

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 16th SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 7.30 p.m. AT HARTLEY LIBRARY, ASH
ROAD**

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

In Attendance: Mrs J Hoad (Clerk)
Mr D Rennison – Hartley De Sales FC
Mr M Quantrill – New Ash Green & Hartley CC
2 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mrs P Cole, Cllr S Granger and Cllr J Gaywood.

2. Declaration of Interests

Cllr Mrs A Oxtoby declared a personal interest under minute items 9 and 16, Quantified Tree Risk Assessments and Hartley Wood, as her private residence was located close to Hartley Wood.

3. Minutes of previous meetings

RESOLVED: That, the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 5th August 2010 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Cricket at Manor Field

Mr Quantrill reported that the New Ash Green and Hartley CC had experienced a number of difficulties over the past few years from a declining membership, but was hopeful the Cricket Club would continue. Next season they proposed to field two teams on a Saturday in the Kent County Village League and field one team on a Sunday for friendly fixtures.

Mr Quantrill explained that the Cricket Club had sited the practice net on rough ground next to the new Burial Ground, but that it tended to be moved by others to a location in front of the Pavilion. Nevertheless Mr Quantrill explained that he was happy for the practice net to be used informally by others, but acknowledged its current position in front of the Pavilion was not ideal as it caused wear to the grass in front of the Pavilion and on the football pitch. He confirmed the Cricket Club would be seeking planning permission for a permanent practice net following the refusal of planning permission earlier in the year.

Mr Quantrill informed the Committee that the Cricket Club intended to seed the ground on 9th October, but explained his concerns about the damage being caused by rabbits to the outfield and, to a lesser extent, the square. He explained the

rabbits tended to eat any new grass shoots and their scratchings caused damage to the surface of the ground on the outfield.

Mr Quantrill explained that they had not rolled the ground next to the corner of the new Burial Ground as the ground had been too hard. He reported that a roller had been moved from behind the Pavilion and was now located on the new Burial Ground. Mr Quantrill explained that neither of the 2 rollers at Manor Field belonged to the New Ash Green and Hartley CC, but very occasionally the Club had cause to use them. He agreed to move the roller from the new Burial Ground and store it in the Calor gas compound.

Mr Quantrill agreed that the sight screen nearest the Pavilion would be moved next to the litter bins for the winter.

The Committee was advised of an e mail from Hartley Country Club (HCC) enquiring about using the ground at Manor Field next season in conjunction with New Ash Green and Hartley CC. The HCC had been aware that the New Ash Green and Hartley CC had experienced difficulty fielding a second team towards the end of the current season and as a result a number of fixtures had been cancelled. The HCC suggested that if the New Ash Green and Hartley CC used the pitch every other weekend, they would be interested in hiring the pitch for the other Saturdays. Mr Quantrill explained that the New Ash Green and Hartley CC hoped to field 2 Saturday teams next year and therefore there would be no capacity at Manor Field for a team from HCC. Furthermore as the Cricket Clubs played in different leagues, he thought there could be a clash of fixtures.

RESOLVED: That,

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) Hartley Country Club be advised that there is currently no capacity at Manor Field and their request to hire the ground next season cannot, at present, be accommodated, but their request would be kept on file in case the situation changed in the future;
- (3) New Ash Green and Hartley Cricket Club be asked to move the sight screen nearest the Pavilion to a more convenient location next to the litter bins for the duration of the winter; and
- (4) New Ash Green and Hartley Cricket Club be asked to move the roller off the new Burial Ground and place in storage in the Calor gas compound.

5. Cricket at Longfield Hill

There was no report.

6. Football at Manor Field

(a) Mr Rennison was welcomed to the meeting.

Mr Rennison thanked Hartley Parish Council for the use of Manor Field by Hartley De Sales FC. He confirmed that the marking of the pitch next to the Pavilion was

satisfactory despite the fact that the pitch was slightly narrower than last season due to the positioning of the sight screen when the pitches were set out.

