

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 24th APRIL 2007 AT 7.30 p.m. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY, ASH ROAD**

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

In Attendance: Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)
Mr V John (New Ash Green and Hartley CC)
4 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mr J Gaywood, Cllr Mr M Harris, Cllr Mr V Sewell, Cllr Mr C Ward and Mr D Thompson (Hartley De Sales FC).

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby declared a personal interest under minute item 8, Gorse Wood, as her private residence was located in Gorsewood Road opposite Gorse Wood .

3. Minutes of previous meetings

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 13th March 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the following correction on page 3, minute item 9, delete the name, "Vaughan" and insert the name, "John".

4. Football at Manor Field

There was no report from Hartley De Sales FC.

5. Cricket at Manor Field

(a) Report from New Ash Green and Hartley Cricket Club

Mr John informed the Committee that a portable practice net, constructed from scaffold poles, had been erected at Manor Field. Mr John confirmed that the practice net would be stored between the Pavilion and the Orchard when not in use during the cricket season, and would be dismantled and stored in the container during the closed season. The Cricket Club reassured the Committee that it had addressed health and safety issues relating to the provision of a practice net at Manor Field.

He explained that the recent dry period of weather had proved problematic for the preparation of the cricket square. It was confirmed that Cllr Mr S Glover would be rolling the outfield at Manor Field sometime during week commencing 30th April 2007, but the Committee doubted whether the rolling would have any effect due to the recent dry weather.

Mr John informed the Committee that cricket clubs involved in youth development were being encouraged to apply for a "club mark", and that this accreditation was becoming a requirement by a number of grant providers. Mr John confirmed the youth section at the cricket club was continuing to thrive and an U15 team would be fielded this year.

Mr John explained that the cricket club was finding it difficult to recruit a person/s to provide the teas. It was confirmed a link to the cricket club's website had been provided from the Parish Council's website.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.45 p.m. to allow members of the public to raise issues relating to cricket at Manor Field.

The meeting resumed at 7.50 p.m.

(b) Cricket fees for the 2007 season

RECOMMENDED: That, the New Ash Green and Hartley CC be charged a fee of £900 per season for the use of the Manor Field and the Pavilion during the 2007 and 2008 cricket seasons and that the fees be invoiced in three equal instalments during each season in May, July and September.

Mr John left the meeting at 7.56 p.m.

6. Playground

The Committee examined the quarterly operational report undertaken by Mrs M Cook on 11th April 2007 in respect of the Council's three playgrounds. The Committee noted two medium risk items contained in the report relating to, (1) the red wet pour insert located beneath the junior swing at the Chantry Avenue playground and (2) the presence of glass and stones around the edge of the roundabout at Woodland Avenue playground. A further wet pour repair kit had been purchased by the Council and Mr Munday had been asked to carry out the repair as soon as possible. The glass and stones had been swept up by Mr Munday as part of his duties under the routine maintenance contract.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be authorised upto a sum of £250 to make arrangements for the remedial work recommended in the quarterly operational inspection report undertaken on 11th April 2007 by Mrs M Cook to be carried out by Mr Munday and to seek quotations for any repair work that could not be undertaken by Mr Munday.

7. Woodland Avenue

At the last Committee meeting it was reported that Charlton AFC wished to deliver a soccer skills course at the Woodland Avenue recreation ground. Charlton AFC had since advised the Council that regrettably no funds were available to deliver this project.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

8. Gorse Wood

It was reported that emergency action had been taken to make safe three trees located in Gorse Wood at an estimated cost of £250, which had become dangerous in high winds during March.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk's actions be confirmed.

9. Rectory Meadow

The Committee considered two quotations received in respect of the grass cutting at Rectory Meadow.

KCSS for the total sum of £890 plus VAT

Gary Hawkins for the total sum of £650 plus VAT.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the total sum of £650 plus VAT from G Hawkins for cutting the grass at Rectory Meadow during 2007 be accepted.

10. Billings Hill Shaw

The Committee considered a letter dated 10th April 2007 from a resident raising concerns about dog fouling at Billings Hill Shaw and suggesting a separate area be provided for dog walkers.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.20 p.m. to allow members of the public to address their concerns about the dog fouling at Billings Hill Shaw to the Committee.

The meeting resumed at 8.30 p.m.

Whilst the Committee shared the residents concerns about dog fouling, it felt that the proposal to fence off a dog free area in Billings Hill Shaw for use as a children's recreational space would be expensive and could not easily be enforced. The Committee felt that other measures to control dog fouling should be investigated and implemented in the first instance, and that the matter should be reviewed at some time in the future. Members of the public were advised to contact the Community Warden, who agreed to liaise with the Police and the dog warden on the matter.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the Sevenoaks District Council's dog warden be informed of the dog fouling problem on Billings Hill Shaw and to undertake patrols of the area, and that the dog warden be asked to display larger notices advising of the current level of fine for those failing to clear up after their dogs and,

(2) an item be placed in the next available edition of the Council's newsletter advising residents of the health issues surrounding dog faeces and informing residents of the current level of fines imposed on those person/s failing to clear up after their dogs.

