

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 9th JUNE 2004 AT 7.30 p.m. AT THE PAVILION, MANOR FIELD**

Present: Cllr Mr A Barnett (Chairman)
Cllr Mr J Gaywood
Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby
Cllr Mr V Sewell
Cllr Mrs M Solman
Mr K Bushell (New Ash Green CC)
Mr A Gray (Hartley De Sales FC)
Mr D Thompson (Hartley De Sales FC)

In Attendance: Mrs Gilder (Assistant Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Mr A Tremain, Cllr Mr C Ward, Mr T Wade (Meopham CC), Mr M Ward (Hextable CC) Mrs L Osborne (New Ash Green CC) and Mr J Harding (New Ash Green CC).

2. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED:

On the motion of Cllr Sewell and seconded by Cllr Mrs Oxtoby that Cllr Barnett be elected Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee until the Annual Meeting in May 2005.

3. Election of Vice – Chairman

RESOLVED:

On the motion of Cllr Barnett and seconded by Cllr Sewell that Cllr Tremain be elected Vice – Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee until the Annual Meeting in May 2005.

4. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby declared a personal interest under minute item 13, Gorse Wood as she lives opposite the property involved.

Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby also declared a personal and prejudicial interest under minute item 18, Hartley Wood as she lives nearby and left the meeting during discussion and voting on this item.

5. Terms of Reference

The Committee reviewed its Terms of Reference.

RESOLVED:

That the Terms of Reference of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee as circulated with the agenda, be approved.

6. Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 20th April 2004 be approved and signed as a correct record.

7. Cricket at Manor Field

There was nothing to report.

Mr Bushell left the meeting at 7.45p.m.

8. Football at Manor Field

Hartley De Sales FC informed the Committee that they would like an additional pitch for the U14's and U15's to be situated parallel to the existing senior pitch at the end of Manor Field.

Should the pitch be added, new goal posts would be required. Mr Gray agreed to inform the Clerk of the size of posts required.

RESOLVED: That once details of the required posts have been received, the Clerk obtain prices for new goal posts.

Hartley De Sales FC reported that the grass in the senior pitch goal mouth would benefit from seeding at an appropriate time.

Mr Gray provided the Committee with some positive feedback from the Council's Youth Activity Day which Hartley De Sales FC attended and reported that a number of young people had expressed an interest in joining the club.

It was felt that the day had been a success and Mr Gray and Mr Thompson asked that should a similar event be organised in the future that they be given as much notice as possible in order to ensure sufficient representation from the football club.

Mr Gray and Mr Thompson left the meeting at 8.00p.m.

9. Meopham Cricket Club

There was nothing to report.

10. Manor Field and the Pavilion

(a) Entrance

It was reported that two quotations had been invited in connection with the revised specification to widen the entrance at Manor Field and provide a kissing gate, but to date only one quotation had been returned.

RESOLVED:

That the matter be deferred until negotiations with the land owners are completed.

(b) Internal decoration

The Committee considered seeking quotations for the internal redecoration of the kitchen and toilets in the Pavilion.

RESOLVED:

That the Clerk be authorised to seek quotations for the internal redecoration of the kitchen and toilets to be considered at the next meeting.

(c) Line marking equipment

The Chairman reported that the purchase of the line marker has been deferred due to the fact that a new, improved model is soon to be released at no extra cost.

RECOMMENDED:

That 45 litres of Pitch Marker "Super C" white be purchased for the sum of £186.12 plus VAT from Fleet (Line Markers) at the same time as the line marker is purchased.

(d) Meter cupboard

The Committee considered a quotation from T D Munday to undertake repairs to the electric meter cupboard.

RESOLVED:

That, the quotation dated 8th June 2004 from T D Munday for the sum of £25.00 to repair the electric meter cupboard, be accepted.

(e) Flail cut

The Committee considered a quotation from J B Westwood to flail mow the grass in the Orchard and at the rear of the Pavilion.

After some discussion, Cllr Gaywood proposed and Cllr Sewell seconded with 3 votes for and 2 against that Mr Westwood should be asked to flail mow the grass in the Orchard only, leaving the grass at the rear of the Pavilion.

RESOLVED:

That, the quotation from J B Westwood for the sum of £100.00 + VAT to flail mow the grass be accepted and that he be advised to flail mow the grass in the Orchard only.

(f) Fertiliser

The Committee considered a quotation from J B Westwood to apply fertiliser to Manor Field.

RESOLVED:

That, the quotation from J B Westwood for the sum of £150.00 + VAT to apply fertiliser to Manor Field, be accepted.

