

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 3rd DECEMBER 2009 AT 7.30 p.m. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY, ASH ROAD**

Present: Cllr A Barnett (Chairman)
Cllr D Graeme
Cllr S Granger
Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby
Cllr V Sewell

In Attendance: Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)
Cllr Ramsay
1 member of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mrs P Cole, Cllr J Gaywood and Mr G Flint.

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby declared a personal interest under minute items 10 (a) and 10 (b) in respect of Hartley Wood, as she owned land and property close to Hartley Wood.

Cllr A Barnett declared a personal and prejudicial interest under minute item 12 (a) and 12 (b) in respect of the allotments as he was an allotment holder, and withdrew from the meeting during discussion and voting on the matter.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 24th September be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Football at Manor Field

(a) Hartley De Sales FC had nothing to report. The Committee was advised of the presence of moss on the field and an increase in the number of worm cast on the surface. The Committee felt that the spraying for the control of worms should be considered in the Spring.

RESOLVED: That, advice be sought on forms of treatment for the eradication of moss that could be applied at this time of year.

(b) At the last meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee it was reported that Longfield Tigers had expressed an interest in hiring a football pitch at Manor Field. The Committee considered a letter from the Hartley De Sales Club Chairman objecting strongly to this proposal.

The Committee was advised that Longfield Tigers FC had not followed up its enquiry about hiring the facilities at Manor Field.

RESOLVED: That, the correspondence be noted.

5. Financial Report

The Committee considered a financial report indicating the net position of the allotments, open spaces and Manor Field Pavilion as at 27th November 2009.

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

6. Pavilion

(a) It was reported that action had been undertaken since the last meeting to replace 1 no emergency light in the away changing room and the overhead light outside the entrance door.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk's actions in respect of repairs to lights in the Pavilion be confirmed.

(b) The Committee was advised that the vandalism sustained to the local Scout hut earlier this year had rendered it unusable for a number of months and as a result the Longfield & Hartley Scout Group have, on occasion, found it necessary to hire the Pavilion for its weekly meetings. The Committee considered a request from the Longfield & Hartley Scout Group to reduce the hire charges of the Pavilion during the period when they were unable to use the facilities at the Scout hut. The Committee was advised that the Scout Group had hired the Pavilion for a total of 7 hours during September and October and that the normal hourly rate for the hire of the Pavilion was £8.00 per hour.

RECOMMENDED: That, the charge to the Longfield and Hartley Scout Group for the hire of the Pavilion during September and October for a total number of 7 hours be waived.

7. Manor Field

(a) Storage container

The Committee was advised that three contractors had been invited to submit quotations to repaint the external surfaces of the storage container, but only two quotations had been received. The Committee examined the two quotations as set out below:

A G Building for the total sum of £675.00

A M H Decorating Services for the total sum of £678.68

RESOLVED: That, subject to satisfactory references, the quotation from A G Building for the total sum of £675.00 be accepted.

(b) Meter Cupboard

The Committee considered a report on the relocation of the electricity meter and creation of an easement on land at Manor Field. The Committee expressed concerns about the terms requested by solicitors acting on behalf of Messrs H F & J H Glover, who required payment of their legal fees regardless of whether or not the matter completed. Furthermore the Committee felt the solicitors' fees should be capped.

RECOMMENDED: That, the Council agrees to meet the reasonable legal costs incurred by the landowners, Messrs H F & J H Glover, in respect of the creation of an easement on land at Manor Field for the electricity cable, upto a limit of £750 and provided that the matter is completed.

(c) Oak trees

The Committee was advised that treework to the 2 Oak trees to raise the canopy had been completed. The Committee considered the benefit of undertaking similar work to the other Oak trees on Manor Field.

RESOLVED: That, the Clerk be authorised to make arrangements for the canopy of 1 no Oak tree to be raised by 6 feet upto a limit of £60.

