

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 7th SEPTEMBER 2006 AT 7.30 p.m. AT THE PAVILION, MANOR FIELD**

Present: Cllr Mr A Barnett (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs Oxtoby
Cllr Mr V Sewell
Cllr Mrs M Solman

In Attendance: Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)
Mr D Thompson (New Ash Green and Hartley CC)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mr J Gaywood, Cllr Mr M Harris, Cllr Mr A Tremain, Cllr Mr C Ward and Mr V John (New Ash Green and Hartley Cricket Club).

2. Declarations of Interests

Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby declared a personal and prejudicial interest under minute item 20 (a) and 20 (b) in respect of matters relating to Hartley Wood, as her private residence was located adjacent to the woods and withdrew from the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.

Cllr Mr A Barnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest under minute item 19 in respect of matters relating to the allotments, as he was an allotment holder and withdrew from the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 18th July 2006 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Cricket at Manor Field

There was no report from New Ash Green and Hartley Cricket Club.

5. Cricket at Longfield Hill

There was no report from Meopham Cricket Club.

The Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee reported that he had inspected the ground and recommended the following works be undertaken:

- an application of weedkiller be carried out as soon as possible when the weather permits
- repairs to the fence along the western boundary between the recreation ground and cultivated field beyond by infilling the gaps and re staking where necessary, rather than complete renewal of the fence.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) expenditure upto a sum of £300 be authorised for the ground to be sprayed for the control of weeds and that the Clerk be asked, in consultation with the Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee, to make arrangements for the work to be undertaken as soon as possible when the weather permits and,

(2) advice be sought on whether the fence running along the western boundary of the recreation ground could be renewed and subject to that advice, quotations be sought for (a) infilling the gaps in the existing fence running along the western

boundary and re staking where necessary and (b) complete renewal of the fence along the western boundary.

6. Football at Manor Field

This item was deferred to later in the meeting pending the arrival of Mr Thompson.

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 1st September 2006.

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

Mr Thompson arrived at the meeting at 7.55 p.m.

8. Football at Manor Field

Mr Thompson confirmed 4 teams would be using the facilities at Manor Field as reported at the previous meeting. He agreed to inform Hartley De Sales FC of the increase in fees at its next committee meeting.

It was confirmed that Mr Munday would be painting the uprights of the senior goal posts which were showing some signs of rusting at the bottom of the uprights.

Mr Thompson asked whether there were any plans to cut back the bramble along the western boundary of Manor Field, which was rather close to the side line of the senior pitch. It was confirmed that the Committee would be considering a quotation to undertake this work later in the meeting.

It was also confirmed that the ground would be sprayed for the control of worms as soon as weather conditions would permit. It was agreed that the spraying carried out last year had improved the condition of the pitches and assisted the marking out, as the amount of mud created by worm casts had been greatly reduced.

Mr Thompson left the meeting at 8.10 p.m.

9. Budget 2007/08

The Committee examined a draft budget for the financial year 2007/08 for the allotments, open spaces and the Manor Field Pavilion.

RESOLVED: That, the budget for the financial year 2007/08, attached as appendix 2 to these minutes, be referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration.

10. Playgrounds

(a) The Committee considered a report on the safety inspection of the Council's three playgrounds report undertaken by RoSPA on 13th July 2006.

RESOLVED: That, the report on the safety inspection of the Council's three play areas undertaken by RoSPA on 13th July 2006 be noted.

(b) The Committee considered a report setting out the action taken in respect of the play area safety inspection undertaken by RoSPA on 13th July 2006. It was reported that a number of quotations were awaited.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the report be noted and the Clerk's actions, as set out in the above report, be confirmed and,

(2) a quotation be sought to remove the undergrowth and lower branches of the belt of trees located behind the play area at the Chantry Avenue recreation ground.

11. Manor Field

(a) It was reported that a quotation to replace the perspex on the notice board at Manor Field was awaited. The Committee was advised of a product which could be more resistant to vandalism and graffiti, and Cllr Sewell was asked to come forward with further details.

RESOLVED: That, report be noted

(b) The Committee considered a quotation for the sum of £60.00 from T D Munday to fix 2 no benches on Manor Field, currently stored in the Calor gas compound.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £60.00 from T D Munday to fix 2 no benches on Manor Field be accepted.

(c) The Committee was reminded that it had at previous meetings expressed concern about the damage caused to the surface of the ground when vehicles were driven onto the field when the ground was soft and had discussed the means to prevent this from happening.