11. Sale of the land at Manor Field

The Committee considered a letter from the land owner dated 9th June 2004 informing the Council that they are currently awaiting a meeting with their Land Agents who are presently on holiday.

RESOLVED:

That, the matter be deferred

12. Rectory Meadow

(a) Volunteer work days

The Committee noted that the North West Kent Countryside Project will be charging £150 per day for each of its volunteer work days on 18th April, 20th June, 19th September, 23rd September, 17th October, 21st November and 16th January 2005, which represents an increase of £50 per day from that charged last year due to cuts in funding. However, the Project will only be invoicing the Council for seven days, one day will be provided free of charge.

(b) Hire of grass cutter

The Committee considered the cost of the hire of a grass cutter on four occasions at a rate of £50 per day.

RESOLVED:

That, the expenditure of £200 for the hire of a grass cutter on four occasions at a Rate of £50 per day be authorised.

(c) Tour of Rectory Meadow

The Committee received a report from the Chairman on the recent tour of Rectory Meadow organised by the North West Kent Countryside Project on 26th May 2004. The Chairman reported that there had been a good turnout and that the tour had

been a great success, providing an enjoyable and informative evening for all who attended and impressing upon everyone the need for more volunteers.
The Chairman agreed to contact the North West Countryside Project to enquire as to whether another tour could be arranged in the near future.

(d) New fencing

The Committee received a report from the Chairman on a recent meeting with the Rail link Countryside Initiative (RLCI) on 21st May 2004 to discuss a bid for funding new fencing at the boundary with Ash Road and the woodland adjoining the Old Rectory. A meeting has been suggested to discuss specifications for the fencing and arrangements for carrying out a survey to find out who is using the meadow and whether they are enjoying it.
The RLCI confirmed that that would be prepared to fund the fencing project and a further meeting is to be arranged.

13. Gorse Wood

A tree surgeon had inspected the site where trees are allegedly affecting property adjoining woodland owned by the Council at Gorse Wood.
The tree surgeon had advised the Council that they may wish to seek further expert advice on the matter.
The Committee considered a quotation from an arboriculturist to investigate and report on the matter. It was not possible to ascertain the full extent of the work required to report and advise fully on the matter and therefore he was not in a position to give a fixed fee quotation.

RECOMMENDED:

That, the Clerk be authorised to instruct the arboriculturist to inspect the site and submit a report, taking a maximum of 3 hours.
If the arboriculturist feels that he is unable to carry out the inspection and provide a report within this time, the Committee will reconsider the situation at the next meeting.

14. Pond

At the last meeting of the Committee, it was resolved that advice be sought from the Wetland Trust on further remedial work that could be carried out to the pond after the diesel spillage on 1st March 2004. The Wetlands Advisory Service of the Wild Fowl and Wetlands Trust has informed the Council that a site visit and a short report could be undertaken providing advice and guidance on what further remedial work could be undertaken to the pond at a cost in the region of £300.

In light of this information, the Committee

RESOLVED:

That, the Clerk be requested to contact societies or organisations who would be willing to provide less costly advice on further remedial work that could be carried out to the pond, to be considered at the next meeting.

15. Public Right of Way SD 302

The Committee considered a grant offer received from Kent County Council for £465 to Provide a new gate arrangement on SD302 where it opens out into Court Field. The County Council is willing to meet the cost of providing the new gates, but funding to install the new gates would need to be secured from other sources.

The Committee felt that it was unnecessary for new gates to be installed.

RESOLVED:

That, no further action be taken.

16. Playgrounds

The Committee considered quotations received for the renewal of safety surfacing below the slide at the Woodland Avenue Play Area.

Cllr Barnett expressed some concern over the proposed depth of wet pour in the quotations and agreed to contact the companies involved to ensure that the depth of wet pour used would conform to current standards.

RESOLVED:

That, this item be deferred until the next meeting in order that further advice may be sought.

17. Routine Maintenance Contract

RESOLVED:

That, the checklists completed during the weekly inspections of the Council's open spaces for the month of April 2004 and for the Council's playgrounds for the month of February, March and April 2004, be noted.

Cllr Mrs Oxtoby left the meeting at 9.37

18. Hartley Wood

The Committee noted a letter received from the Council's Solicitor in respect of the disposal of three plots of land at Hartley Wood.

RECOMMENDED:

That, no further action be taken regarding the three plots of land at Hartley Wood

19. Date of next meeting

Monday 5th July 2004 at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.45 p.m.

Signed:.....

Date:.....