

OPEN SESSION: There was one member of the public present.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 6th July 2005 at 7.05 pm

PRESENT: Cllr N W Light (Chairman)
Cllr N J Chard (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Mrs B Charlton
Cllr D E Cracknell
Cllr M F J Daly
Cllr Mrs V A Sullivan
Cllr Mrs N Wood

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr T R Simpson, Town Clerk
Jo Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk

OS/4659 ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D R Cole and Cllr L C Ford.

OS/4660 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

OS/4661 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 1st June 2005, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

OS/4662 THE BICKERLEY AND POCKET PARK

Members received a presentation from Tony Harris and Catherine Harris, both Landscape Architects at New Forest District Council. They outlined proposals to open up Pocket Park and the adjoining area of land, which the Council is in the process of purchasing, to create a network of open space, linking in with The Bickerley. The proposals included retaining the majority of the trees, cutting back the undergrowth to give access to the river, installing new dragons teeth, a new barrier, new picnic tables, nest and bat boxes and an interpretation board to explain how the area will be managed and what wildlife/plants can be seen. Mr Harris said that the District Council could work with the Town Council to work up the scheme and put more detail to it so that it was ready for implementation, either by the Council's groundstaff or through a more formal contract. They may also be able to help with putting together a package for funding bids.

It was noted that the Town Clerk had met with an arboriculturist who had recommended removing the willow and elder trees and pollarding the remaining trees adjacent to the river, in order to make the best of the aspect across the river. It had also been previously agreed to remove one tree on the land being purchased from Mr Hiscock and to improve the track used by a local farmer to access the fields across the river.

There was a wish to include some areas of wild flowers in the scheme and Mr Harris said that the Council would need seek specialist advice on this and may need to alter the mowing regime for the area.

The Clerk informed members that the proposals met the criteria for a new National Lottery fund called "The People's Millions". Grants of up to £50,000 were available to fund up to 100% of the costs. Television viewers would vote for selected schemes and there would be two schemes in the Meridian area that would receive funding. It was noted that the deadline for applications was 11th July and therefore an estimate of costs would be required by the end of the week. The Council would also need to provide the name of a referee and the Town Clerk agreed to ask Nick Gibbs, Director of Community Services or Barry Rickman, Leisure Portfolio Holder at the District Council.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the proposed scheme prepared by the District Council be approved.
- 2) That the offer to work in partnership with the District Council on the scheme for Pocket Park and The Bickerley be accepted.
- 3) That an application for funding be submitted to "The People's Millions".

OS/4663

RINGWOOD FOOTBALL CLUB

The Town Clerk reported that he had had a positive meeting with the Vice Chairman of the Football Club, Paul Reid, and was pleased that the Club now wished to work with the Council. As a result of the discussions, it was possible that the Club may allow access through its grounds to the 10-acre field, together with use of the car park and changing facilities. The Town Clerk suggested that, if this was agreed, the Council might wish to reallocate funding, which was to be used for portacabins, to improve facilities at the Football Club.

The Town Clerk informed members that there were travellers in the area and he had therefore arranged for the access to the 10-acre field to be protected with some large logs. However, he was concerned that the access to the Football Club was vulnerable and, as the Council was the landowner, there would be cost implications if travellers did enter the site. He therefore suggested purchasing a heavy-duty steel gate in order to make illegal entry as difficult as possible.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee, continue discussions with Ringwood Football Club to enable access to the 10-acre field to be serviced through the Club's grounds.
- 2) That, subject to the satisfactory outcome of discussions with the Football Club, the £10,000 previously agreed for portacabins be reallocated to improve facilities at the Football Club.
- 3) That the proposal to purchase a new gate for the entrance to the Football Club grounds be approved.

OS/4664

CAR PARKING AT CARVERS

The Town Clerk informed members that, when the Health Centre moved onto Carvers, the Council did not envisage that there would be any car parking available for users of Carvers. However, subject to some conditions, the Health Centre had made the car park available. Ringwood Cricket Club had agreed to these conditions. However, Lord Toads Cricket Club would not comply. The Town Clerk informed members that, if the Club did not comply, its members might need to be barred from parking their cars on site.

