

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 September 2006 at 8.35 pm

PRESENT: Cllr N W Light (Chairman)
Cllr M F Daly (Vice Chairman)
Cllr N J Chard
Cllr D Cole
Cllr D E Cracknell
Cllr L C Ford
Cllr Mrs V A Sullivan

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr T R Simpson, Town Clerk
Mrs L A Wickens, P A to the Town Clerk

**OS/4793
ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Mrs B A Charlton.

**OS/4794
DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr M Daly declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 5 (a) and (b) as he is chairman of Ringwood Cricket Club. He also indicated that he would leave the room during discussion and voting on this item.

**OS/4795
MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5th July 2006, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

**OS/4796
REPORT ON VISIT TO VIEW NEW MILTON'S SPORTS FACILITIES**

In view of the lateness of the hour it was

RESOLVED: that this item be deferred for discussion at the Committee's meeting in October.

Cllr Daly left the room during discussion of the following item.

**OS/4797
CARVERS RECREATION GROUND
(a) Pavilion**

The Clerk reported that the tender for the contract for the refurbishment work was in excess of the budget available. However, Medcentres, who had originally offered to carry out the works had agreed to submit a quotation.

RESOLVED: that the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Committee be authorised to negotiate with Medcentres for the refurbishment work to be carried out within budget.

(b) Pest control measures

The Clerk reported that there was a problem with rabbits digging up the cricket square and lawn tennis courts. A deerstalker, whom the Council had used at Long Lane to deal with the rabbits, had advised that he could help with the problem at the Recreation Ground. The gentleman was very experienced, had all the necessary insurances and would carry out the work at night, with the full knowledge of the police. There would not be a charge for the service.

It was agreed that the rabbit problem needed to be resolved and therefore the offer be accepted. It was also agreed that nearby residents be advised of the period when the work was to be carried out and also that a notice giving the same details be displayed at the Recreation Ground.

RESOLVED: that the offer to deal with the rabbit problem at Carvers Recreation Ground be accepted and that nearby residents be advised of the period when the work was to be carried out and a notice giving the same details be displayed at the Recreation Ground.

Cllr Daly returned to the meeting.

OS/4798

RINGWOOD LAWN TENNIS CLUB

The Clerk advised the Committee that a letter and the results of a questionnaire which the Club had sent to its members had been received that day, too late to be circulated properly and considered by members. The Clerk therefore requested that this agenda item be deferred until the October meeting of the Committee. In the meantime, he wished to undertake basic maintenance only to the lawn tennis courts.

RESOLVED: that the agenda items regarding the Ringwood Lawn Tennis Club due to be considered at this meeting, be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee and that basic maintenance only to the lawn tennis courts be carried out in the meantime.

OS/4799

PROPOSED SPORTS FACILITIES AT LONG LANE

(a) Arrangements for use of the 10 acres field and costs of accommodation works

The Clerk reported that the works were steadily moving forward. £12,000 from Developers' Contributions was being requested to cover the cost of the works and the Football Association had agreed to bear 50% of the cost of new goal posts. A tarmac access apron with kerbing was to be installed. It was anticipated that a decision on the Planning Application would be made shortly.

(b) Progress report on acquisition of remainder of land identified for inclusion in the scheme

The Clerk reported that the District Valuer had met with the landowners and negotiations for acquisition of the remainder of the land were progressing.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Committee move forward with the arrangements to bring the 10 acres field into sports use; and

(b) that the Clerk's report on the acquisition of the remainder of land required at Long Lane be received.

OS/4800

DR LITTLE GARDENS

The Committee were shown photographs of the vandalism to the wall on the east side of Dr Little Gardens. The Town Clerk suggested to members that the wall be lowered by approximately eighteen inches so that it was easier to see into the Gardens and would discourage any inappropriate activity within the area. The work would not need any special permissions as the Gardens were next to, but not in, the Conservation Area. The Council's own groundsmen would be able to carry out the work. Cllr Chard expressed concern that lowering the wall would make it easier to climb over.

RESOLVED: that, on the grounds of minimising incidences of crime and disorder, the wall on the east side of Dr Little Gardens be lowered by four courses of bricks, the work to be carried out by the Council's groundsmen.

OS/48001

ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEALING WITH DOG FOULING ON OPEN SPACES (Min.C/4583(3) REFERS)

It was reported that to date, insufficient information had been received from the District Council on this matter for it to be discussed at the meeting.

RESOLVED: that the matter be deferred to a future meeting of the Committee when the necessary information had been received.

OS/48002

RINGWOOD CEMETERY

(a) Clerk's report on investigations into the reuse of graves

The Clerk advised that his investigations had revealed that, at present, the Council was not legally entitled to re-use graves. Legislation was currently being considered for the re-use of graves in London and it was probable that, in time, this would extend to the rest of the United Kingdom.

(b) Timescale for bringing the unused part of the Cemetery (currently let as temporary allotments) into use and arrangements to be made for the preparation of a development scheme for the site

The Clerk advised members that it would soon be necessary to bring the part of the Cemetery currently let as temporary allotments into Cemetery use. To this end, he advised that allotment holders be immediately given one year's notice. However, it would probably only be necessary to take back the first 5 allotment plots next September. The remaining plots to be taken back as and when required for Cemetery use.

