

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SPECIAL PROJECTS WORKING GROUP
HELD ON 9th MARCH 2006 AT 10.00 a.m. AT PAVILION, MANOR FIELD**

Present : Cllr Mr C Alford
Cllr Mr A Barnett
Cllr Mr J Gaywood (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby

In attendance : Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)
Cllr Mr V Sewell
3 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Mr B Ramsay and Cllr Mr A Tremain.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Special Projects Working Group held on 3rd February 2006 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Cherry Trees

The initial findings of the Parish Plan survey questionnaire circulated to residents last year had been brought to the Council's attention at a meeting held on 12th December 2005 and due to the number of residents expressing concerns about the condition of the Cherry Tree shops and surrounding area, the matter had been referred to the Special Projects Working Group for further consideration.

The Working Group was reminded of action taken by the previous Council to undertake improvement works to the area surrounding the Cherry Tree shops, which had involved extending the remit of the Council's handy man to undertake regular litter picking and weed removal to the area surrounding the shops. At that time, the Council had understood the owners of the building were happy for the work to be carried out by the Council's handy man and that they were willing to pay for this work. However it later transpired these costs were being passed on to the tenants, which had not been the Council's intentions. In addition, a number of issues were raised relating to the Council's insurance liabilities and due to both of these difficulties, the work to tidy up the area was suspended.

It was reported that that in the early 1990's Sevenoaks District Council had implemented works to improve the area in front of the shops through funding provided by the District under an Environmental Enhancement scheme. The works included repairs to the existing pavement and road, provision of new paving and installation of new bollards. As the District Council had implemented the works, the Working Group questioned whether it had a responsibility to ensure the future maintenance of the pavement and the bollards. The Working Group was informed that this matter had been discussed by the Highway Working Group at its meeting held on 28th February 2006, at which it had been agreed representation be made to Sevenoaks District Council to replace the missing bollards.

The Working Group agreed that the building premises had suffered from years of neglect and would benefit from some external re decoration. The Working Group considered that

the environment around the shops was generally very untidy and whilst Sevenoaks District Council undertook regular litter picks at the front the shops, the rear of the shops had a serious litter problem. Many of the paving slabs at the front of the shops were broken and required weeding, both of which could created a safety hazard. A number of the bollards surrounding the lay-by were missing, thus allowing cars to park on the pavement which not only contributed to a deterioration in the condition of the paving slabs, but also created a hazard for pedestrians.

The Working Group felt the surroundings could be greatly improved if the area at the rear of the shops was cleared of rubbish and litter, the broken paving slabs replaced and additional bollards erected to prevent vehicles from parking on the pavement. The Working Group considered, at some length, who could be held responsible for implementing such improvements and the role that the Parish Council should take in facilitating these improvements.

The meeting was briefly adjourned to seek the views of Cllr Mr Sewell.

RESOLVED: That,

- (1) the Council seek to have a discussion with the owner of the building, with a view to facilitating some improvements to the building and its environment,
- (2) Sevenoaks District Council be asked to repair the broken paving slabs and insert additional bollards to stop the vehicles from parking on the pavement and,
- (3) the Highways Working Group be advised of actions set out in (2) above.

5. Access to the new Burial Ground

The Working Group considered a letter dated 21st February 2006 from solicitors acting on behalf of Messrs H F & J H Glover in respect of the Council's proposals to undertake improvements works to the entrance at Manor Field. It was reported that the works were due to commence on 13th March 2006 and the Working Group was satisfied that the works to be undertaken by the contractor would be carried out in a proper and workmanlike manner.

RESOLVED: That, the letter dated 21st February from solicitors acting on behalf of Messrs H F & J H Glover be noted.

The meeting was adjourned at 10.34 a.m.

The Chairman invited views from members of the public.

The meeting resumed at 10.37 p.m.

6. Exclusion of the press and public

RESOLVED: That, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of minute item 7 in respect of the covenants on Manor Field, on the grounds that the likely disclosure of exempt information would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Members of the public withdrew from the meeting.

7. Access to Manor Field

The Working Group considered advice received from NALC in respect of the covenants on the land at Manor Field.

RESOLVED: That,

- (1) advice received from NALC relating to the covenants and instructions thereto, be treated as confidential information and,
- (2) the Clerk be authorised to make further enquiries along the lines as discussed by the Working Group

8. Date of the next meeting

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 11.26 a.m.

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date:.....