It was noted that the Town Clerk would be attending a meeting with the Health Centre to discuss car parking as they were currently experiencing problems with cars parking all day, and there were also complaints from neighbouring properties. It was therefore possible that, as the land had been leased to the Health Centre, it could withdraw the car parking facility to all users of Carvers.

RESOLVED: That, if Lord Toads Cricket Club would not comply with conditions of use of the car park at Carvers, the Club's members should be barred from parking on site.

**OS/4665
SKATE PARK**

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that Mr Sheerin had been asked to look at the problem at the bottom of the ramps where a lip had formed as a result of the ramps sinking into the tarmac. He had recommended carrying out a localised repair by scraping away the tarmac and replacing it. This would be a temporary solution. However, the alternative would be to remove all the equipment and lay proper foundations. This would be very expensive and there would be no guarantee that the problem would not re-occur at some time in the future.

RESOLVED: That repairs to the base of the ramps in the Skate Park be approved.

**OS/4666
PROPOSED RUGBY FACILITIES AT RINGWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

An update had been received from the rugby club stating that it had now received written confirmation that it was being "encouraged to proceed" with the grant application to Sport England and that a meeting of all stakeholders would take place on 25th or 26th July. In addition, the project architect would be in a position to provide the Club with drawings and costings by the end of the week, which would enable final amendments to be made to the Business Plan.

Members were concerned that the Club had still not provided the Council with the list of items that had been requested repeatedly since the project's inception, including a business plan and worked up capital and revenue estimates. The Council's offer of £250,000 towards the project had been made subject to the scheme meeting certain criteria including the provision of a community facility of a particular size and standard.

Cllr Chard was concerned that the Club had still not consulted with local residents. However, the Town Clerk said that the Council had prevented them from consulting on the original plans and, even though they had now been encouraged to consult, this would not be possible until the plans were complete.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk attend the meeting with Sport England, together with the Chairman of the Committee and the Mayor to support the proposed rugby facilities, and to confirm that the funding would be released, subject to the conditions laid down at the beginning of the project being met.

Cllr Cracknell left the meeting at 8.45pm.

**OS/4667
URGENT BUSINESS**

i) Flower tubs outside Visitor Information Centre

The Town Clerk reported that it was proposed to move the flower tubs from outside the Visitor Information Centre to another location next season, as it was impossible to keep them looking good due to the continued abuse they received.

RESOLVED: That members consider alternative and appropriate locations for the two flower tubs to be moved to.

ii) Health Centre

Notification had been received from the Health Centre of the intention to submit a planning application for the fencing that had been erected around the temporary site at Carvers.

RESOLVED: That the Council support the retrospective planning application for a perimeter fence around the Health Centre at Carvers.

iii) Dragons Teeth at The Bickerley

The Town Clerk reported that there was £1,000 in the budget to replace the dragons teeth on part of The Bickerley. It was hoped that the Environment Agency would replace those along the access track to Old Mill House and Hampshire County Council had agreed to replace those along Bickerley Road. However, the County Council would only pay for smooth concrete bollards and, if the Council wished to have more rustic, roughcast bollards, it would need to pay the difference.

It was also noted that the County Council would be widening the ditch in the near future in an attempt to prevent illegal access.

RESOLVED: That the Council pay the difference between the cost of smooth and roughcast concrete bollards to be installed along Bickerley Road.

iv) Poulner Lakes

It was noted that the anglers had intended to plant a new hedge around their land at Poulner Lakes. However, they had discovered that the soil was not of sufficient depth to do this and were therefore proposing to erect a new fence.

The Town Clerk reported that he would be meeting Mr Graham Lavender on site next week to discuss the access road. It was hoped that the anglers would concede that they do not own the part of the road owned by no one, so that the Council could take ownership and upgrade the road.

RESOLVED: That there was no objection to the anglers erecting a new fence at Poulner Lakes, subject to any planning consent that may be required.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.50 pm.