

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 27th JANUARY 2009 AT 7.30 p.m. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY, ASH ROAD**

Present: Cllr Mr A Barnett (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs P Cole
Cllr Mr J Gaywood
Cllr Mr D Graeme
Cllr Mr S Granger
Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby
Cllr Mr V Sewell

In Attendance: Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)
Guy Flint (Hartley De Sales FC)
2 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mr M Harris, Mr T Wade (Meopham CC) and Mr V John (NAG & Hartley CC).

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Mr J Gaywood declared a personal interest under minute item 12, Hartley Green, as his private residence was located adjacent to the Green.

Cllr Mrs P Cole declared a personal interest under minute item 13 (a) in respect of the Woodland Avenue playground refurbishment, as her private residence was located opposite the recreation ground.

Cllr Mr A Barnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest under minute item 18 in respect of the allotments, as he was an allotment holder. After making representations on matters relating to the allotments, Cllr Mr A Barnett 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 4th December 2008 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Cricket at Manor Field

(a) The Committee noted that the works carried out over recent years at Manor Field for the control of worms had significantly improved the playing surface. In addition this work had greatly assisted the marking out of the football pitches.

RESOLVED: That, quotations be invited for the control of worms at Manor Field and Longfield Hill, and the quotations be considered at the next meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee.

(b) The Committee considered the fees to be charged to New Ash Green and Hartley CC for the use of the ground and the Pavilion.

RECOMMENDED: That, the New Ash Green and Hartley Cricket Club be charged £950 per season for the use of ground and the Pavilion during the 2009 and 2010 seasons and that the fees be invoiced in three equal instalments in May, July and September.

5. Cricket at Longfield Hill

Meopham CC had nothing to report.

6. Football at Manor Field

Mr Flint explained that the Club had lost a number of fixtures during December and January due to the recent period of bad weather. He enquired when the cricket season was due to start as the Football Club would be trying to rearrange these fixtures to fulfil their league commitments.

It was explained that the Cricket Club had not yet provided details of its fixtures for the 2009 season, but if their fixtures followed the same pattern as previous years their first game would be on 25th April 2009. Mr Flint confirmed that, all being well, the football fixtures should be completed by 19th April 2009, but enquired whether the Council would have any objection to mid week games. Subject to the agreement of the Committee, Mr Flint agreed to liaise with the Clerk over the arrangement of mid week fixtures to ensure that other users of the ground and the Pavilion would not be inconvenienced.

Mr Flint reported that the football pitches were in excellent condition.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) quotations be invited to roll the outfield during week commencing 20th April 2009, weather permitting and,

(2) arrangements be made for the football posts to be taken down during week commencing 20th April 2009 and,

(3) permission be given to Hartley De Sales FC for mid week games to be played at Manor Field in order to catch up with fixtures cancelled due to the recent period of bad weather, subject to agreement of the Clerk.

Mr Flint left the meeting at 7.50 p.m.

7. Financial Report

The Committee examined a financial report indicating the net position of the allotments, open spaces and Manor Field Pavilion as at 20th January 2009. Questions were raised in relation to the overspend on allotment budget.

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

8. Pavilion

(a) At the previous meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee it was recommended that the hourly rate for the hire of the Pavilion be increased by 50p per hour from £7.50 to £8.00 for individual bookings and from £6.50 to £7.00 for regular hirers. This was approved by the Council at a meeting held on 8th December 2008. The approved recommendation omitted to include that the increase in fees would be effective from 1st April 2009.

RECOMMENDED: That, the increases in the hourly rate, as approved by the Council at a meeting held on 8th December 2008, be effective from 1st April 2009.

(b) The Committee considered the purchase of additional shelving in the Pavilion for the storage of the Council's archives.

RECOMMENDED: That, the sum of upto £200 be authorised for the purchase of additional shelving at the Pavilion for the storage of archived

documentation and the expenditure be met from the budget allocated for Office Costs.

9. Manor Field

(a) Meter Cupboard

It was reported that Messrs H F & J H Glover had no objection to the meter cupboard, currently sited on their 20 foot wide strip of land at the rear of the pond, being re-located onto land owned by the Council in Hartley Burial Ground, provided the work was carried out properly, including the preparation and completion of an easement allowing the electric cable to cross their land. Messrs H F & J H Glover had requested the easement was completed before the work to re-locate the meter cupboard was carried out. The Clerk reported that she was seeking legal advice on the matter.

