

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 19th JANUARY 2006 AT 7.30 p.m. AT THE PAVILION, MANOR FIELD**

Present: Cllr Mr A Barnett (Chairman)
Cllr Mr J Gaywood
Cllr Mrs Oxtoby (*arrived at 7.32 p.m.*)
Cllr Mr A Tremain
Cllr Mr V Sewell

In Attendance: Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)
Mr V John (New Ash Green and Hartley CC)
Mr D Thompson (Hartley De Sales FC)
2 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mrs M Solman, Cllr Mr C Ward and Mr A Gray (Hartley De Sales FC).

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby arrived at the meeting at 7.32 p.m.

Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby declared a personal and prejudicial interest under minute item 16 in respect of matters relating to the application to register land at Hartley Wood as a Village Green, as her private residence is located adjacent to Hartley Wood and withdrew from the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.

Cllr Mr J Gaywood declared a personal interest under minute item 11, grass cutting contracts 2006/08, in respect of the grass cutting at Hartley Green as his private residence overlooks the Green.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 17th November 2005 be approved and signed as a correct record.

4. Football at Manor Field

(a) The Chairman reported that the Council had received an enquiry from the manager of Dartford FC U13 team to hire a junior football pitch at Manor Field, including the use of the Pavilion, as their current facilities at the rear of the Wellcome buildings in Dartford were unsatisfactory.

Mr Thompson explained that Dartford FC had ambitious plans to provide first class football facilities at Princess Park. The junior Dartford football clubs played in the Kent League and generally feed their players through to the senior team. As a result, the football played by the junior teams was usually of a very high standard and extremely competitive. Mr Thompson expressed his concerns over the proposal to extend the use of Manor Field and the Pavilion to Dartford U13's, inasmuch as the fixtures for the Hartley De Sales FC U13's team had been fixed and the Maidstone Boys League would not, at this stage in the season, agree to any alterations in the dates of their fixtures.

Whilst the Committee welcomed the potential increase in income relating to the hire of the facilities at Manor Field, it did express some concerns over the shared use of the junior

pitch with Hartley De Sales FC, not least the detrimental effect the shared use may have on the condition of the pitch.

RESOLVED: That, the request from Dartford FC U13 to hire a junior football pitch at Manor Field, including the use of the Pavilion, be declined.

(b) Mr Thompson reported that the worming of the field undertaken in November 2005 had proved to be a great success and the pitches were all in very good condition. He also considered that the short length of the grass had been beneficial. Overall the Hartley De Sales FC was delighted with the facilities and thanked the Council for its support.

5. Cricket at Manor Field

(a) The Committee considered a letter dated 11th November 2005 from Landscape Services, in which it set out a number of concerns over undertaking works to the cricket square in March 2006. Mr John explained that the end of season repairs to the cricket square scheduled to take place in the Autumn, had been put off to March 2006 on advice received from the Kent Cricket League. Mr John read a letter received from the Kent Cricket League detailing a number of problems with the condition of the square and the outfield at Manor Field. Mr John reported he had responded to this letter.

Mr John explained he was trying to contact Landscape Services to arrange a meeting to discuss a plan of action regarding repairs and maintenance to the square, including costings, and that it would be beneficial to the cricket club for their proposed groundsman to be present at this meeting. Mr John reported that the Cricket Club is minded to carry out its own repairs in March 2006, i.e. aerate and seed, and requested that should this be the case, consideration be given by the Council to returning to the old fee structure.

(b) The Committee requested the fixture list for the 2006 season be sent as soon as possible.

Mr John requested the outfield be rolled in advance of the start of the season with a heavy roller, but explained that the roller currently located at Manor Field was not heavy enough to undertake the work satisfactorily. It was suggested that Mr S Glover may have the necessary equipment and may be willing to undertake the work.

Mr John asked whether the Council would be willing to undertake repairs to the outfield to level off a dip identified by the Kent Cricket League.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be authorised to spend upto a sum of £200 to make arrangements for the dip in the outfield to be repaired by spreading and levelling top soil into the dip and seeding the surface.

(c) Cllr Tremain reported that Hextable Cricket Club had now disbanded and thanked the New Ash Green and Hartley CC and Parish Council for their support.