It was reported that quotations had been invited to supply and install a barrier at the entrance to the field next to the notice board at the end of the beech hedge, but none had so far been returned.

The Committee considered a quotation for the sum of £30.00 from T D Munday to supply and install stock fencing to extend the existing stock fencing located behind the beech hedge so that it extended to the edge of the concrete path leading to the Pavilion, thus narrowing the width of the opening to prevent vehicular access onto the field at this point.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the quotation for the sum of £30 from T D Munday to extend the stock fencing be accepted and,

(2) the contractors invited to submit a quotation in respect of the supply and install a barrier at Manor Field be asked to return a quotation in readiness for the next meeting.

(d) The Committee considered a quotation for the sum of £60.00 from T D Munday to cut down and clear the bramble along the western boundary of Manor Field.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £60.00 from T D Munday to cut down and clear the bramble along the western boundary of Manor Field be accepted.

(e) The Committee considered quotations for the control of worm casts on Manor Field as set out below:

- Sencio Green Care to spray an area of 3 hectare to include the outfield and the cricket square for the control of worm casts for the sum of £350 plus VAT.
- Weed Management Ltd to supply and apply Carbendazim for the control of worms casts for the sum of £295 plus VAT excluding the cricket square and an additional £50 for inclusion of the cricket square.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £345 plus VAT from Weed Management to supply and apply Carbendazim for the control of worm casts at Manor Field, including the cricket square, be accepted.

(f) It was reported that a quotation to reduce the height of the hedge running along the northern boundary of Manor Field had been invited.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

(g) At a meeting of the Special Projects Committee held on 21st August 2006, it was suggested that the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee may wish to consider the clearance of bramble from the 20 foot strip of land owned by Messrs H F & J H Glover along the southern boundary of Manor Field, behind the Pavilion and the car park.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) Messrs H F & J H Glover be asked whether they would have any objection to the Council clearing the bramble and spraying the area behind the Pavilion and the car park on the 20 foot wide strip of land of owned by the company along the southern boundary of Manor Field and,

(2) a quotation be sought to clear the bramble from the 20 foot wide strip of land owned by Messrs H F & J H Glover and to spray the area in the Spring.

12. Pavilion

(a) The Committee considered a report on the new fire rules affecting all non domestic premises in England and Wales which come into force on 1st October 2006.

RESOLVED: That, advice be sought from the Fire Brigade on whether, under the new fire regulations, the Council is required to obtain a fire certificate and carry out a fire risk assessment.

(b) It was reported that the graffiti had been removed from the back of the Pavilion and the storage container by the Probation Services on 15th and 16th August 2006. The Committee noted that the surface of the timber panels below the windows at the rear of the Pavilion had been damaged as a result of the graffiti renewal and agreed that this matter would be addressed when the contract to re paint the outside of the Pavilion was let next year. In addition the inside of the window located in the hall of which had recently sustained damage would be included in the external redecoration contract.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

13. Chantry Avenue recreation ground

The Committee considered an e mail dated 21st August 2006 from a resident of Chantry Avenue complaining about the height and spread of three horse chestnut trees located in the recreation ground, which she claimed blocked sunlight from her rear garden.

RESOLVED: That, a quotation be invited to reduce the crown of the three horse chestnut trees by one third.

14. Woodland Avenue recreation ground

It was reported that a quotation to repair the post and rail fence at the Woodland Avenue recreation ground adjacent to the kissing gate located next to the car park off Porchester Close was awaited.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

15. Pond

(a) The Committee considered a revised fee quotation for the sum of £400 from Blackwood Bayne to prepare a report on the future management of the pond which would include:

- Analysis of the pond – brief survey of the current condition on the pond only
- Options for the management of the pond to include a wetland option
- Analysis of these options including cost estimates.

RESOLVED: That, the fee quotation for the sum of £400 from Blackwood Bayne be accepted.

(b) It was reported that a new grant scheme for community environmental projects had been launched on 8th August 2006 offering awards of upto £1,000 to local groups and individuals for the hire of tools or equipment and to purchase plants, paint, signs, materials etc for environmental projects, including the creation of a wildlife pond.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

16. Hartley Court Green

The Committee considered planting a new tree on Hartley Court Green to replace the dead tree which had recently been removed. The Committee was informed of a tree donation scheme operated by the Hop Farm at Paddock Wood to help preserve native trees which were under threat. The Committee favoured the planting of a Crab apple tree on Hartley Court Green

RESOLVED: That, further investigation be undertaken on the free tree scheme operated by the Hop Farm.

