

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SPECIAL PROJECTS COMMITTEE HELD ON 15th NOVEMBER 2006 AT 11.30 a.m. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY

Present : Cllr Mr C Alford
Cllr Mr A Barnett
Cllr Mr J Gaywood (Chairman)
Cllr Mr M Harris
Cllr Mr B Ramsay (*left the meeting at 1.00 p.m.*)
Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby

In attendance : Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)
1 member of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Mr A Tremain.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Mrs Oxtoby declared a personal interest under minute item 5 in respect of matters relating to the areas of land owned by the London Borough of Southwark in Hartley Wood and the land fill site, as her private residence backs onto Hartley Wood. She considered that her interest was only personal and not prejudicial, as the area of land owned by the London Borough of Southwark in Hartley Wood did not immediately abut her property and therefore she felt the land owned by Southwark was too remote from her property to cause her interest to be prejudicial.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Special Projects Committee held on 21st August 2006 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Hoselands Green

The Committee considered a report on the current position regarding the Parish Council's enquiry about the ownership of Hoselands Green and future arrangements for the cutting of the grass on the Green. The Committee was informed that a report setting out a number of options available to the District Council on the future ownership, maintenance and management of amenity land that had been retained by the District Council following the transfer of the housing estates to West Kent Housing Association had been approved by Sevenoaks District Council's Cabinet on 26th October 2006.

The Committee noted that the option relevant to the future of ownership of Hoselands Green allowed Sevenoaks District Council to dispose of isolated areas of amenity land with no realisable development potential to town and parish councils at nil cost. The Committee considered the implications for the Parish Council if it decided to take over the ownership of the land. The Committee considered that, due to the prominent location within the parish, the Green could benefit from more frequent grass cuts than that currently provided by the District Council and felt that the Parish Council would be better placed to ensure the Green was maintained to a standard that was acceptable to residents. The Committee was informed that the strips of land around the periphery of the Green where it abutted Larksfield, Ash Road and Wellfield were classified as highway verge land and therefore would be owned by Kent County Council. The Committee noted that the road known as "Hoselands View" was owned by Sevenoaks District Council, but considered the Council would not wish to take ownership of the road or the pavement. The Clerk

was asked to seek clarification from Sevenoaks District Council on the extent of land involved should the Parish Council decide to take ownership of the Green.

RECOMMENDED: That, the Parish Council take over ownership of the green area at Hoselands Green, provided the District Council agreed to meet the Parish Council's legal costs.

5. Hartley Wood

The Committee considered a report on attempts by the Clerk to contact the London Borough of Southwark for an update on its plans for the future of Hartley Wood and the landfill site. The Committee was disappointed that no response had been received. The Committee was reminded of the recent ruling from the House of Lords (Traps Ground case), which had clarified the legal position regarding village green applications and felt that in view of the outcome of this case, the Parish Council should once again press ahead with its village green application to ensure the area of land in Hartley Wood owned by the London of Southwark may be secured for the benefit and enjoyment of residents in perpetuity.

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) the London Borough of Southwark be informed that the Parish Council intends to resurrect its village green application on land owned by Southwark in Hartley Wood and will do so on 31st January 2007, unless the Parish Council hears from Southwark to the contrary and,

(2) the detail of the Parish Council's village green application be amended to show that the area of land to be included within the application is confined to the land owned by the London Borough of Southwark in Hartley Wood and the area of land included within the current application to the south of the land fill site is omitted from the application.

6. United Reformed Church

The Committee was informed that no further information was available on the future of the site and premises at the United Reformed Church.

RESOLVED: That, an update be obtained from the Synod Secretary.

7. Cherry Trees

The Committee considered a report on measures taken by the Council to tidy up the area surrounding the Cherry Tree shops.

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) investigations be undertaken to enquire what assistance Sevenoaks District Council may be able to offer in order to ensure the area is regularly cleared of litter and rubbish and,

(2) the Highways Committee be requested to investigate the reports of parking on the pavements outside the Cherry Tree shops.

8. Gorse Wood

The Committee considered proposals from West Kent Housing Association to develop a number of areas within the Wellfield estate, as set out below:

(1) the car park between 21 and 66 Caxton Close, including an area of Gorse Wood immediately adjacent to the car park, for 2 no., two-bed dwellings,

(2) amenity land between 27 and 37 Porchester Close for 4 no., two-bed flats and 2 no., one-bed flats and,

(3) the car park at the rear of 22 to 32 Porchester Close, including part of Gorse Wood, for 3 no., three-bed dwellings.

RESOLVED: That, further detail be obtained from West Kent Housing Association on its development proposals at the Wellfield Estate.

9. Community Warden

The Committee considered a report on the recent secondment of Hartley's Community Warden to the position of area supervisor for a period of six months to cover long term sick leave. The Committee expressed its dissatisfaction with the Community Warden scheme, particularly with regard to the lack of clear guidance on how the scheme should operate and the reporting procedures required of Community Wardens.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) clarification be obtained from Kent County Council on the future operations of the Community Warden scheme in Hartley and,

(2) investigations be undertaken with the Police to establish the role of the two PCSOs currently operating out of New Ash Green.

Cllr Mr B Ramsay left the meeting

10. Exclusion of the press and public

RESOLVED: That, under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of minute item 11, "New Burial Ground", 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.

11. New Burial Ground

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

RECOMMENDED: That, the Clerk be instructed to proceed with further communications including seeking any further legal advice.

12. Date of the next meeting

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 1.30 p.m.

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date:.....