The Committee explained its concerns about the damage being caused by rabbits to the surface of the ground which could cause a hazard to the footballers. The Committee requested each football team must inspect their respective pitch immediately before each game and any hole or scratching filled in with sand or loam to form a flat and safe playing field.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the report be noted;

(2) Hartley De Sales FC be required to inspect the pitches immediately before every game and any holes or scratchings be filled in and levelled with sand or loam.

(b) The Committee considered the football fees for the 2010/11 season. The Committee was advised of the usage of Manor Field by Hartley De Sales FC for the 2010/11 season; 2 teams on the senior pitch and 2 teams on the junior pitch.

RECOMMENDED: That, Hartley De Sales FC be charged £360 per team for the use of the senior pitch and £310 per team for the use of the junior pitch, and that the fees be charged in two equal instalments in October and March, plus an additional charge for the marking out of the training pitch on a monthly basis.

7. Financial Report

The Committee considered a financial report indicating the net position of the allotments, open spaces and Manor Field Pavilion as at 9th September 2010.

The Committee was advised that last year the allotment holders had been given notice of an increase in the allotment rents for 2010/11 in line with the rate of inflation.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the financial report, attached as appendix 1 to these minutes, be noted; and

(2) the allotment rents for 2010/11 be increased by 3%, in line with the current rate of inflation.

8. Budget 2011/12

The Committee considered the draft budget for 2011/12 in respect of the allotments, open spaces and Manor Field Pavilion.

RESOLVED: That, the draft budget for 2011/12 in respect of the allotments, open spaces and Manor Field Pavilion, as set in appendix 2 attached to these minutes, be referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

9. Quantified Tree Risk Assessments

The Committee was advised of a meeting with Duramen Consulting Ltd on 21st September 2010 to discuss the content and findings of the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted.

10. Pavilion

The Committee was advised of an e mail received from New Ash Green and Hartley Cricket Club on 3rd September 2010 informing the Council that the lights were not working in either of the changing rooms and that the Clerk had made arrangements for an electrician to attend the site to repair the lights.

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

11. Manor Field

(a) Grant of electricity easement

The Committee considered the draft Deed of Easement in respect of the electricity cable at Manor Field.

RECOMMENDED: That, a solicitor be instructed to advise the Council on and execute the draft Deed of Easement, as set out in appendix 3 attached to these minutes, in respect of the electricity cable at Manor Field.

(b) Rabbit infestation

The Committee was advised of discussion at a meeting of the Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance Committee held on 31st August 2010 in respect of the installation of close boarded fencing along the southern and eastern boundaries of the new Burial Ground.

The Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance Committee felt that the provision of a close boarded fence would improve the visual amenity and prevent the encroachment of bramble from adjoining land. Furthermore the close boarded fence could be adapted, with a suitable mesh, to provide some control over the rabbits at Manor Field. However the Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance Committee considered the matter should be deferred until such time as the legal issues relating to the restrictive covenants and rights of access had been resolved. The Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance Committee resolved that further advice be sought on the control of rabbits at Manor Field.

A pest control company advised that the rabbits could be controlled by means of gassing and that they would inspect the area and come forward with a quotation to undertake the work. The Committee was informed of the views of the adjoining landowner who questioned the effectiveness of gassing the rabbits and was of the opinion that the erection of rabbit proof fencing would be more effective to control rabbits damaging Manor Field and beyond.

The Committee was advised that a quotation had been received in respect of the clearance of bramble from the 20 foot wide strip of land owned by Messrs H F & J H

Glover to the south of the new Burial Ground and along the boundary of Foxborough Wood in advance of the installation of new fencing along those boundaries.

The Committee felt that any future new fencing works in Manor Field and along the edge of the new Burial Ground should be undertaken in conjunction with the Burial Grounds and Gardens of Remembrance Committee.

RESOLVED: That, the matter be deferred.