11. Pond

(a) The Community Warden reported that phase one of the project to tidy up the pond and surrounding bank was scheduled to take place on 10th May 2007 and that he hoped to have a group of approximately 15 Response Team Community Wardens to undertake the work. The Community Warden confirmed his team would use the bonfire site located in Hartley Burial Ground for the disposal of deadwood and other vegetation, and agreed to stack larger logs and branches at the rear of the pond, which would provide a habitat for wildlife. The Community Warden reported that he had sourced most of the tools required for the project and that a risk assessment had been completed. He informed the Committee that Woodland Garden Centre had offered to assist with providing the plants required for the marshland and that a possible source had been located for the logs to be used to form the sides of the new pond.

The Community Warden enquired whether the Council had considered the future maintenance of the marshland which, in his opinion, would require careful management. The Committee noted that offers of help had been forthcoming from interested residents and hoped that these volunteers would come forward to provide assistance with the pond's future maintenance. Furthermore it was suggested that the Council could provide some guidance on what work should be undertaken by the volunteers.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the report be noted, (2) the facilities at the Pavilion be made available on 10th May 2007 for use by the Community Wardens and, (3) the press be invited to attend.

12. Pavilion

(a) The Committee considered a report on the inspection and testing of the Calor Gas supply to the Pavilion undertaken by CalorForce on 3rd April 2007.

RESOLVED: That, quotation/s be sought on the required works identified in the report.

(b) The Committee considered a request to hire the Pavilion by a team from Hartley De Sales FC as a fund raising event and was informed that the hirers wished to provide a cash bar, which would require a temporary events notice. The Committee was informed of the views expressed by Messrs H F & J H Glover, who confirmed that whilst they did not wish to discourage Hartley De Sale FC in their fund raising attempts, felt that the covenants should not be waived on this occasion as it could set a precedent for other users.

RESOLVED: That, the request be declined.

(c) It was reported that action had been taken to replace defective fluorescent tubes and light bulbs, in conjunction with other minor maintenance work required at the Pavilion, at a cost of £109.75, which included the installation of the manual fire alarm, easing the shower room door, re-fixing a toilet roll holder and checking the cistern in the disabled toilet.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk's actions be confirmed.

(d) It was reported that one cover to a fluorescent light fitting in the home changing room was missing and one cover to a fluorescent light fitting in the away changing room was damaged, which could present a hazard to those using the changing rooms. Due to the age of the fittings, replacement covers were no longer available and that in the interests of health and safety, the light fittings in the changing rooms should be sealed. The Committee was informed that the cost of four new sealed fluorescent light fittings would be £140 plus VAT and labour.

RESOLVED: That, arrangements be made for the supply and installation of 2 no. new sealed fluorescent light fittings at a cost of £70 plus VAT and labour

(e) The Committee considered a letter dated 4th April 2007 from Sevenoaks District Council advising on new smoke-free legislation effective from 1st July 2007. The Committee noted a no smoking policy was already in place in the Pavilion but the no smoking signs could require updating.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be asked to investigate the provision of new signs.

(f) It was reported that the Pavilion had been booked on Sunday 29th April 2007 for a period of 3½ hours for a charity walk and the charity organisers had requested whether the Council would consider allowing the use of the Pavilion free of charge. The Committee did not wish to set a precedent over the use of the Pavilion for future charity fund raising events, but felt on this occasion the Pavilion should be offered at no charge.

RECOMMENDED: That, the Pavilion be made available to the hirers on 29th April 2007 free of charge.

(g) The Committee reviewed the cleaning regime currently employed in the Pavilion.

RESOLVED: That, a cleaning schedule be prepared for consideration by the Committee.

(h) The Committee had previously been informed that the testing of anti-graffiti paint on the brickwork at the Pavilion would no longer be going ahead as proposed by Kent County Council.

RESOLVED: That, details of the anti-graffiti paint be obtained from Kent County Council with a view to undertaking a test sample on the Pavilion.

13. Routine Maintenance Contract

The Committee considered a report on the invitation to seek quotations for the routine maintenance contract for the period 1st June 2007 to 31st May 2008. The Committee was informed that notices had been displayed on the Council's noticeboards inviting quotations from interested parties, but only one quotation had been received for the total sum of £5,970.00 from T D Munday to undertake the works specified under the terms and conditions of the routine maintenance contract.

The Committee noted that financial regulation 11.1 (j) made provision within the quotation process for a situation whereby an insufficient number of quotations were received and

under such circumstances the Council was permitted to make arrangements as it thought fit for the procurement of goods, works or services.

RECOMMENDED: That, the quotation for the total sum of £5,970.00 from T D Munday to undertake work as specified under the terms and conditions of the routine maintenance contract for the period 1st June 2007 to 31st May 2008 be accepted.

14. Date of next meeting

To be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.

Signed:..... Date:.....
Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee

