

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 6th MAY 2008 AT 7.30 p.m. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY, ASH ROAD**

Present: Cllr Mr A Barnett (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs P Cole
Cllr Mr D Graeme
Cllr Mr S Granger (Arrived at 7.55p.m)
Cllr Mr M Harris
Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby

In Attendance: Mrs H Gilder (Assistant Clerk)
Mr G Flint (Hartley De Sales FC)
3 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mr J Gaywood and Mr V John (New Ash Green & Hartley CC).

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Mrs P Cole declared a personal interest under minute item 11 in respect of the playground at Woodland Avenue as she lived opposite the recreation ground.

Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby declared a personal interest under minute item 13 (a), (b) and (c) in respect of Hartley Wood, as her private residence was located adjacent to the woodland.

Cllr Mr A Barnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest under minute item 17 (a) in respect of consideration of a quotation for tree works at the allotments as he was an allotment holder, and withdrew from the meeting during discussion and voting on the matter.

Cllr Mr A Barnett declared a personal interest under minute item 17 (b) in respect of the allotments as he was an allotment holder.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 25th March 2008 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Football at Manor Field

The Committee received a report from Mr Flint in which he informed the Committee that the three pitches at Manor Field had been kept in excellent condition throughout the season, and asked the Committee to pass on the Football Club's thanks to the contractors responsible for the upkeep of the pitches. Mr Flint confirmed that the Club had had a successful season.

Mr Flint informed the Committee that it was not yet known whether the Football Club would have one or two senior teams next season, but that a decision would be made by 19th May 2008. Mr Flint was asked to contact the Parish Office once a decision had been made.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

The Committee considered a request from a senior team from New Ash Green to hire a football pitch at Manor Field next season. The manager had requested details of hire charges.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be requested to contact the Manager of the senior team from New Ash Green to ascertain on which day/s the pitch would be required and whether the team would require use of the Pavilion.

5. Cricket at Manor Field

The Committee considered a report from Mr John in which informed the Committee that for the time being, club practice, both senior and colt's would be held at the playing field at New Ash Green where there still exists cricket nets. This would mean that for the time being, plans for a practice net at Manor Field would be postponed but that the Club would assess how practice goes under the new arrangement. If things don't work out then the Club would re-visit the idea of erecting a net at Manor Field.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

Mr G Flint left the meeting at 7.45p.m.

6. Cricket at Longfield Hill

There was no report from Meopham Cricket Club.

7. Financial Report

The Committee considered a financial report indicating the net position of the allotments, open spaces and Manor Field Pavilion as at 29th April 2008.

RESOLVED: That, the financial report, attached as appendix 1 to these minutes, be noted.

8. Routine Maintenance Contract

The Committee considered two quotations received in respect of the routine maintenance contract from the period 1st June 2008 to 31st May 2009.

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 £6,031.00 from T D Munday to undertake work as specified under the terms and conditions of the routine maintenance contract for the period 1st June 2008 to 31st May 2009, be accepted.

8. Pavilion

(a) Boiler

The Committee considered advice received from a local heating engineer, suggesting that the old Andrews storage water heater could be replaced with a new Andrews L63/71 storage water heater with auto ignition controls.

RESOLVED: That, further advice be sought from suitably qualified heating engineers on whether it was necessary to replace the Andrews storage water heater and if so, what system could be employed to replace it.

(b) Car park light

The Committee considered a complaint from a local resident about the lights in the car park shining directly into his drive. The resident also complained that the lights had, on occasions, been left on over night.

The two car park lights are operated by means of a timed switch located in the corridor of the Pavilion. The Committee noted that the switch had been inspected and found to be slightly dirty, causing it to get stuck in the 'on' position. The switch has since been cleaned. The Committee noted that the timed switch operating the lights was currently set to stay on for 3 hours.

The Committee noted that one of the lights in the car park is not working.

RESOLVED: That, 1) the timer on the switch operating the two car park lights be re-set to ensure that the lights only remain on for half an hour, and that the local resident be advised accordingly, and 2) a quotation be sought to repair the broken light.

(c) Water consumption

The Committee noted that a letter dated 7th April 2008 had been received from South East Water, informing the Council that its water consumption at the Pavilion had increased significantly when compared with a similar period for last year.

The Committee noted that two taps had recently been found to be leaking and had been repaired. The water main has been investigated and there appears to be no leak. It is suspected that the increase in consumption was due to the leaking taps.

RESOLVED: That, 1) the report be noted and the action taken to repair the leaking taps be confirmed, and 2) quotations be sought for the supply and installation of push taps to replace all of the taps in the toilets and changing rooms.

(d) Hire of the Pavilion

The Committee noted that an enquiry had been received from a Slimming Group about hiring the Pavilion every Friday morning for an initial period of six weeks.