(c) Repairs to brickwork and re-instatement of bench

The Committee considered a quotation in respect of repairs to brickwork and reinstatement of the bench at Manor Field.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the total sum of £226 from Graham Budd to reinstate the bench onto the existing concrete base in front of the Pavilion using anti-vandal fixings and to repair and replace, using appropriate bricks, the damaged brickwork on the edge of the steps leading to the Pavilion be accepted.

12. Longfield Hill

(a) Fence repairs

The Committee was advised of the Clerk's actions to instigate repairs to the damaged chestnut paling fence, adjacent to the road caused by an act of vandalism.

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

(b) Electricity sub-station and underground cable

The Committee considered a letter dated 14th July 2010 received from Freedom Group regarding the proposed installation of a new micro substation and relevant underground cables at Longfield Hill Recreation Ground. The reason for the works was to rectify a current voltage complaint which had arisen in the area. The Committee was advised of a site meeting which had taken place on 16th August 2010 with representatives from the Freedom Group and Meopham Cricket Club.

The Committee felt that the Council should be compensated in some form due to the disruption to the ground created by the proposed works, in addition to any Easement or Wayleave payment that could be due.

Some concern was expressed about the position of the cable close to the hedge and any damage it could cause the hedge.

RECOMMENDED: That, the proposed installation of a new micro substation and relevant underground cables at Longfield Hill recreation ground be agreed in principle, subject to advice on the amount of compensation that could be due to the Council for the disruption caused to the ground by the proposed works and payment of Easement or Wayleave in respect of the proposed installation, and subject to the Freedom Group's agreement to pay the Council's legal and professional costs in respect of the proposed installation.

(c) Moles

At the meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held on 5th August 2010 the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee, was authorised to accept a quotation in respect of the control of moles at Longfield Hill by means of gassing, provided the Contractor did not require the ground to be closed to members of the public.

The Committee was advised that the Contractor does not require the ground to be closed, but has recommended the works should now be delayed until February 2011, as the moles are now starting to hibernate for the winter until the breeding cycle resumes in February/March.

RESOLVED: That, the report be noted and the works for the control of moles at Longfield Hill be deferred until February 2011.

13. Woodland Avenue

(a) The Committee was advised of further vandalism to the gate of the play area at Woodland Avenue which occurred on 9th August 2010 and that the Clerk made arrangements for its repairs at a cost of £268 plus VAT.

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

(b) The Committee was advised of emergency action was taken on 6th September 2010 to remove smashed glass from the goalmouths of the football pitch at Woodland Avenue.

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

14. Gorse Wood

At a meeting held on 5th August 2010 the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee considered a request from a resident of 37 Porchester Close to prune a tree on land at Gorse Wood which was overhanging her property.

The Quantified Tree Risk Assessment undertaken by Duramen Consulting Ltd had identified some treework to a Whitebeam tree, (tree number 3/10) which was leaning towards property and recommended the tree be monitored.

A site inspection was undertaken with a local tree surgeon, at which the resident of 37 Porchester Close indicated that the tree causing concern was a Cherry tree. The tree surgeon confirmed the Cherry tree overhanging 37 Porchester Close was damaged and should be felled to the ground.

RESOLVED: That, the quotation for the sum of £280 plus VAT from Austin Treework to fell to the ground the damaged Cherry tree overhanging 37 Porchester Close be accepted.

15. Rectory Meadow

(a) The Committee considered a letter dated 31st August 2010 from the Rural Payments Agency advising of the results of a single payment scheme inspection carried out on 11th January 2010. The Rural Payments Agency advised that

following their inspection no evidence of any agricultural activity had been found on the land and therefore the land was not eligible for the scheme. Furthermore the Rural Payment Agency advised that it had rejected the 2009 claim for SPS and that would be seeking the recovery of payments made between 2005 and 2009. The Committee was advised this amounted to approximately £200.

