

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE
HELD ON 21st AUGUST 2006 AT 7.30 P.M. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY**

Present : Cllr Mr C Alford
Cllr Mr A Barnett
Cllr Mr J Gaywood (Chairman)
Cllr Mr M Harris
Cllr Mr A Tremain

In attendance : Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

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

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Special Projects Committee held on 24th May 2006 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Hoselands Green

The Committee considered a letter dated 16th July 2006 from Mr R Wilson, Head of Environmental and Operational Services at Sevenoaks District Council in response to the Council's letter of 12th July 2006. He explained that the possible transfer of the freehold title on land at Hoselands Green to the Parish Council would be considered by the Cabinet in the future, but in the interim he confirmed that Sevenoaks District Council would have no objection to the Parish Council undertaking additional cuts on Hoselands Green provided any cuts were undertaken at the Parish Council's expense. He confirmed that Sevenoaks District Council would only be willing to consider paying the Parish Council to cut the grass on behalf of the District Council if, by doing so, it would be more cost effective for the District.

The Committee considered the programme of grass cuts undertaken by Sevenoaks District Council on Hoselands Green to be inadequate and favoured acquiring the freehold title of the land at Hoselands Green, as this would enable the Parish Council to control and protect the land, and could provide the Council with the opportunity to implement improvements, if it so desired. Furthermore, the Committee felt that due to the prominent position of Hoselands Green within the Parish, it was important to ensure this area of amenity land was maintained to a standard acceptable to the Parish Council. Overall the Committee felt that acquiring the ownership of the land would be in the best interests of the parishioners and suggested that further details on a possible transfer in ownership should be obtained from the District Council.

RESOLVED: That, further details be sought from the District Council on the possible transfer of the freehold title on the land at Hoselands Green to the Parish Council.

RECOMMENDED: That, the Clerk be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee, to make arrangements for additional grass cuts on Hoselands Green, should it be deemed necessary.

5. Manor Field

The Committee considered a letter dated 8th March 2006 from Messrs H F & J H Glover advising that they had no objection to the bramble along the western boundary at Manor Field being cleared. Messrs H F & J H Glover explained that they no longer cleared this area of Manor Field after a football net became entangled in their machinery. It was reported that the matter was being considered by the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee. The Committee suggested that the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee may wish to consider clearing the bramble behind the Pavilion, in readiness for the start of the works to set out the new Burial Ground at Manor Field.

RESOLVED: That,

- (1) the letter dated 8th March 2006 from Messrs H F & J H Glover be noted,
- (2) the Amenities and Open Spaces be asked to continue with its arrangements for clearing the bramble along the western boundary at Manor Field and that arrangements should be made for this area to be sprayed at a suitable time and,
- (3) the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee be asked to consider clearing bramble on land owned by Messrs H F & J H Glover along the southern boundary at Manor Field, behind the Pavilion and the car park.

6. Cherry Trees

(a) The Committee considered a letter dated 16th June 2006 from Mrs M Bigden, Head of Community Development at Sevenoaks District Council explaining why a “Planning for Real” exercise, similar to that undertaken recently at New Ash Green, would not be suitable at the Cherry Tree shops.

The Committee expressed concern about the condition of the environment surrounding the shops, particularly the rubbish dumped under the staircase leading to the flats above the shops, the litter in the car park and the broken and uneven paving slabs in front of the shops. Furthermore, the Committee felt that the fabric of the building would benefit from some preventative maintenance. The Committee noted the findings of the Parish Plan survey questionnaire recently distributed to all households in the Parish, which identified that the area causing most concern in the Parish was the Cherry Tree shops.

The Committee was reminded that the landlord’s agent had advised the Council that the landlord would be undertaking certain repairs, but noted this work had not yet been undertaken. The Committee felt that the above issues could be better addressed by arranging a meeting with the landlords’ agent.

RESOLVED: That, the landlords’ agent be advised of the concerns expressed by the Committee and be asked whether they would be willing to meet with the representatives from the Parish Council to discuss the matter further.

(b) The Committee was informed of a new initiative operated by Kent County Council in partnership with all 12 Kent Districts, Kent Highways, Highways Agency and rail companies to target litter and waste across the County. It was reported that Sevenoaks District Council intended to employ three “Clean Kent” rapid response teams to augment its resources to clear litter, remove dumped rubbish and clean up areas (including private land), remove graffiti and dog fouling. The Committee noted that the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee had requested a visit from the rapid response team to remove the rubbish and fly tipping from Gorse Wood.

The Committee considered a letter dated 10th August 2006 from the Community Action Officer, Clean Kent Campaign advising of an initiative being implemented by Kent County Council entitled, “Our Space – Clean Kent Campaign”, to support community clean ups and litter picks during the month of October.

RECOMMENDED: That, the rapid response team from Sevenoaks District Council be asked to clean up the area surrounding the Cherry Tree shops.

7. United Reformed Church

The Committee considered a report on a meeting with representatives of the URC Synod held on 6th July 2006 and was advised that the Secretary of the Synod was in the process of completing a report. The Committee felt that the matter could not be progressed further at this stage, but considered some exploratory investigation should be undertaken into the process required to establish a charitable trust.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted and guidance be obtained on setting up a charitable trust.

8. Hartley Wood

The Committee noted the Council's application to seek village green status on an area of woodland in Hartley Wood and a small section of the land fill site owned by the London Borough of Southwark had been temporarily suspended. The Committee felt that if the Council wished to resurrect the village green application, the area of land running along the southern boundary of the landfill site should be omitted from the application, thus confining the extent of land to be included within the application to the area of woodland in Hartley Wood owned by the London Borough of Southwark. By doing so, the Committee believed that the Parish Council's objective to ensure unrestricted access for the public throughout Hartley Woods in perpetuity could still be maintained and the omission of part of the landfill site from the village green application would not affect any plans Southwark may have for the future use of the landfill site.

The Committee welcomed the recent ruling from the House of Lords (Trap Grounds case), which had clarified the legal position regarding village green applications and felt that the London Borough of Southwark should be contacted to see if any further developments had taken place since the meeting with representatives from the Parish Council and the London Borough of Southwark on 24th May 2006.

RESOLVED: That, the London Borough of Southwark be contacted to progress further discussions.

9. New Burial Ground

(a) It was reported that the Planning Officer was mindful to grant planning permission on the Council's application for the provision of a new Burial Ground at Manor Field, subject to a number of conditions.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

(b) The Committee considered advice received in respect of the restrictive covenants on land at Manor Field.

RESOLVED: That,
(1) the advice be received and noted and,
(2) further investigations be undertaken.

10. Date of the next meeting

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 9.40 p.m.

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date:.....