6. Cricket at Longfield Hill

The Chairman reported on a number of problems with the ground at Longfield Hill. The chestnut paling fence on the western boundary was leaning and required re staking. The hedge located adjacent to Manor Land contained gaps and required the erection of approximately 60 metres of chestnut paling fencing to seal the gaps. Worms and moles were causing a problem on the field. Quotations for the fencing work would be sought.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the Clerk be authorised to spend upto to a sum of £200 to make arrangements for the ground to be sprayed for the control of worms and (2) the Clerk be authorised to spend upto a sum of £250 for a mole catcher to attend site.

Mr V John left the meeting at 8.20 p.m.

7. Financial Report

The Committee examined a financial report setting out the net financial position of the allotments, open spaces and the Pavilion as at 13th January 2006.

RESOLVED: That, the financial report indicating the net position of the allotments, open spaces and the Pavilion as at 13th January 2006, attached as appendix 1 to these minutes be received and noted.

8. Playgrounds

(a) The Committee considered arrangements for RoSPA's play area safety inspection of the Council's three playgrounds in July 2006 and considered the other services offered by RoSPA in its information sheet.

RESOLVED: That, arrangements be made with RoSPA to undertake a safety inspection of the Council's three playgrounds during July 2006 and that a risk assessment be under in conjunction with the safety inspection at a total cost of £80.00 per site for upto five items plus £3.00 for each additional item and that an appointment be made with the Inspector on site for an additional fee of £30.00.

(b) The Committee considered an e mail dated 9th January 2005 from the Council's insurers seeking assurances from the Council that work had commenced in respect of medium risk items identified in RoSPA's play area safety inspection report of 12th July 2005 and also considered the Clerk's response in a letter dated 10th January 2006. The Clerk reported that a subsequent letter dated 17th January 2006 had been received from the Council's insurers, in which they informed the Council that they were pleased to note the action being taken by the Parish Council and that action would be taken to carry out minimal repairs to the surfacing below the slide at Longfield Hill.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk's actions be confirmed and the correspondence received from the Council's insurers be received and noted.

(c) The Committee considered a report on wet pour safety kits. It was suggested that County Supplies may supply wet pour safety kits. Before purchasing any kits, Mr Munday would be approached to ask if he would be willing to use the kits.

RESOLVED: That, the matter be deferred.

(d) The Committee considered a report on repairs required to the safety surface below the slide at Longfield Hill recreation ground. The Chairman reported that the turfing around the safety surface below the swing at Longfield Hill to eliminate a trip hazard had been very successful and suggested similar treatment to the safety surface below the slide.

RESOLVED: That, a quotation be sought for the supply and laying of turf around the safety surface below the slide at Longfield Hill and for sealing the gaps between the existing safety tiles with mastic.

(e) The Committee considered a quotation in respect of repairs in the Woodland Avenue playground, which was identified by RoSPA as a medium risk item in their Play Area Safety Inspection Report dated 12th July 2005.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £40.00 from T D Munday to lay paving slabs below the bench and to level off the timber kerb at the junction of the grass and tarmac all round the playground at Woodland Avenue be accepted.

9. Woodland Avenue

The Committee considered a quotation to cut back overhanging bushes at the recreation ground.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £30.00 from T D Munday to cut back the bush overhanging the footpath leading to the playground and to cut back the bushes behind the playground to prevent branches protruding into the playground be accepted.

10. Health and Safety

(a) The Committee examined the playground inspection record for the period 30th June 2005 to 22nd September 2005.

RESOLVED: That, the playground inspection records be received and noted.

(b) The Committee examined the time sheets in respect of the routine maintenance work for the months of September 2005 and October 2005.

RESOLVED: That, the time sheets be received and noted.

11. Grass cutting contracts

The Committee examined quotations received in respect of the grass cutting contracts for the period 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2008 at the Council's open spaces (contract 2), including the gang mowing contract at Manor Field and Longfield Hill (contract 3). Contract 1 relates to the grass cutting at the Burial Ground and Closed Church Yard and will be considered by the Burial Ground and Garden of Remembrance Committee at its meeting to be held on 7th February 2006. Four contractors had been invited to submit quotations namely; T D Munday, Landscape Services, Westcut Mowing and Richard Abel Landscapes, but only two had returned quotations.