In the past, the Council has offered regular hirers a discount of £1.00 per hour on the standard hourly rate which currently is £7.50 per hour, thus reducing the rental to £6.50 per hour.

The Committee noted that there was no mention in the Conditions of Hire of the Pavilion relating to a discounted rate for regular bookings, and agreed that this should be addressed at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That, 1) the Slimming Group be offered a reduced hourly hire rate for the Pavilion of £6.50 per hour and 2) revision of the Conditions of Hire of the Pavilion, to incorporate a discounted rate for regular bookings, be considered at the next meeting.

10. Manor Field

Meter cupboard

At the previous meeting of the Committee it was resolved that further investigations be carried out to examine the feasibility and costs involved in repositioning the meter on land owned by the Council and providing a more secure enclosure.

It was reported that no further information had been received.

RESOLVED: That, the matter be deferred.

11. Playgrounds

(a) Woodland Avenue – playground refurbishment

At the last meeting of the Committee it was resolved that (1) the criteria of various grants be examined to establish what would be required by the grant provider, (2) the head teachers of the two local primary schools be contacted to establish what assistance could be offered by the schools in any consultation exercise undertaken by the Council and (3) investigation be undertaken to establish whether the design schemes submitted by various playground suppliers could be displayed on the website.

The Committee noted that no information had been received yet regarding the criteria of various grants.

Cllr Mrs Oxtoby reported that she had been in contact with the head teachers of the two local primary schools and they had both confirmed that they would be prepared to assist with a consultation exercise. Cllr Mrs Oxtoby agreed to organise the consultation exercise in conjunction with the head teachers.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the criteria of various grants be examined to establish what would be required by the grant provider.

(2) Cllr Mrs Oxtoby continue to liaise with the head teachers of the two local primary schools to undertake a consultation exercise

(3) investigation be undertaken to establish whether the design schemes submitted by various playground suppliers could be displayed on the Council's website.

12. Rectory Meadow

(a) The Committee noted that the Clerk had made arrangements for the recently planted trees at Rectory Meadow to be sprayed with herbicide and for woodchips to be distributed around the base of the trees at a cost of £65.00. This action was taken in consultation with the Chairman of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee as it was deemed sufficiently urgent and could not wait for authorisation at the next meeting.

The Committee had been asked to confirm the Clerk's actions.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.30p.m. to allow a resident to ask a question. The resident enquired whether the herbicide used was environmentally friendly. The Chairman confirmed that the herbicide used had been approved by DEFRA.

The meeting resumed at 8.32p.m.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk's actions, as set out above be confirmed.

(b) The Committee had been asked to consider quotations in respect of the grass cutting at Rectory Meadow.

The Chairman reported that two contractors had been invited to submit a quotation but as yet, none had been received. The Assistant Clerk reported that letters had been sent to both contractors asking whether they intended to submit a quotation and one had responded to confirm that he would. The Chairman explained that the Council has historically encountered difficulty in finding a contractor able to carry out the required work.

The Council's Financial Regulation 11.1 (j) states that if following the quotation process an insufficient number of quotations are received, then the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring works

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman be authorised to consider and accept any suitable quotation submitted for the grass cutting at Rectory Meadow.

13. Hartley Wood

(a) Motorbikes

At the last meeting of the Committee it was resolved that (1) Longfield and New Barn Parish Council be asked if it would be willing to provide a padlock on the kissing gate to the north of the subway, so as to prevent the gate being opened with a RADAR key, (2) investigations be undertaken into the provision of a motorbike inhibitor next to the subway, (3) a meeting be arranged with the Crime Reduction Officer to investigate measures to prevent motorbike incursion of the highway at the end of Beechlands Close and (4) Southwark Council be asked what measures it intends to take to prevent motorbike incursions off Hartley Bottom Road and over the land-fill site.

The Chairman reported that no response had been received from Longfield and New Barn Parish Council regarding the Committee's suggestion that a padlock be provided on the kissing gate to the north of the subway.

The Committee noted that no information had been received regarding the provision of a motorbike inhibitor next to the subway.

The Committee noted that a meeting was still to be arranged with the Crime Reduction Officer.

The Committee noted that Southwark Council had not yet been contacted regarding what measures it intends to take to prevent motorbike incursions off Hartley Bottom Road.

RESOLVED: That, (1) Longfield and New Barn Parish Council be contacted to ask whether a decision had been made regarding the provision of a padlock on the kissing gate.

