

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 5th July 2004 AT 7.30 p.m. AT THE PAVILION, MANOR FIELD**

**Present:** Cllr Mr A Barnett (Chairman)  
Cllr Mr V Sewell  
Cllr Mr A Tremain  
Mr K Bushell (New Ash Green CC)

**In Attendance:** Mrs Gilder (Assistant Clerk)

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Mr J Gaywood, Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby, Cllr Mrs M Solman, Cllr Mr C Ward, Mr M Ward (Hextable CC), Mr T Wade (Meopham CC), Mr J Harding (New Ash Green CC) and Mrs L Osborne (New Ash Green CC), Mr A Gray (Hartley De Sales FC) and Mr D Thompson (Hartley De Sales FC).

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 9th June 2004 be approved and signed as a correct record.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Mr A Tremain declared a personal interest under agenda item 4, Cricket at Manor Field as he is a member of Hextable Cricket Club.

Cllr Mr A Tremain also declared a personal and prejudicial interest under agenda item 10, Gorse Wood as his property adjoins Gorse Wood and left the meeting during discussion and voting on this item.

**4. Cricket at Manor Field**

New Ash Green CC reported that they have arranged for someone with a weed spraying machine to spray the pitch on a regular basis.

Cllr Barnett requested that when the pitch is being sprayed, a notice be put in place to inform the public and, if necessary the area should also be fenced off whilst spraying is being carried out.

Keith Bushell agreed to confirm with the person spraying the pitch that the necessary health and safety requirements were complied with.

New Ash Green CC reported that they are in the process of arranging their annual Fun Day at Manor Field but that a date has not yet been fixed.

Hextable CC thanked the New Ash Green CC for its work in preparing the cricket square.

*Mr Bushell left the meeting at 7.50 p.m.*

**5. Football at Manor Field**

a) Report from Hartley De Sales FC

There was nothing to report

b) Purchase of goal posts

The Committee considered the purchase of 1 pair of steel goal posts.

RESOLVED:

That, due to the existing football posts being unusable, the purchase of 1 pair of steel goal posts 7.32m x 2.13m from Kent County Supplies at a cost of £361.39 + VAT be approved.

Hartley De Sales FC have agreed to erect the posts themselves and it was

RESOLVED:

That, once the goal posts have been erected, Mr Munday be asked to carry out a health and safety check on them.

c) Hartley De Sales FC – Charges for the 2004/05 season

The Committee considered what charge should be made to Hartley De Sales FC for the use of 2 senior pitches for the 2004/05 season.

RECOMMENDED:

That Hartley De Sales FC be charged a sum of £560.00 for the use of 2 senior pitches for the 2004/05 season.

**6. Meopham Cricket Club**

There was nothing to report.

**7. Manor Field and the Pavilion**

(a) Internal decoration

The Committee considered three quotations, opened at the meeting, to carry out internal redecoration of the kitchen and toilets in the Pavilion. The quotations were received from Richard W Burns, for the sum of £1022.50, Mr V Griffin for the sum of £1450.00 and P.P.D for the sum of £3060.00 for labour only and £3260.00 including materials.

The Committee received and noted a letter enclosed with Richard W Burns's quotation informing the Council that he is the husband of Cllr Mrs J Burns.

RECOMMENDED:

On the motion of Cllr Sewell, seconded by Cllr Tremain that the quotation from Richard W Burns for the sum of £1022.50 be accepted, subject to the Council receiving a copy of his current public liability insurance policy.

(b) Vertical Blinds

The Committee considered a quotation received in respect of the supply and fitting of vertical blinds to the full height windows and doors in the Pavilion overlooking the field.

RECOMMENDED:

On the motion of Cllr Tremain, seconded by Cllr Sewell that the quotation from Hillarys for the sum of £299.00 to supply and fit vertical blinds to the full height windows and doors in the Pavilion overlooking the field be accepted.

(c) Trim Trail

The Committee considered the provision of a trim Trail on Manor Field.

Cllr Sewell informed the Committee that he was able to obtain a device to measure out distances around the field. Cllr Tremain offered to assist with the measuring out.

RESOLVED:

That, Cllrs Sewell and Tremain would measure out distances around Manor Field and put forward ideas for a marking out system at the next meeting.

## **8. Sale of the land at Manor Field**

There was nothing to report.

## **9. Rectory Meadow**

### (a) Volunteer work days

Cllr Barnett informed the Committee that there had been a very poor turn out on the volunteer day held on 20th June 2004 as only he and a representative from the North West Kent Countryside Project attended.

### (b) Grass cutting and raking

The Committee considered the future arrangements for cutting and raking the grass at Rectory Meadow.

Cllr Barnett informed the Committee that the current system is very time consuming and relies heavily on volunteers coming forward to assist.

The Committee considered a quotation from Williams Agriculture giving three different options:

- 1) To just collect the cut grass in the first area of the meadow and remove for the sum of £120 + VAT.
- 2) To mow and collect the cut grass into the forage box for the sum of £250 + VAT and
- 3) To cut and clear the grass and flowers using a 1.25m flail collector for the sum of £160 + VAT.

The Committee considered the various options and it was agreed that Cllr Barnett would consult with the North West Kent Countryside Project to obtain their advice and guidance although the Committee felt that the best option would be to mow and collect the cut grass into the forage box.