Quotations received in respect of the contract for the gang mowing at Manor Field and Longfield Hill had been invited on three alternative cutting regimes.

Alternative A: Based on 22 cuts per annum from 1st April to 31st October

Alternative B: Based on - Manor Field - 1 cut per week from 1st April to 31st August and thereafter 1 cut every two weeks to 31st October. Longfield Hill - 1 cut per week from 1st April to 31st July and thereafter 1 cut every two weeks to 31st October.

Alternative C: Based on - Manor Field - 1 cut per week from mid March to end of August and thereafter 1 cut every two weeks to mid November. Longfield Hill - 1 cut per week from mid March to end of July and thereafter 1 cut every two weeks.

The Clerk reported a number of errors on the quotation returned by Landscape Services.

Contractor	Contract 2	Contract 3		
		Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Westcut Mowing	£3,582.00	£1,760.00	£2,030.00	£2,340.00
Landscape Services	£4,960.00	£1,982.90	£2,187.38	£2,476.70

All quotations returned were subject to VAT.

The Committee was reminded that any grass cuts undertaken at Manor Field or Longfield Hill over and above the Council's 22 cuts would be invoiced directly to the cricket clubs.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the quotation for the sum of £3,582.00 plus VAT from Westcut Mowing to cut the grass at the Council's open spaces for the period 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2008 as detailed in the Council's specification of works contract 2 be accepted and (2) the quotation for the sum of £2, 340 plus VAT from Westcut Mowing to cut the grass at Manor Field and Longfield Hill for the period

from mid March 2006 to mid November 2008 as detailed in the Council's specification of works, contract 3, alternative C, be accepted.

12. Manor Field

(a) The Committee considered a quotation from T D Munday to cut back the bramble along the western boundary of Manor Field to within 20 ft of the boundary fence and remove from site.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £20.00 from T D Munday to cut back the bramble along the western boundary of Manor Field to within 20 ft of the boundary fence and remove from site be accepted.

(b) The Committee considered a report on the installation of various barriers and bollards to prevent unauthorised vehicular access onto Manor Field. The Committee expressed concerns over the safety of installing a collapsible bollard adjacent to the concrete path leading to the Pavilion, particularly when approaching the Pavilion in the dark. It was suggested that the opening in the beech hedge could be narrowed.

RESOLVED: That, (1) Messrs H F & J H Glover be asked whether they would have any objection to the installation of a chain barrier to be positioned on the 20 foot wide strip of land between the end of the beech hedge and the boundary with Cobweb Corner and that further consideration of the installation of a barrier be deferred until such time as the landowners agree to its installation and, (2) a quotation be sought for the installation of an external PIR light unit to be fitted on the existing car park lighting column to illuminate the opening in the beech hedge.

(c) The Committee considered a quotation for the application of weedkiller on the field.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £262.45 plus VAT from Weed Management Ltd for the application of a weedkiller on Manor Field be accepted.

(d) The Committee considered a quotation for the application of fertilizer on the field.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £160 plus VAT from Mr Westwood for the application of a weedkiller on Manor Field be accepted.

13. Pavilion

(a) The Committee considered a risk assessment of the water services at the Pavilion undertaken by Bayly Environmental Services Ltd on 15th August 2005 and recommendations contained in their letter dated 1st December 2005.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the following quotations from Bayly Environmental Services Ltd be accepted,

(a) visit site once per year in order to carry out the cleaning of the cold water storage tank plus chlorination of the tank and associate services for the sum of £140.00 plus VAT.

(b) take two samples for legionella screening for the sum of £40.00 per sample.

(c) prepare a logbook for the sum of £15.00, and

(2) the cleaner at the Pavilion be asked if he would be willing to undertake the following tests and if so provide the Council with a quotation.

(a) Test and record the temperature of the hot and cold water services in the Pavilion and,

(b) remove, dismantle and clean the shower heads,

at such intervals to be determined by Bayly Environmental Services Ltd.