(2) investigations be continued into the provision of a motorbike inhibitor next to the subway, and

(3) a meeting be arranged with the Crime Reduction Officer to investigate measures to prevent motorbike incursion off the highway at the end of Beechlands Close

The Committee had been requested to note that an e mail of complaint has been received from a local resident about motorbike activity in Hartley Wood and the land-fill site. The Community Warden has been informed and undertakes regular patrols of the area.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the report be noted, and

(2) the Clerk be requested to reply to the resident's email of complaint confirming what action has been taken

(b) Foul water discharge

The Assistant Clerk reported that enquiries had been made with Thames Water to establish the position and layout of the foul drains.

RESOLVED: That, the matter be deferred.

(c) Quantified tree risk assessment

The Committee agreed at a meeting held on 20th September 2007 to accept a quotation for the sum of £275.00 plus VAT from Specialist Tree Services. The company has failed to produce a report, despite a number of reminders and the Committee had been requested to consider cancelling their order and seek new quotations to undertake the work.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the Clerk be requested to cancel the order for Specialist Tree Services to carry out a quantified tree risk assessment, and
(2) Quotations be invited for a quantified risk assessment on the land owned by the Parish Council in Hartley Wood.

14. Gorse Wood

At the last meeting of the Committee it was resolved that (1) further investigation be undertaken to establish the extent of fly tipping in Gorse Wood and (2) quotations be sought on the provision of fencing and kissing gates at the two entrances to Gorse Wood off Gorsewood Road.

The Committee was requested to note that Mr Munday has inspected the area and reports no significant problem with fly tipping.

The Committee noted that quotations had not yet been sought for the provision of fencing and kissing gates at the two entrances to Gorse Wood.

RESOLVED: That, (1) the report be noted and that Mr Munday be asked to continue to report any fly tipping and if it becomes a significant problem, Clean Kent be requested to clear the area, and
(2) quotations be sought for the provision of fencing and kissing gates at the two entrances to Gorse Wood.

The Committee considered a report on motorbike activity and fly tipping in Gorse Wood. The Committee considered a number of options to fence off the entrances into Gorse Wood off Gorsewood Road and next to Down Ampney.

15. Foxborough Wood

The Committee considered three quotations from land surveyors to mark the boundaries of land owned by the Council in Foxborough Wood.

RECOMMENDED: That, the quotation for the sum of £1,195.00 + VAT from J C White Geomatics Ltd to mark the boundaries of land owned by the Council in Foxborough Wood, be accepted, and

The Committee considered a letter dated 10th April 2008 from the owner of The Court Cottage, Grange Lane, referring to a long standing boundary dispute between his property and land owned by the Council in Foxborough Wood.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be requested to write to the owner of The Court Cottage Grange Lane, to inform him that a contractor had now been employed by the Council to establish the boundaries.

16. Longfield Hill

At the last meeting of the Committee it was resolved that the Clerk be authorised upto a sum of £350 to make arrangements for works to be undertaken on the outfield and the cricket square at Manor Field for the control of wormcasts and to seek a quotation for similar works to be carried out at Longfield Hill.

A quotation from Sencio for the total sum of £300 plus VAT has been accepted by the Clerk to undertake spraying for the control of worms to the outfields and cricket squares at Longfield Hill and Manor Field. A comparative quotation was provided by Weed Management Ltd for the total sum of £580 plus VAT.

The Clerk's action to include Longfield Hill in works for the control of worms was taken before the next meeting of the Committee, in consultation with the Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee, as any spraying undertaken after May would have been ineffective.

The Committee was requested to confirm the Clerk's actions.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk's actions as set out above, be confirmed.

17. Allotments

(a) The Committee considered a quotation from Austin Treework for the sum of £190.00 + VAT for the reduction of the Conifer trees located to the rear of the recycling centre at Woodland Avenue. The quotation included for cutting the trees back to their old cuttings, clipping of the face, removal and disposal of all arisings.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £190 plus VAT from Austin Treework to prune the trees behind the recycling centre in the allotments be accepted.

(b) The Committee considered a letter dated 7th April 2008 from a local resident complaining about parking in Larksfield and Woodland Avenue allegedly caused by users of the allotments.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.23p.m. to allow the resident who had written the letter of 7th April 2008 to explain his concerns.

The meeting resumed at 9.30p.m.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be requested to write to all of the allotment holders asking them to park responsibly and not block residents' drives, and that a copy of the letter be sent to the complainant.

18. Date of next meeting

Monday 2nd June 2008 at 7.30 p.m. in Hartley Library

The meeting closed 9.36 p.m.

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

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	100.00	175.00
6 Open Spaces	1,870.00	0.00	25,700.00	2,986.10	20,843.90
7 Manor Field Pavilion	1,500.00	179.00	7,850.00	1,006.93	5,522.07
NET TOTAL	3,670.00	179.00	34,125.00	4,093.03	26,540.97
Total for ALL Cost Centres		859.14		12,677.08	
V.A.T.		0.00		1,025.79	
GROSS TOTAL		859.14		13,702.87	