17. Publications

RESOLVED: That, the newsletter published by the Kent County Playing Fields Association entitled “The Playing Field – Summer 2006” be received and noted.

18. Order of business

RESOLVED: That, pursuant to standing order 26 (d), the order of business be altered so that the agenda item relating to the allotments be taken before the agenda item relating to the Hartley Wood.

19. Allotments

The Committee considered the allotment rents for the year 2006/07 and noted that in accordance with the terms and conditions of the rental agreement held with the allotment holders, 12 months notice of an increase in the rent in line with the rate of inflation had been given when the invoices for 2005/06 had been issued last year.

RECOMMENDED: That, the rents for the allotments at Woodland Avenue for the period 1st October 2006 to 30 September 2007 be increased in line with the rate of inflation.

20. Hartley Wood

(a) Possessory title claim

The Committee was reminded that at the last Committee meeting it had been reported that the Council was aware of two further unregistered plots of land in Hartley Wood owned by a family who had since moved out of the parish. The Committee noted that efforts had been made on a number of occasions to contact the family to obtain information on the position of these plots within Hartley Wood, but the family had not responded. As a result the Committee had agreed to resume its possessory title claim on those parts of Hartley Wood where there was no known owner, once this information had been received.

It was reported that a further attempt had been made to obtain information on the location of these two unregistered plots from the owner, but no response had been received. The Committee expressed its frustration that no response had been forthcoming from the owner of the two unregistered, despite the fact that the Council had endeavoured to reassure the owner that it did not wish to seek possessory title of any plots of land in Hartley Wood where there was known to be a legitimate owner. The Committee felt that if the Council wished to pursue the claim through the Land Registry, it had no alternative but to submit a claim which included the aforementioned two unregistered plots of land.

RECOMMENDED: That, the Council continue with its claim for possessory title on plots of land in Hartley Wood where there was no known owner with the Land Registry and that Cllr Mr Alan Barnett be authorised to sign the affidavit prepared by the solicitors acting on the Council's behalf in support of the claim.

(b) Village Green Application

The Committee considered a suggestion which had come forward from a meeting of the Special Project Committee held on 21st August 2006, that the Council may wish to consider seeking village green status on the part of Hartley Wood owned by the proprietors of Gorsewood Farm.

The Committee felt that a further application should not be submitted until after such time as the village green application had been determined on the part of Hartley Wood owned by the London Borough of Southwark and in any event, it considered that there were insufficient grounds to substantiate any such claim on this land and for this reason did not favour submitting an application seeking village green status.

RESOLVED: That, the views of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee on the suggestion to seek village green status on land in Hartley Wood owned by the proprietor of Gorsewood Farm, as set out above, be made known to the Special Project Committee.

21. Date of next meeting

Thursday 19th October 2006 at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.40 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 | 0.00 | 575.00 | 200.69 | 74.31 |
| 6 Open Spaces | 2,375.00 | 564.91 | 24,825.00 | 12,712.36 | 10,302.55 |
| 7 Manor Field Pavilion | 1,000.00 | 738.75 | 6,375.00 | 2,294.40 | 3,819.35 |
| NET TOTAL | 3,675.00 | 1,303.66 | 31,775.00 | 15,207.45 | 14,196.21 |
| Total for ALL Cost Centres | | 52,481.81 | | 44,449.43 | |
| V.A.T. | | 581.23 | | 2,422.99 | |
| GROSS TOTAL | | 53,063.04 | | 46,872.42 | |

| Expenditure | Budget 2006/7 | Spent so far (upto Aug 06) | Projected expenditure to 31st March 2007 | Estimate for year | Budget 2007/08 | Notes |
|------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|--|-------------------|----------------|--|
| Allotments | | | | | | |
| Maintenance | 300.00 | 27.82 | 100.00 | 127.82 | 225.00 | |
| Rent | 200.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 200.00 | 200.00 | |
| Water | 75.00 | 72.87 | 75.00 | 147.87 | 150.00 | |
| SUB TOTAL | 575.00 | 200.69 | 275.00 | 475.69 | 575.00 | |
| Open Spaces | | | | | | |
| Grass cutting | 4,250.00 | 1,050.00 | 2,460.00 | 3,510.00 | 4,250.00 | |
| Gang mowing | 1,600.00 | 640.00 | 1,365.00 | 2,005.00 * | 2,100.00 | *06/07 over budget due to enhanced cutting regime @ M/F & L/H |
| General maintenance | 3,000.00 | 180.00 | 1,500.00 * | 1,680.00 | 3,000.00 | * 06/07 fencing @ L/Hill plus sundries |
| Routine maintenance contract | 5,500.00 | 2,276.00 | 3,200.00 | 5,476.00 | 5,650.00 | |
| Playground maintenance | 2,000.00 | 457.66 | 1,000.00 | 1,457.66 | 2,000.00 | |
| Playground inspection | 475.00 | - | 455.00 | 455.00 | 475.00 | Annual & bi annual inspection |
| Rubbish clearance | 1,000.00 | - | 500.00 | 500.00 | 1,000.00 | |
| Dog bins | 1,300.00 | 182.00 | 1,092.00 | 1,274.00 | 1,300.00 | 7 bins @ £3.50 per week |
| Rectory Meadow | 1,500.00 | 2,180.54 | 5,700.00 * | 7,880.54 | 1,500.00 | * £5,100 for fencing/panels/leaflets, £600 grass cutting. 06/07 £5,770 to be recovered through grant from RLCI |
| Hartley Wood | 2,500.00 | 1,800.00 | 1,760.00 * | 3,560.00 | 4,000.00 | * 06/07 £760 tree survey & estimate of £1,000 for treework. 07/08 survey/treework on possessory title claim |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------|------------------|------------------|---|
| Pond | - | - | 400.00 | 400.00 | - | Works to funded through County Members scheme |
| Layby | - | - | 100.00 | 100.00 | - | |
| Miscellaneous expenses | 500.00 | 3,433.00 | * | - | 3,433.00 | 500.00 * 06/07 new entrance @ M/F |
| Cricket | 900.00 | 490.00 | - | 490.00 | 500.00 | |
| Football | 300.00 | 23.16 | - | 23.16 | 300.00 | |
| SUB TOTAL | 24,825.00 | 12,712.36 | | 19,532.00 | 32,244.36 | 26,575.00 |
| Manor Field Pavilion | | | | | | |
| Cesspool | 650.00 | 230.00 | | 460.00 | 690.00 | 750.00 |
| Calor gas | 600.00 | 18.33 | | 900.00 | 918.33 | 925.00 |
| Electricity | 500.00 | 202.86 | | 252.00 | 454.86 | 525.00 |
| Water | 175.00 | 41.11 | | 100.00 | 141.11 | 175.00 |
| Rates | 700.00 | 532.50 | | - | 532.50 | 700.00 |
| Cleaning | 1,000.00 | 400.00 | | 560.00 | 960.00 | 1,000.00 |
| Cleaning materials | 100.00 | - | | 50.00 | 50.00 | 100.00 |
| Maintenance | 2,000.00 | 664.98 | | 750.00 | 1,414.98 | 3,000.00 07/08 External redecoration |
| Testing fire extinguishers/electrics | 400.00 | - | | 100.00 | 100.00 | 400.00 PAT, fire extinguishers, water treatment |
| Miscellaneous | 250.00 | 204.62 | * | 50.00 | 254.62 | 250.00 * 06/07 £165 for glazing repairs |
| SUB TOTAL | 6,375.00 | 2,294.40 | | 3,222.00 | 5,516.40 | 7,825.00 |

| Income | Budget 2006/07 | Received so far (upto Aug 06) | Projected income to 31st March 2007 | Estimate for year | Budget 2007/08 | Notes |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|--|--|----------------------|-------------------|---|
| Allotments | | | | | | |
| Rent | 300.00 | | | - | 300.00 | |
| SUB TOTAL | 300.00 | | | - | 300.00 | |
| Open Spaces | | | | | | |
| Rectory Meadow | 280.00 | 19.91 ** | 5,970.00 * | 5,989.91 | 8.00 | ** 06/07 SPS payment *06/07 £200 DEFRA grant - no provision made for educational access payment + £5,770 RLCl grant |
| Cricket | 1,095.00 | - | 1,278.00 | 1,278.00 | 1,275.00 | £858 NAG & Hartley CC, £420 Meopham CC |
| Football | 1,000.00 | 545.00 | 1,120.00 * | 1,665.00 | 500.00 | * 06/07 2 x U18 @ £300/team. 1 x U14 @ £260/team & 1 x U13 team @ £260/team |
| SUB TOTAL | 2,375.00 | 564.91 | 8,368.00 | 8,932.91 | 1,783.00 | |
| Manor Field Pavilion | | | | | | |
| Lettings | 1,000.00 | 596.25 | 500.00 | 1,096.25 | 1,000.00 | |
| SUB TOTAL | 1,000.00 | 596.25 | 500.00 | 1,096.25 | 1,000.00 | |