The Committee was advised of a quotation for the sum of £547 plus VAT from EDF Energy to joint the existing mains supply to the Pavilion on land owned by the Council at the rear of the pond and run a new supply to a steel service cabinet in Hartley Burial Ground.

It was reported that quotations had been invited for, (1) the provision of a new steel service container on a concrete base, including all necessary ducting and, (2) electrical work to realign the electrical supply to the Pavilion and relocate the existing trip box.

The Committee was informed that only one quotation had been returned in respect of the builders works set out in (1) above and that two of the three electricians invited to provide a quotation in respect of the works set out in (2) above had declined.

Following an enquiry from the Clerk as to whether the provision of a new steel service container would require the benefit of planning permission, Sevenoaks District Council had advised that it was not able to confirm whether a planning application would be required and that the Parish Council should submit an application for a lawful development certificate.

RESOLVED: That, invitation and consideration of further quotations in respect of works to re-locate the position of the meter cupboard from its current position on land by Messrs H F & J H Glover at the rear of the pond to land owned by the Council in Hartley Burial Ground be deferred pending the receipt of legal advice.

RECOMMENDED: That, an application for a lawful development certificate be submitted to Sevenoaks District Council in respect of proposed works to re-locate the meter cupboard from its current position to land owned by the Parish Council in Hartley Burial Ground.

(b) Grass cutting

The Committee considered the implementation of an extended grass cutting regime on the "Orchard" and fringe area between the playing field at Manor Field and Foxborough Wood.

RESOLVED: That, the grass cutting regime at Manor Field be amended to allow three cuts of the grass on the "Orchard" and the fringe area between the playing field and Foxborough Wood.

(c) Storage container – painting

The Committee was advised that only one quotation had been received in respect of the painting of the storage container. One painter had declined the invitation to provide a quotation.

The Committee was informed that painter who had returned a quotation had included within his quotation sum for washing down the container, spot priming, and the application of one undercoat and one gloss coat in green. The Committee considered an alteration to the painting specification.

RESOLVED: That, quotations be invited to repaint the storage container at the rear of the Pavilion using a suitable one coat application.

(d) Storage container – football posts

The Committee was informed of the difficulties encountered by Mr Munday when storing the football posts on brackets located at high level on the wall of the storage container.

RESOLVED: That, Mr Munday be asked to alter the position of the brackets located in the storage container so that may be lowered to a more convenient position.

10. Hartley Wood

(a) Motorbikes – Beechlands Close

It was reported that Kent Highway Services had confirmed verbally it would send a written response to the Council's enquiry about the provision of a motorbike inhibitor and fencing on highway land at the end of Beechlands Close in due course.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

(b) Demarcation of title no K888102

At the previous meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee it was reported that the trees had been marked with yellow paint and a number of posts erected in Hartley Wood, and that it appeared the markings had been placed to identify the boundaries of title number K888102, a plot of woodland to the east of Beechlands Close.

It was reported that the landowners had confirmed the boundary markings had been installed to define the correct position of the boundaries and the extent of the land under title number K888102.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

11. Billings Hill Shaw

(a) New entrance

The Committee considered a report on a site meeting held on 16th December 2008 to discuss the proposal to create a new access into Billings Hill Shaw off public right of way SD301. The Committee examined details of a rambler gate. The Committee favoured the proposal to create a new entrance/exit as it would provide opportunities for users of Billings Hill Shaw to access a wider network of footpaths beyond the field and encourage greater use of the open space. Some concern was expressed about the possible mis-use of the field by nuisance and illegal motorbikes.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) residents of Billings Hill Shaw be informed of the Council's intention to create a new access in the south west corner of Billings Hill Shaw and,

(2) the provision of a new access in the south west corner of Billings Hill Shaw off SD301 be agreed, in principle, subject to final costings and consideration of comments received from residents to the proposal.