8. Billings Hill Shaw

The Committee considered a report on the trees in Billings Hill Shaw. The Committee was advised of the partial collapse of a double stemmed Ash tree during the storm on 14th

November 2009, which caused damage to a vehicle parked on the highway at Billings Hill Shaw. Details of the Council's insurance particulars have been passed to owner of the damaged vehicle.

It was reported that tree surgeons had inspected the site and had come forward with a number of recommendations relating to the double stemmed Ash tree and also to four other Ash trees in the vicinity which were showing either signs of disease or damage. The Committee examined the recommendations and the quotations, (as set out below), submitted by tree surgeons.

Benton Arboriculture £1,600.00 plus VAT

Down to Earth £1,320.00 plus VAT

Austin Treework £2,100.00 plus VAT

Trojan Tree Care £2,100 plus VAT excl additional charge of £50 to undertaken work with BT cable in place (5% discount offered if contract let as a whole - £1,995)

The tree surgeons recommended varying approaches towards the treework, from felling the trees to the ground or reducing the height of the trees to reduce the risk of failure.

The Committee was advised of the presence of an overhead BT cable supplying Hartley Grange Cottage in the vicinity of a semi uprooted Ash tree. Trojan Tree Care confirmed it would be willing to undertake the work to the semi uprooted Ash tree with the BT cable in place for an additional charge of £50. The other three contractors required the BT cable to be temporarily dropped for the duration of the works. The Committee was informed that BT would charge £437.00 plus VAT to undertake this work. The Committee felt that the programming of the works would be more straightforward if the tree surgeon undertook the work to the semi uprooted Ash tree with the BT cable in place. It would also cause less inconvenience to the occupier of Hartley Grange Cottage. Furthermore the Committee considered it would be better if all the five diseased or damaged trees were felled to the ground to avoid any ongoing maintenance problems.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £2,042.50 plus VAT from Trojan Tree Care to undertake tree works with the BT cable in place, as set out in a quotation dated 1st December 2009, be accepted.

9. Woodland Avenue playground refurbishment

The Committee received a verbal report on the attendance of Cllr Mrs Oxtoby and the Clerk at a seminar held on 18th November 2009 to explain the requirements and procedures to be followed with the submission of a "Playbuilder" grant. Kent County Council has the responsibility of administering a total grant in the region of £600,000 to fund a minimum of 10 projects across the County. The grant would be available on 1st April 2010 and successful applicants would be required to complete their projects by 31st March 2011. The Committee examined the grant application form and felt that the Council was not in a position to complete the application due to the detail required at this stage, particularly as the closing date for applications was 11th December 2009.

RESOLVED: That, no further action be taken to pursue the "Playbuilder" grant.

10. Hartley Wood

(a) The Committee was advised that an application to voluntarily register land by Hartley Parish Council under title numbers K700099 and K887840 as a Village Green had been submitted to Kent County Council, but due to a backlog there would be a slight delay before the application was processed.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

(b) The Committee considered a letter dated 5th November 2009 from Southwark Council confirming its insurance policy extended to cover land outside the boundaries of Southwark including Hartley Wood.

RESOLVED: That, the letter dated 5th November from Southwark Council be noted.

11. Foxborough Wood

The Committee considered a report containing advice and costings from the Council's appointed surveyor regarding the setting out of the north and east boundaries of land owned by the Council in Foxborough Wood. The Committee noted that the surveyor was willing to meet the adjoining landowners, Messrs H F & J H Glover, to agree the position of the boundaries and provided this could be undertaken on the same day as the setting out, there would be no additional cost to the Council. However the surveyor was not able to give any assurances that this would be the case and if an additional visit was required there would be a charge of £250 plus VAT.

RESOLVED: That, the advice of the Council's appointed surveyor in respect of setting out the north and east boundaries in Foxborough Wood be accepted and arrangements be made for the surveyor to undertake the works at a cost of £495 plus VAT, (plus the cost of 9 no ground anchors at approximately £15.00 each, plus the cost of an additional visit to site of £250 plus VAT, if necessary).