The Committee expressed its surprise over the Rural Payment Agency's position, particularly as the Contractor employed to cut the grass used the grass cuttings for animal fodder and bedding, and therefore was an agricultural activity. The Committee considered that the management of Rectory Meadow followed the management plan prepared by the North Kent Countryside Project and in doing so met the single payment scheme criteria requiring the land be maintained in good agricultural and environmental condition. For all the aforementioned reasons the Committee considered the Council's claim satisfied the eligibility criteria for claims under the Single Payment Scheme. Furthermore nothing had changed to the management of the land since the Rural Payments Agency accepted the Council's application in 2005 to receive payments under the Scheme.

RESOLVED: That, representations be made to the Rural Payments Agency setting out the reasons why the Council considered it satisfied the eligibility criteria for making claims under the Single Payment Scheme at Rectory Meadow.

(b) The Committee was advised that the bench located in Rectory Meadow had been damaged by an act of vandalism sometime between 21st August 2010 and 26th August 2010. The bench had been set on fire and only the metal frame remained. The Clerk had made arrangements for the frame to be removed as it was unsafe.

RESOLVED: That,

(1) the report be noted and the Clerk's action confirmed; and

(2) expenditure upto a sum of £100 be authorised to fix the metal bench currently stored in the Calor gas compound to replace the vandalised bench at Rectory Meadow.

16. Hartley Wood

The Committee considered a letter dated 17th August 2010 from Kent County Council regarding Hartley Parish Council's application to voluntarily register land at Hartley Wood as a Village Green. The Committee examined two plans provided by Kent County Council and noted that the boundary of Pippins in Gorsewood Road was incorrect. Furthermore the plans showed no reference to the strip of land owned by Kent County Council under title number K347596.

RESOLVED: That, Kent County Council be informed of the inaccuracies relating to the boundary of Pippins, Gorsewood Road and advised that the land owned by Kent County Council under title number K347596 and K361245 should not be included in Hartley Parish Council's application to voluntarily register land in its ownership held under title numbers K887840 and K700099 as a Village Green.

17. Parish Plan

The Committee considered the action plan contained in the Hartley Parish Plan relating to the countryside.

RECOMMENDED: That, the comments and actions taken in respect of the Hartley Parish Plan action plan relating to the countryside, as set out in appendix 4 attached to these minutes, be approved and adopted by the Council.

18. Date of the next meeting

Monday 25th October 2010 at 7.30 p.m. in Hartley Library.

The meeting closed at 9.35 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	600.00	0.00	725.00	126.77	-1.77
6 Open Spaces	2,580.00	999.00	26,000.00	8,284.82	16,134.18
7 Manor Field Pavilion	2,500.00	864.50	8,825.00	3,612.24	3,577.26
NET TOTAL	5,680.00	1,863.50	35,550.00	12,023.83	19,709.67
Total for ALL Cost Centres		63,442.91		49,918.37	
V.A.T.		820.40		2,085.37	
GROSS TOTAL		64,263.31		52,003.74	

Expenditure	Budget 2010/11	Spent so far (upto Aug 10) (Column C)	Projected expenditure to 31st March 2011 (Column D)	Estimate for year (Column C + Column D)	Budget 2011/12	Notes
Allotments						
Maintenance	225.00	-	225.00	225.00	225.00	
Rent	200.00	100.00	100.00	200.00	-	To be transferred to HPC
Water	300.00	26.77	400.00	426.77	450.00	
SUB TOTAL	725.00	126.77	725.00	851.77	675.00	
Open Spaces						
Grass cutting	4,500.00	1,996.00	2,484.00	4,480.00	4,500.00	Contract re-let 2010
Gang mowing	2,250.00	1,235.00	1,400.00	2,635.00	2,750.00	Contract re-let 2010
General maintenance	4,500.00	1,058.70	4,200.00	5,258.70	6,000.00	See attached sheet for breakdown
Routine maintenance contract	6,500.00	2,660.00	4,172.00	6,832.00	7,000.00	
Playground maintenance	2,000.00	158.07	750.00	908.07	2,000.00	
Playground inspection	650.00	300.00	300.00	600.00	650.00	
Rubbish clearance	500.00	-	500.00	500.00	500.00	Gorse Wood (skip hire)
Dog bins	1,500.00	687.05	700.00	1,387.05	1,500.00	Based on 7 no bins
Rectory Meadow	2,250.00	-	1,700.00	1,700.00	1,700.00	See attached sheet for breakdown
Hartley Wood	750.00	-	-	-	-	
Pond	-	-	-	-	-	
Layby	-	-	-	-	-	