(b) Bench

The Committee considered the provision of a bench in Billings Hill Shaw and its possible siting. The design of two benches were considered by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the provision of a new bench in Billings Hill be agreed, in principle, subject to final costings and,

(2) an article be placed in the next available edition of the Council's newsletter enquiring whether any resident wished to support the provision of a memorial bench in Billings Hill Shaw.

12. Hartley Green

There was no further information available from the guide leader in respect of the request to install a temporary flower bed at Hartley Green in celebration of the Centenary of Girl Guiding.

RESOLVED: That, the matter be deferred.

13. Playgrounds

(a) Woodland Avenue – playground refurbishment

The Committee examined responses received to date from residents who had completed the online consultation document in respect of the proposed refurbishment of Woodland Avenue playground.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) an article be placed in the next edition of the Council's newsletter encouraging residents to participate in the online consultation in respect of the proposed refurbishment of the Woodland Avenue playground and,

(2) a sub-committee be established to investigate the feasibility of refurbishing the Woodland Avenue playground, including an evaluation of the findings of the consultations undertaken by the Council, sourcing possible streams of funding for the project, liaising with playground suppliers and report back the outcome of such investigations for consideration by the Committee and,

(3) the sub-committee consist of Cllrs Mrs Cole, Granger and Mrs Oxtoby.

(b) Quarterly Operational report

The Committee considered a report on the action taken to attend to matters raised in the quarterly operational report on the Council's playgrounds undertaken by Ms M Cook on 19th November 2008.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

14. Foxborough Wood

The Committee considered a report on the action taken to identify the position of the boundaries of the plot of woodland owned by the Council in Foxborough Wood. The Committee considered a letter dated 22nd January 2009, and accompanying drawings nos 1 and 2, from land surveyors J GC White Geomatics Ltd showing the line of the boundary as discussed with the landowners of Hartley Court Cottage on site, the extent of the boundary encroachments from Hartley Court and discrepancies along the northern and eastern boundaries between the 1939 conveyance plan and the filed title plan of the Council's plot of woodland in Foxborough Wood.

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) the report be received and noted and,

(2) the Clerk's action be confirmed in respect of discussions and agreement with the landowners of Hartley Court Cottage over the position of the boundary between

Hartley Court Cottage and land owned by the Council in Foxborough Wood, as contained in the 1943 conveyance between Hartley Parish Council and Mrs Orde, and as plotted on drawing nos. 1 and 2 accompanying a letter dated 22nd January 2009 from the surveyors J C White Geomatics Ltd and,

(3) Subject to (2) above, costings be obtained for the supply and installation of a 4 foot high chestnut paling fence on the agreed boundary between Hartley Court Cottage and land owned by the Council in Foxborough Wood, as plotted on drawings nos 1 and 2 accompanying a letter dated 22nd January 2009 from the surveyors J C White Geomatics Ltd and,

(4) the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee be authorised to negotiate with the landowner of Hartley Court to resolve the encroachment onto Council's land in Foxborough Wood and,

(5) the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee be authorised to enter into discussions and to agree with the landowners of the adjoining woodland in Foxborough Wood, Mr Roy Glover and Mr Eric Glover, the position of the northern and eastern boundaries of the Council's plot of land in Foxborough Wood, in advance of a rectification of the Council's title at Land Registry.

15. Rectory Meadow

The Committee examined three quotations in respect of grass cutting at Rectory Meadow during 2009, as set out below:

Contractor	April grass cut (£)	June grass cut (£)	Sept grass cut (£)	TOTAL (£)
Sentry Groundcare	780.00	660.00	900.00	2,340.00
KCCS	280.00	250.00	280.00	810.00
Garry Hawkins	270.00	270.00	270.00	810.00

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the total sum of £810.00 from Garry Hawkins for undertaking 3 grass cuts at Rectory Meadow, including the removal of cuttings, during 2009 be accepted.

16. Gorsewood Road

At a meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held on 16th October 2008 it was resolved that, "(1) *the matter in relation to the mud on the footpath leading to the subway and the defective lighting be pursued with the County Councillor and Kent Highway Services and (2) Sevenoaks District Council be asked to remove the graffiti from the walls of the subway*".

It was reported that the footpath was swept once a month by Sevenoaks District Council from the end of Gorsewood Road to the top of the steps leading to the subway. Following discussions with the road sweeper he had kindly agreed to extend the sweep of the footpath, down the steps and under the subway.