12. Allotments

Cllr Barnett withdrew from the meeting

(a) The Committee was informed that the allotment holder on plot number 2 was a Team Manager for a Community Mental Health Team and had requested permission to take 3 or 4 people onto the allotment on a weekly basis as a daytime activity.

RESOLVED: That, permission be granted to the Team Manager to take 3 or 4 people onto the allotment plot no 2 on a weekly basis as a daytime activity, provided confirmation was obtained from the Community Health Team that adequate public liability insurance cover was in place for such visits.

(b) The Committee considered a report on a meeting with the allotment holders on 17th November 2009. The Committee expressed concern about the use of sprinklers. The Clerk reported a complaint received by an allotment holder regarding the height of the trees behind the recycling centre which were shading the allotment plot.

RESOLVED: That, (1) arrangements be made for the purchase of a dustbin, (2) a review of rules be placed on the agenda of the next meeting and (3) a quotation be sought to reduce the height of the trees behind the recycling centre.

Cllr Barnett returned to the meeting.

13. Tree management

The Committee considered a draft programme to extend quantified tree risk assessments to all areas of land owned or managed by the Council, including Foxborough Wood, Rectory Meadow, Billings Hill Shaw, Chantry Avenue, Woodland Avenue, Manor Field, Hoselands Green, Longfield Hill, Hartley Green, Hartley Court Green, Burial Ground and Closed Churchyard.

RESOLVED: That, quotations be sought from consultants to undertake a quantified tree risk assessment in line with the priorities set out in appendix 2 attached to these minutes.

14. Hoselands Green

The Committee was advised that the work proposed by Jacobs to construct a hard standing for a mobile speed camera on Hoselands Green could not be undertaken as the land was registered as a Village Green and such works were not permissible.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

15. Date of next meeting

Thursday 28th January 2010 at 7.30 p.m. in Hartley Library.

The meeting closed at 9.20 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	450.00	549.83	725.00	627.70	197.13
6 Open Spaces	2,590.00	2,227.00	26,050.00	17,180.11	8,506.89
7 Manor Field Pavilion	2,000.00	1,765.50	8,900.00	4,839.92	3,825.58
NET TOTAL	5,040.00	4,542.33	35,675.00	22,647.73	12,529.60
 Total for ALL Cost Centres		115,790.92		84,736.57	
V.A.T.		2,230.95		3,428.87	
GROSS TOTAL		118,021.87		88,165.44	

Open Space	Priority	Risk assessment undertaken (proposed date)	Quotations obtained for treework	Treework undertaken
Billings Hill Shaw	1	Jan 2010	Feb 2010	Mar 2010
Hoselands Green	1	Jan 2010	Feb 2010	Mar 2010
Gorse Wood	2	Feb – Mar 2010	Apr 2010	May – June 2010
Woodland Avenue	2	Feb – Mar 2010	Apr 2010	May – June 2010
Foxborough Wood	2	Following survey to identify location of north and east boundaries		
Rectory Meadow	3	Mar – Apr 2010	May 2010	Jun - Jul 2010
Chantry Avenue	3	Mar – Apr 2010	May 2010	Jun - Jul 2010
Longfield Hill	3	Mar – Apr 2010	May 2010	Jun - Jul 2010
Manor Field	3	Mar – Apr 2010	May 2010	Jun - Jul 2010
Burial Ground	3	Mar – Apr 2010	May 2010	Jun - Jul 2010
Closed church yard	3	Mar – Apr 2010	May 2010	Jun - Jul 2010
Hartley Green	3	Mar – Apr 2010	May 2010	Jun - Jul 2010
Hartley Court Green	3	Mar – Apr 2010	May 2010	Jun - Jul 2010
Hartley Wood	4	Apr – May 2010	Jun 2010	Jul - Aug 2010