### **RECOMMENDED:**

On the motion of Cllr Barnett, seconded by Cllr Tremain that the quotation from Williams Agriculture to mow and collect the cut grass into the forage box for the sum of £250 + VAT be accepted, once the North West Kent Countryside Project have been contacted.

## **10. Gorse Wood**

(a) At the last meeting of the Committee, it was recommended that an arboriculturist be instructed to inspect the site where trees are allegedly affecting property adjoining woodland owned by the Council at Gorse Wood.

The Committee agreed that any inspection should take no longer than 3 hours in view of the cost involved.

The Committee was informed that the arboriculturist had been contacted but felt that he would be unable to carry out an inspection and provide a report within this time limit.

The Council's insurers have been sent a complete copy of the surveyor's report and have spoken to the house owners. The Council's insurers have informed the Council that the house owners do not intend to make a claim against the Council but are alerting it to the possibility that a problem may occur in the future.

The Committee were informed that the Council's insurers have recommended that the trees be pruned and pollarded as suggested in the surveyor's report in order to avoid any future liability.

(b) The Committee agreed that in order to comply with the Council's Financial Regulations 11.1b, a second quotation should be obtained for the pruning and pollarding of the trees in Gorse Wood.

(c) Pursuant to Standing Order 9, the matter concerning the acceptance of a quotation to fill the holes and remove the associated rubbish created by the young people to form a BMX track in Gorse Wood, it was

RESOLVED:

That, this item be referred to the next meeting of the Council for further consideration.

## **11. Pond**

At the last meeting of the Committee, it was resolved that advice be sought from societies and organisations regarding further remedial work that could be carried out to the pond.

The Wetland Trust had previously been contacted but the Committee had agreed that less costly advice should be sought.

The Committee was informed that a number of societies and organisations had been contacted but only one offer of assistance had been received from Rick Bayne from the North West Kent Countryside Project although he was unable to visit the site until August.

RESOLVED:

That the North West Kent Countryside Project's offer of assistance be accepted and that they be asked to attend the site in August.

## **12. Playgrounds**

At the last meeting of the Committee, it was resolved that further advice be sought over the proposed depth of wet pour given in the quotations received for the renewal of safety surfacing below the slide at the Woodlands Avenue Play Area.

The Committee was informed that both companies had been contacted and that the depth of wet pour complied with current European standards.

The Committee was reminded that written quotations had been invited from three specialist companies. Quotations had been received from Recreational Supply Services Ltd for the sum of £4,103.00 plus VAT and Park Leisure Limited for the sum of £4,250.00 plus VAT. No quotation had been returned from Abacus Playgrounds Ltd. The Committee was of the opinion that due the specialist nature of the works, financial regulation 11.1 (a) (ii) could be applied, and therefore it would not be necessary to obtain three written quotations for contracts valued between £3,001 and upto £6,000.

The Committee examined the budget and noted that a sum of £3,000 had been allocated for playground maintenance for the current financial year and therefore the works to replace to the safety surface below the slide at Woodland Avenue could not be met entirely from the current budgetary provision. The Committee also noted that the Annual Safety Inspection undertaken by RoSPA was due to be carried out during July and that a bi-annual inspection would be undertaken by RoSPA in February 2005. The Committee anticipated that some remedial work would be required as result of these safety inspections. In addition before the end of the financial year, the Committee felt that there some expenditure may be necessary to meet the cost of any remedial work required as a result of vandalism or general wear and tear. This being the case, the Committee estimated a sum of £1,500 would be required to meet any future repair costs upto the end of the current financial year.

The Committee considered the quotations from Recreational Supply Services Ltd for the sum of £4,103.00 plus VAT and Park Leisure Limited for the sum of £4,250.00 plus VAT. The Committee noted that financial regulation 11.1 (i) did not place any obligation on the Council to accept the lowest quotation. The Committee expressed its satisfaction with

the quality and standard of workmanship undertaken by Park Leisure Ltd to replace the safety surface below the roundabout at Woodland Avenue last year and noted that there was very little difference between the quotations submitted by the two contractors and this being the case, the Committee considered that it was justified in accepting the quotation from Park Leisure Ltd.

**RECOMMENDED:**

That, (1) the quotation from Park Leisure Limited for the sum of £4,250.00 plus VAT be accepted and, (2) £1,500 of the total cost of the safety surface renewal works be met from the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee's current budgetary provision and that the shortfall, a sum of £2,750, be met from the Council's General Reserve.

**13. Routine Maintenance Contract**

**RESOLVED:**

That, the checklist completed during the weekly inspections of the Council's open spaces for the month of May 2004 be noted.

**14. 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.

**15. Longfield Hill**

In view of an increase in dog fouling, the Committee considered the possibility of Purchasing a new dog bin to be installed at Longfield Hill.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Clerk be asked to obtain the costs of the purchase of a dog bin and that this item be deferred to the next meeting.

**16. Lay-by**

The Committee considered the possibility of backfilling behind the logs in the lay by adjacent to the Burial Ground in Church road.

**RESOLVED:**

That, the Clerk be authorised to instruct Mr Munday to backfill behind the logs using the topsoil recently purchased by the Council, provided the sum did not exceed £100.

**17. Financial Statement**

The committee received and noted the summary of receipts and payments indicating The net position of the Council's open spaces and Manor Field Pavilion.

**19. Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 1st September 2004 at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.

Signed:.....

Date:.....