

OPEN SESSION: There were no members of the public present.

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

Held on Wednesday 7 March 2007 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Cllr M F Daly (Vice Chairman)
Cllr N J Chard
Cllr Mrs Charlton
Cllr D Cole
Cllr C Ford
Cllr Mrs V A Sullivan

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs J L Stannard, Deputy Town Clerk
Mrs L A Wickens, P A to the Town Clerk

OS/4870 ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Cracknell and Light.

OS/4871 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Cole declared a personal interest in agenda item 4(c) as he was a resident living adjacent to the access road in question. He stayed in the room and took part in the discussion. Cllr Daly declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 10(b), as he is Chairman of Ringwood Cricket Club. He withdrew from the meeting during discussion and voting on this item.

OS/4872 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2007, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

OS/4873 BICKERLEY/POCKET PARK (a) Report on Natural England's Living River Project

The Deputy Town Clerk reminded members that the Town Council had submitted a bid to Natural England for a share of lottery funding for the Avon Valley Living River Project. Confirmation had now been received that grant support amounting to £8,000 was available for several aspects of the enhancement work to be carried out on The Bickerley and Pocket Park area. It was hoped that detailed discussions with Natural England would take place later this year. See Annex "A" attached.

RESOLVED: that the action taken be approved and that support from Natural England for the improvement schemes for the Bickerley be welcomed.

(b) Quotation for drainage works

The Deputy Clerk reported that one quotation had been received for works to improve drainage on The Bickerley, but that this was £700 over budget. The Deputy Clerk requested approval to seek further quotations for the work.

RESOLVED: that further quotations be sought for works to improve drainage on The Bickerley.

(c) Maintenance of access road

The Deputy Town Clerk advised members that the access road to Bickerley Terrace and Riverside across the Village Green was in a very poor condition with many large potholes and areas of lying water. Cllr Cole added that it was impossible for people with pushchairs or wheelchairs to use the road. It was the responsibility of the Town Council to maintain this access to a reasonable standard. Cllr Cole opined that the access road needed regrading, the holes filled with scalplings and the area rolled. However, it would not be possible to carry out any work whilst the ground conditions were so wet. Cllr Cole also advised Members that the road was used as a dropping off point by members of the public who wish to cycle or walk the County Council's Castleman Trail from its access point at the end of Riverside. He suggested, therefore, that the County Council be approached for assistance in funding the maintenance works.

RESOLVED:

(a) that costings be obtained for remedial works to the access road across the Village Green, and

(b) that Hampshire County Council be approached for assistance in funding the remedial works required as the access road led to the County's Castleman Trail.

OS/4874

THE COMMONS ACT 2006

Members considered the Town Clerk's report and welcomed DEFRA's proposals, particularly in relation to removing the need for a land swap in all cases and also for the proposals to speed up the process for dealing with applications for consent to undertake minor works.

They also welcomed the proposal to allow certain exempt works to be carried out on village greens, including the creation of unsurfaced footpaths. However, it was suggested that DEFRA be requested to consider extending the number of exemptions to include surfaced footpaths of no more than two metres in width where those footpaths run alongside a public highway in semi-urban areas. The reason for this is that when commons and village greens were first created, residents were used to walking on uneven and largely ill-maintained fields. However, residents now expect to be provided with a properly surfaced footpath rather than having to walk on the grass. The use of a relatively narrow strip adjoining the highway as a surfaced footpath would maintain access for pedestrians but not cause a significant interference to the village green.

RESOLVED: that a response be submitted to DEFRA requesting that surfaced footpaths be permitted as exempt works on Village Greens alongside a public highway.

OS/4875

TENNIS FACILITIES

The Deputy Town Clerk updated Members on efforts made by the Town Clerk to obtain information from the Tennis Club on levels of maintenance required for the tennis courts at Carvers for the 2007 season. See Annex "B" attached.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be received, and
- (b) that the action taken by the Clerk to provide a specification and fixed price for maintenance of the courts for the 2007 season be brought to Members at the April meeting of the Committee, be approved.

OS/4875

RUGBY FACILITIES AT RINGWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Members were apprised of the contents of a letter from the Chairman of Ellingham & Ringwood Rugby Club to the Assistant Director of the District Council's Leisure Services requesting the release of further Developers' Contributions, amounting to £20,000, in order to progress Building Regulation approval for the scheme.

Members considered that it would not be prudent to release further "at risk" funds until the legal agreement with the County Council had been finalised. It was further suggested that the Rugby Club be encouraged to use some of its own funds at this time.

RECOMMENDATION: it is recommended to Policy & Finance Committee that no further Developers' Contributions be released until such time as the legal agreement between the Rugby Club and the County Council is finalised.

OS/4876

RINGWOOD TOWN FOOTBALL & SOCIAL CLUB

The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that an approach had been made by the Club in respect of possible future football pitch maintenance by Council grounds staff. The Finance Manager and Grounds Foreman were preparing costings to be submitted to the Club.

RESOLVED:

(a) that the approach from Ringwood Town Social & Football Club regarding future maintenance be noted and the Council's action in preparing costings be approved, and

(b) that the Committee be apprised of the costings at the next meeting of the Committee before they are submitted to the Club.

OS/4877

SUMMER BEDDING PLANTING

(a) quotation for brackets for fixing baskets to railings

Members were advised that a quotation had been received to make 30 brackets, together with nuts and bolts, for fixing the ex lamp post baskets to the railings. There was provision in the budget for this work.