At the previous meeting it was reported that Kent Highway Services had confirmed it was responsible for the maintenance of the column light/s, (numbers IGAW 001, IGAW002, IGAW003 and IGAW004), located on the public right of way SD 295 and DR 213A. It was reported that Kent Highway Service was responsible for the maintenance of the bulkhead

located in the subway and Kent Highway Services had confirmed the light was now functioning. The Committee was advised that this information was not correct and that the bulkhead light was not functioning.

It was reported that Sevenoaks District Council had advised of 12 week waiting list for the removal of graffiti. The Committee noted the matter was reported to Sevenoaks on 23rd October 2008.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the report be noted and,

(2) Kent Highways Services be informed that the bulkhead light in the subway was not functioning.

17. Noticeboards

The Committee considered a quotation for the sum the total sum of £120 from Mr G Glidewell to re-cover the noticeboards at Longfield Hill and Manor Field with new perspex.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the total sum of £120 from Mr G Glidewell to re-cover the noticeboards at Longfield Hill and Manor Field with new perspex be accepted.

18. Allotments

Pursuant to Standing Orders 68 and 57, the meeting was adjourned to allow Cllr Barnett to make representations to the Committee. He explained that the removal of the bramble had now exposed two unstable concrete posts in the chain link boundary fence on Larksfield. Furthermore he explained that the ivy referred to a letter of complaint dated 24th January 2009 from an allotment holder had been removed.

Cllr Barnett withdrew from the meeting during further discussions and voting matters on relating to the allotments.

The Committee considered three letters of complaints received from two allotment holders in respect of the clearance of bramble from the corner of the allotments. The Committee was reminded that the removal of the bramble had been approved at the previous meeting in response to a complaint about bramble encroachment from an adjoining allotment holder.

The Committee noted that the bramble had been extensively cut back and removed, and that its clearance had exposed the south west corner of the allotment site, and more particularly exposed an allotment plot which did not appear to be actively cultivated and was therefore becoming rather untidy and unsightly. The Committee commented that the bramble would, in time, recover.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) a quotation be invited to straighten and refix 2 no concrete posts in the chain link fence and,

(2) the rules relating to the allotments be reviewed with a view to defining responsibilities around the periphery of the allotment site.

Cllr Barnett returned to the meeting.

19. Hoselands Hill verge

It was reported that last summer bee orchids had appeared on the grass verge on Hoselands Hill, Ash Road opposite the junction with the Bramblefield Estate. The Kent Wildlife Trust had been informed and the Highway Authority asked to refrain from cutting the grass verge until such time as the orchids had seeded. As a result only a 1 metre wide strip was cut

immediately adjacent to the highway, to ensure sight lines could be maintained. However mid way through the season the verge was cut before the orchids had the opportunity to seed.

The Kent Wildlife Trust had been asked to designate the verge as a Road Side Nature Reserve to enable a grassing cutting regime to be adopted to accommodate the bee orchids, should they return next season. The Committee was concerned following the adoption of suitable grass cutting regime complaints would be received from residents about the length of the grass on the verge, which was located in a prominent position approaching Hartley.

RECOMMENDED: That,

(1) the designation of the verge Hoselands Hill, Ash Road opposite the junction with the Bramblefield Estate as a Road Side Nature reserve be supported by the Council and,

(2) subject to (1) above, Kent Wildlife Trust be encouraged to install suitable signage advertising the special status of the verge and,

(3) subject to (1), residents be advised on the designation of the verge as a Road Side Nature Reserve in the Council's newsletter and through the local press.

20. Date of next meeting

Thursday 5th March 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in Hartley Library.

The meeting closed at 9.55 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	444.52	575.00	837.73	-118.21
6 Open Spaces	1,870.00	2667.00	25,700.00	20,275.92	6,221.08
7 Manor Field Pavilion	1,500.00	1,869.00	7,850.00	8,017.41	201.59
NET TOTAL	3,670.00	4,980.52	34,125.00	29,131.06	6,304.46
Total for ALL Cost Centres		118,936.08		114,723.10	
V.A.T.		4,695.84		6,966.02	
GROSS TOTAL		123,631.92		121,689.12	