Miscellaneous expenses	200.00	-	200.00	200.00	200.00	
Cricket	250.00	190.00	-	190.00	200.00	Rolling
Football	150.00	-	300.00	300.00	350.00	Pitchmarker
SUB TOTAL	26,000.00	8,284.82	16,706.00	24,990.82	27,350.00	

Expenditure	Budget 2010/11	Spent so far (upto Aug 10) (Column C)	Projected expenditure to 31st March 2011 (Column D)	Estimate for year (Column C + Column D)	Budget 2011/12	Notes
Manor Field Pavilion						
Cesspool	950.00	293.00	592.00	885.00	950.00	10/11 6 no empties per year @ £148 per empty
Calor gas	1,200.00	18.33	1,200.00	1,218.33	1,300.00	
Electricity	700.00	374.79	375.00	749.79	800.00	
Water	150.00	25.51	100.00	125.51	150.00	
Rates	625.00	518.93	-	518.93	625.00	
Cleaning	1,450.00	660.00	730.00	1,390.00	1,450.00	
Cleaning materials	100.00	21.49	25.00	46.49	50.00	
Maintenance	2,500.00	1,437.00	2,000.00	3,437.00	1,500.00	10/11- Paint storage container/elect meter relocation /paint hall & corridor 11/12 no decoration
Testing	900.00	263.19	650.00	913.19	800.00	5 year fixed wiring test undertaken in June 2009
Miscellaneous	250.00	-	250.00	250.00	250.00	
SUB TOTAL	8,825.00	3,612.24	5,922.00	9,534.24	7,875.00	

Income	Budget 2010/11	Received so far (upto Aug 10) (Column C)	Projected income to 31st March 2011 (Column D)	Estimate for year (Column C + Column D)	Budget 2011/12	Notes
Allotments						
Rent	600.00	-	625.00	625.00	640.00	
SUB TOTAL	600.00	-	625.00	625.00	640.00	
Income	Budget 2010/11	Received so far (upto Aug 10) (Column C)	Projected income to 31st March 2011 (Column D)	Estimate for year (Column C + Column D)	Budget 2011/12	
Open Spaces						
Rectory Meadow	-	-	-	-	-	* £900 NAG & Hartley CC (2009 & 2010 seasons)
Cricket *	1,380.00	-	1,380.00	1,380.00	1,400.00	* £480 Meopham CC (rent fixed to 2012)
Football **	1,200.00	99.00	1,300.00	1,399.00	1,350.00	** 2009/10 fees - £350/team full size pitch &
SUB TOTAL	2,580.00	99.00	2,680.00	2,779.00	2,750.00	** £300/team junior pitch

Income	Budget 2010/11	Received so far (upto Aug 10) (Column C)	Projected income to 31st March 2011 (Column D)	Estimate for year (Column C + Column D)	Budget 2011/12
Manor Field Pavilion					
Lettings	2,000.00	665.00	850.00	1,515.00	1,500.00
Yoga	500.00	147.00	200.00	347.00	350.00
Art Group	-	-	-	-	-
SUB TOTAL	2,500.00	812.00	1,050.00	1,862.00	1,850.00

*** Testing**

Water temp	240.00
Chlorination	180.00
Legionella	200.00
PAT	50.00
Fire extinguishers	75.00
Fixed wiring	<u>500.00</u>
	<u>1,245.00</u>