

OPEN SESSION: There were nine members of the public present, one of whom wished to speak.

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

Held on Wednesday 7th June 2006 at 7.20 pm

PRESENT: Cllr N W Light (Chairman)
Cllr M F Daly
Cllr N J Chard
Cllr B A Charlton
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
Mr R Eldred, Technical Officer
Mrs C Harris, Landscape Architect, NFDC

OS/4771 ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

OS/4772 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr M Daly declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 6, as he is Chairman of Ringwood Cricket Club. He also indicated that he would leave the room during the discussion and voting on this item.

OS/4773 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meetings held on 3rd and 24th May 2006, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

OS/4774 THE BICKERLEY

(a) Redevelopment of Pocket Park

The Chairman welcomed Catherine Harris to the meeting. Mrs Harris circulated to members illustrations of the chosen designs for street furniture for the site.

As the installation of a footpath by HCC in Bickerley Road adjacent to the Pocket Park was now progressing, the Chairman asked members if they would wish to discuss agenda item 4(b) next and then return to agenda item 4(a) to hear Mrs Harris's report.

(b) Footpath

The Town Clerk reported that he had received from HCC plans of the footpath to be installed along the length of Bickerley Road from Kingsbury Lane to Handley Court/Strides Lane. The path would be 1.9m wide, finished in yellow sandstone. There would need to be an exchange of land between HCC and Ringwood Town Council, as the footpath would be constructed on

the Village Green. Discussions had also taken place with NFDC regarding the introduction of Waiting Restriction Orders for the same part of Bickerley Road, which, if confirmed, would probably be in place by the end of the year.

RESOLVED: that the plans for the footpath in Bickerley Road and the Clerk's report thereon be received.

(a) Redevelopment of Pocket Park cont'd

Mrs Harris answered Councillors' queries regarding the street furniture and agreed that any major work in the area would be best left until the construction of the footpath was completed. Until introduction of the Waiting Restrictions was confirmed by NFDC, it would not be sensible to install bollards at the edge of the Council's land. If the restrictions are not introduced, the bollards could be installed at the edge of the road, between the roadway and the footpath in order to discourage parking on the path. In the meantime, the Council's land could be kept tidy and any tree works undertaken.

RESOLVED:

(1) that the street furniture for the area as shown to members at the meeting, be approved

(2) that the Town Council negotiate with Hampshire County Council for an exchange of land in respect of that portion of Village Green being taken up for the construction of a new footpath and

(3) that the Council's land be kept tidy and any tree work or other landscaping works which could be carried out be done, but that any major landscaping works be deferred until the completion of the footpath.

The chairman thanked Mrs Harris for attending the meeting.

(c) Brockey Sands

The Clerk advised members that at present, the area on the Bickerley known as Brockey Sands was in the ownership of Wessex Water. He mentioned that from time to time members had commented about its ownership and now enquired whether members wished to consider making an approach to Wessex Water to acquire the land for the Town Council.

RESOLVED: that as the acquisition of Brockey Sands would be of no additional benefit to the people of Ringwood at the present time, the Town Council does not proceed with an approach to Wessex Water to acquire the land.

OS/4775

LONG LANE DEVELOPMENT

(a) Provision of temporary facilities and accommodation works

The Council's Technical Officer reported that he had now received quotations for second hand units and budget quotations for ancillary works, in the sum of approximately £40,000, not including electric supply, planning application fees, tarmacking the car park area and footpath construction from the changing rooms. Mr Eldred had sought the views of the District Council's Planning Officer on the Town Council's plans and, in principle, the proposed scheme would be acceptable. However, there were vehicular access and parking issues still to be resolved. He was now at the stage of preparing a final draft planning application.

Cllr Cracknell queried whether all the temporary changing facilities would be needed.

The Town Clerk reported that he had received an indication from the Chairman of Ringwood Town Football Club that day that it may be possible for the Town Council to use two of the Football Club's changing facilities as a result of the Football Club deciding to concentrate on running only two teams. This still needed clarification and would be pursued. As consideration for use of the site, the Club would require some accommodation works to be undertaken, such as fencing, and a new set of goal posts to be provided.