(b) The Committee considered two quotations received for the internal redecoration of the changing rooms, w.c. and referees changing room from K W Abraham and Richard W Burns for the sums of £1,250 and £1,860.00 respectively. Mr Burns advised the Committee that he was the husband of a Member of the Council, Cllr Mrs J Burns.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £1,250 from K W Abraham for the internal decoration of the changing rooms, w.c. and referee's changing room as detailed in the Council specification of works be accepted.

14. Rectory Meadow

(a) The Committee considered a suggestion from the Project Officer at the North West Kent Countryside Project that the Council may wish to consider submitting an application for funding from the Lottery fund "Awards for All", for the provision of additional fencing, improvements to the access at Rectory Meadow to encourage greater public use of the meadow or the organisation of a launch following confirmation that the meadow had been designated as a Local Nature Reserve. The Committee was unable to come forward with any suggestions at this particular time for any projects at Rectory Meadow that may be suitable for funding from the Lottery fund "Awards for All".

RESOLVED: That, submission of an application for funding from the Lottery fund "Awards for All" be deferred.

(b) The Committee considered a report confirming that the Rail Link Countryside Initiative (RLCI) had confirmed an increase of £800 in its grant to the Parish Council which was required as a result of the higher than expected costs in felling the trees located next to the footpath at the end of Banckside. The total grant to be recovered from the RLCI in respect of works to improve the security of Rectory Meadow and to raise its profile would be £5,790.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

(c) The Committee considered a report on the sewage discharge on Rectory Meadow which occurred during November 2005.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

15. Pond

The Committee considered a report from the Pond Warden confirming that he intended to undertake a study of the pond to establish the variety of wildlife, flora and fauna at the pond and anticipated this work would take a couple of months to complete. He has informed the Council that he does not intend to analyse the water in the pond, as reported previously, as analysis has already been undertaken in the past by the British Trust of Conservation Volunteers (BTCV). A copy of the analysis results has been requested.

The Pond Warden has suggested that if the Council wished to re line the pond there may be grants available from the Lottery fund "Awards for All".

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted and any further action be deferred until the findings of the Pond Warden have become available.

16. Hartley Wood

The Committee considered a letter dated 7th December 2005 received from Kent County Council enclosing a letter of objection lodged by consultants, Hephher Dixon, acting on behalf of the London Borough of Southwark in respect of the Council's application to register land owned by the LB of Southwark in Hartley Wood as a village green under section 13 of the

Commons Registration Act 1965. The Committee considered the response sent on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk's actions be confirmed and the correspondence from Kent County Council and Hephher Dixon be received and noted.

17. Gorse Wood

The Chairman reported that the Probation Services had attended site on 14th and 15th December 2005 and the two gangs in attendance had managed to fill two skips with litter and rubbish dumped primarily in the section of Gorse Wood off Caxton Close. The Chairman reported further rubbish in the form of old timber windows had been dumped in the woods at the rear of Porchester Close.

The Clerk reported on an e mail dated 19th January 2006 from a local resident complaining about the muddy condition of the path from Caxton Close to Gorsewood Road.

RESOLVED: That, enquiries be made with the Probation Services to ask whether they would be willing to attend site again to undertake further rubbish clearance.

18. Kent County Playing Fields Association

RESOLVED: That, the Playing Field be received and note

19. Date of next meeting

Thursday 2nd March 2006 at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.55 p.m.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Hartley Parish Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments
Amenities and Open Spaces

Cost Centre	Receipts		Payments		Net Position Underspend (+) /Overspend (-)
	Estimated	Actual	Estimated	Actual	
5 Allotments	300.00	353.14	700.00	451.51	301.63
6 Open Spaces	2,790.00	6,936.60	25,550.00	20,070.19	9,626.41
7 Manor Field Pavilion	1,200.00	1,166.25	6,125.00	3,978.52	2,112.73
NET TOTAL	4,290.00	8,455.99	32,375.00	24,500.22	12,040.77
Total for ALL Cost Centres		110,041.54		105,513.74	
V.A.T.		6,500.77		7,976.25	
GROSS TOTAL		116,542.31		113,489.99	

APPENDIX 2