RESOLVED: that the quotation, which is within budget, for making 30 brackets, together with nuts and bolts, for fixing the ex lamp post baskets to the railings be accepted.

(b) quotation for provision and planting of summer bedding around the town

Members considered the quotation received from the Council's contractor for the provision and planting of summer bedding for summer 2007.

RESOLVED: that the quotation from the Council's contractor for the provision and planting of summer bedding for summer 2007 be accepted.

(c) purchase of new planter

Members were advised that there was provision in the budget to purchase a new planter to be placed outside Ringwood Physiotherapy in Southampton Road (near the entrance to Carvers Industrial Estate).

RESOLVED: that a 1m square floor-standing planter be purchased to be placed outside Ringwood Physiotherapy in Southampton Road (near the entrance to Carvers Industrial Estate).

OS/4878

FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2007/08

Members reviewed the Council's current fees and charges, as follows:

(a) Cemetery Fees – Interment and Memorial

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the proposed increases had been reflected in the original budget for 2007/08. The Finance Manager had recommended a general increase of approximately 4% for interment and memorial fees. Members agreed to accept the new fees en bloc.

RESOLVED: that the cemetery fees for interments and memorials for 2007/08 be approved as shown in Annex 'C' to these minutes.

(b) Sports Facilities – Carvers

It was agreed to leave discussion of the fees for cricket until the end of this agenda item.

(i) Football

The Finance Manager had recommended a general increase of approximately 3% for all block bookings with a slightly higher percentage increase being charged for casual bookings. Members agreed to accept the new fees en bloc.

RESOLVED: that the fees for the hire of football pitches at Carvers for 2007/08, Casual and Blocked Booked, be approved as shown in Annex 'C' to these minutes.

(ii) Rugby

Members noted that rugby was no longer played on Carvers and agreed to delete the fees from the list of Fees & Charges.

RESOLVED: that rugby be deleted from the Council's list of Fees & Charges for Carvers Recreation Ground.

(c) Sports Facilities – Long Lane

Members were advised that the Grounds Staff had half an hour's travelling time to get to, and return from, Long Lane. Cllr Chard proposed that the charge for block booked football matches (seniors) be £55 per game; block booked matches, (juniors), £30 per game. For Casual Bookings, Cllr Chard proposed that the charge be £65 for seniors and £40 for Juniors. The proposition was seconded but not carried. Members agreed to base the fees on those agreed for Carvers.

For use of five mini pitches, Cllr Chard proposed that the charge be £63 per session. This proposition was seconded and agreed.

RESOLVED: that the charges for football at Long Lane be as follows:

Block bookings	seniors	£52 per game
	Juniors	£26 per game
Casual bookings	seniors	£62 per game
	Juniors	£36 per game
Use of 5 mini pitches		£63 per session

See Annex "C" to these Minutes.

(d) Allotments

The Finance Manager had recommended an increase of approximately 5% for all allotment plots. Members were reminded that the Committee had resolved to bring the fees for the Upper Kingston allotment plots into line with those for the other sites over a three-year period. In 2007/08 therefore, there would be parity between all three sites.

RESOLVED: that the fees for allotments for 2007/08 be approved as shown in Annex 'C' to these minutes.

(e) The Bickerley

The Finance Manager had recommended an increase of approximately 3% for the hire of The Bickerley Village Green, from £55 for each overnight stay to £57, plus the cost of provision of a portable toilet. Cllr Chard proposed that the new fee for 2007/08 should be £60 plus the cost of a portable toilet. This was seconded and agreed.

RESOLVED: that the cost of each overnight stay on The Bickerley Village Green for 2007/08 be £60, plus the cost of provision of a portable toilet. (See Annex 'C' to these minutes).

(b) Sports Facilities – Carvers - Cricket

Cllr Daly left the room while the fees for cricket were discussed.

Members elected Cllr Chard to be Chairman during the discussion of this agenda item.

The Finance Manager had recommended an increase of approximately 3% for all cricket fixtures. Members agreed to accept the new fees en bloc.

RESOLVED: that the fees for the hire of cricket wickets at Carvers for 2007/08, Casual and Blocked Booked, be approved as shown in Annex 'C' to these minutes.

Cllr Daly returned to the meeting.

OS/4879

TREE SURVEYS

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that the latest Tree Surveys had identified some urgent tree work which needed to be carried out at Toad Corner. The tree line along the A.31 at Folly

Farm had also been identified as being in need of attention. The work required was likely to be costly and it was proposed to investigate sources of possible funding. Cllr Cole informed Members that the procedures regarding work to trees in Dorset with Tree Preservation Orders was different from Hampshire and, as the land at Folly Farm was in Dorset, the Council should check with East Dorset District Council before proceeding with any works.

RESOLVED:

- (1) that the Council's contractor proceed with the urgent tree work required at Toad Corner;
- (2) that the Council seeks estimates for the work required at Folly Farm;
- (3) that the Council investigates sources of possible funding for the work at Folly Farm; and
- (4) that the Council checks Tree Preservation Order procedures in Dorset with East Dorset District Council before work at Folly Farm commences.

OS/4880

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED: That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw. (*Annex 'D'*).

OS/4881

POULNER JUNIOR SCHOOL

Members considered correspondence from Poulner Junior School regarding grounds maintenance work undertaken as part of the Council's contract with the school.

RESOLVED: that the action agreed at the meeting be approved.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.05 p.m.