The Clerk advised that, whatever the outcome of further discussions with the Football Club regarding use of their facilities, it would still be necessary for the Town Council to submit a Planning Application in order to use the 10 acre field. However, the availability of the two existing changing rooms would mean that costs should be contained well within the original budget figure of £10,000.

RESOLVED:

(1) that the Town Council proceed with submitting its Planning Application for the use of 10 acre field at Long Lane,

(2) That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Committee, be authorised to continue discussions with Ringwood Town Football Club regarding use of their changing facilities and

(3) that in consideration of the use of the land and facilities at the Ringwood Town Football Club site, the Town Council carry out accommodation works, including the provision of new goal posts and replacement of the fencing between the car park and the training area, with the cost of works being contained within the provision made in the budget for bringing the 10 acre field into use.

(b) Progress report on land acquisition

The Town Clerk reported that the District Valuer had now been given instructions to proceed with negotiations with a local landowner who wished to sell one area of land to the Town Council. The Clerk confirmed that Government advice was that an appropriate use of land in the Green Belt was recreational facilities.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk's report be received.

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

OS/4776

CARVERS PAVILION

The Town Clerk reminded members that the rent which had been received from Medcentres while the temporary health centre was on Carvers had been put aside for the refurbishment of the pavilion. The architect appointed had not kept to the Contract and the Contract had therefore been withdrawn. The Council would need an architect to draw up plans and oversee the refurbishment of the pavilion and a new Contract would need to be let.

RESOLVED: that the Town Council proceed with letting a new Contract for an architect to draw up plans for the refurbishment of the pavilion and oversee the work.

Cllr Daly returned to the meeting.

OS/4777

URGENT BUSINESS

The Town Clerk advised members that if they so wished, he would arrange a visit to New Milton so that the Committee could see the sports facilities there. He felt this would assist them in visualising how the facilities at Long Lane could look when completed.

RESOLVED: that the Town Clerk arrange a visit by Councillors to New Milton to view that town's sports facilities.

OS/4778

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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information. (Annex 'A').

OS/4779

DEVELOPMENT OF RINGWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL PLAYING FIELD

Members discussed the Heads of Terms proposed by HCC for the use of the Junior School playing field by Ellingham & Ringwood Rugby Club in the light of the comments made on the document by Peter Gray, a Governor of Ringwood Junior School, during the Open Session before the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: that, subject to the points of clarification given by Peter Gray during the Open Session, the Heads of Terms be accepted to enable the lease document to be prepared.

OS/4780

RINGWOOD LAWN TENNIS CLUB

With regard to the blocked drain from the Tennis Club's pavilion to the main drain, the Technical Officer reported that there were three options available to resolve the problem, viz: dig up the fractured pipe and relay the drain, put in a liner or keep rodding the pipe as and when a blockage occurred.

Members had been provided with a letter from the Chairman of the Tennis Club which referred to the costs of maintaining the courts for the last financial year, the current year and the remedial work to repair the drain and the Club's inability to meet these costs. Members noted that the Club had been heavily subsidised for many years and had never met the full cost of maintenance of the courts. In addition, unlike other clubs, the Town Council did not charge any rent for use of the facilities. Members and officers had encouraged the Club to look at ways of increasing its revenue, current membership fees being less than £100 per annum and increasing its membership which currently stood at around 30 adults plus some young people. Effectively, the Club also had virtually free use of the hard courts.

Following a detailed review of the situation, it was felt that all clubs which use Carvers must pay their way. All other users except the Tennis Club now pay 100% of the costs involved in maintaining the ground and marking out pitches etc.

RESOLVED:

- (1)** that the drain from the tennis club's pavilion to the main drain be not repaired, but rodded when required,
- (2)** that Ringwood Lawn Tennis Club be advised that the invoice for 2005/2006 must be paid by reasonable means through an amicable arrangement between the Council and the Tennis Club and
- (3)** that at the July meeting, the Committee considers charges to Ringwood Lawn Tennis Club for use of the grass and hard courts at Carvers which ensure that the Club is dealt with in the same manner as other sports.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.37 pm.