The Clerk also advised that consultants would need to be engaged to produce a design layout for the Cemetery extension, to include a new roadway and new ashes plots. Investigations would also need to be made as to whether individual graves could be consecrated as used, rather than the whole area being consecrated before use. He also suggested that the opportunity should be taken to investigate the possibility of removing kerbstones, but retaining headstones, in the Cemetery in the interests of improving the overall appearance of the Cemetery and mitigating the annual maintenance costs.

RESOLVED : (a) that the Clerk's report on investigations into the re-use of graves be accepted;

(b) that allotment tenants at the Hightown Road site be immediately given one year's notice; the tenants of the first five plots, which would need to be taken back next September, to be offered alternative plots: and

(c) that consultants be engaged to produce a design layout for the new Cemetery extension.

OS/48003**FLORAL DECORATIONS**

The Clerk advised members that, for health and safety reasons, it had been necessary this year to obtain the services of a company with a cherry picker to put up the baskets on the lamp posts, which had cost £250. At the request of the County Council, a company had also been engaged to test every lamp post when it was first used, at a cost of £35 per post. These two elements had a significant effect on the budget allocation for floral displays. He suggested that members might consider finding alternative uses and sites for these baskets next year. The Council had 124 containers available for use.

Members agreed that this was an unnecessary expense and a working party would look at alternative sites, for example railings, for next year. The Clerk suggested that perhaps local shops and businesses could be approached to see if they would like to have a basket fixed to their building and be responsible for planting and maintenance.

Members discussed plants suitable for the planters and flower beds for the winter season and it was agreed that the contractor be asked to supply Polyanthus, which could be funded within budget.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Clerk's report on floral decorations carried out in 2006 be received;
- (b) that a working party look at alternative sites and uses for the Council's stock of baskets and the possibility of providing surplus baskets for local shops; and
- (c) that the contractor be asked to supply Polyanthus for the town's winter floral display.

OS/48004**RINGWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

The Clerk reported that negotiations were continuing with the School regarding the use of the Town Council's land as a footpath between the school and its playing field. It may be possible to come to an arrangement with the County Council for a "swap" with another piece of land in the town. With the Committee's approval, the Clerk said he would pursue this objective.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk continue negotiations with Ringwood Junior School and Hampshire County Council regarding the use of the Town Council's land as a footpath between the school and its playing field.

OS/48005**TREE SURVEYS**

Tree surveys for work included in the budget were received, as follows:

- (a) Jubilee Gardens
- (b) Southampton Road – Parsonage Barn Lane
- (c) Southampton Road – Town side
- (d) War Memorial Gardens
- (e) Bickerley Village Green
- (f) The Mount

It was agreed that the work at each site would need to be done, but not as a matter of urgency, and therefore it would be to the Council's financial advantage if contracts were let for the necessary tree work to be carried out when it could be fitted in with other work by the contractor.

RESOLVED: that contracts be let for tree work to be carried out at the following sites:

- (a) Jubilee Gardens
- (b) Southampton Road – Parsonage Barn Lane
- (c) Southampton Road – Town side
- (d) War Memorial Gardens
- (e) Bickerley Village Green
- (f) The Mount

OS/48006

POCKET PARK

(a) Update on progress

The Clerk reported that a contract would be let for the removal of unsafe and other trees at the site. General maintenance work would be carried out by the Council's own groundstaff.

(b) Approach from Churchill Retirement Living

Members were advised that an approach had been made by Churchill Retirement Living to become involved in a project at Pocket Park.

RESOLVED:

- (a)** that the Clerk's reported be noted; and
- (b)** that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Committee, together with the Town Clerk, meet representatives of Churchill Retirement Living and report back to the Committee.

OS/48007

URGENT BUSINESS

1. **Access to Poulner Lakes.** The Clerk reported that some remedial works to the paths and car park would be carried out by the Council's groundsmen during the winter months.
2. **Trees on The Bickerley.** The Chairman advised the Committee that the tree work was in hand and would be carried out shortly.

OS/48007

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED: That under Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. (*Annex'A'*).

OS/48008

POULNER JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOLS

The Clerk presented details of the suggested new three-year grass maintenance contract with Poulner Junior and Infant Schools. He suggested that Cllr Clarke should check the calculations with the Council's Finance Manager and that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Committee, together with Cllr Clarke, should negotiate the contract with the Schools.

Cllr Chard opined that the contract should be for one year only, as with the 10 acre field at Long Lane coming into use, he felt this would entail more work for the grounds staff which would need to be evaluated. The Town Clerk advised that he was confident that as a result of the improved productivity of staff and the use of the new equipment purchased by the Council, existing measures would be sufficient to enable a three-year contract to be negotiated. Cllr Daly proposed that the Contract should be for three years.

RESOLVED: that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Committee, together with Cllr Clarke, negotiate a three-year grass maintenance contract with Poulner Junior and Infant Schools.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.20 pm.