

NORTHFIELD MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday 18th May 2007 in the Viewing Gallery of Ash Green Sports Centre

Present: Cllr A Barnett
Cllr. M Brown (Chairman)
Cllr. Mrs C Clark
Cllr. J Gaywood
Cllr. S Glover
Cllr. Mrs A Oxtoby

In Attendance: Mrs J Redman
Mrs J Hoad
4 members of the Public

Cllr. Mrs Oxtoby was welcomed to her first Northfield meeting as a member of the Management Committee.

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs. Brown and Mrs Clark a personal interest in any matter relating to the New Ash Green Village Association. Cllr. Mrs Oxtoby a personal interest in item 7 Recreational Facilities – Horse Riding Route. Cllr. Glover a prejudicial interest in items 6.1 Cutting of the Silage/Hay 2007 and 8.1 Boundary fence between Courtfield, Cavan and Northfield.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 13th April 2007

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th April 2007 were signed as a true record.

4. Matters Arising (Not on the Agenda)

None.

5. Finance

5.1 Balances – The balances, as set out in Agenda A/05/07, were NOTED.

5.2 Financial Statement – The financial statement, as set out in Agenda A/05/07, was NOTED.

5.3 The payments 3.1 – 3.3, as set out in Agenda A/05/07, were AUTHORISED.

PROPOSED Cllr. Brown, SECONDED Cllr. Gaywood and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.

5.4 Financial Risk Assessment – The Financial Risk Assessment, as set out in Agenda A/05/07, was discussed. The Committee agreed some minor changes to the document and a copy showing those changes is attached to these minutes.

5.5 (i) Review of the effectiveness of the system of internal audit for the period 1st April 2006 to 31st March 2007 – Under the Accounts and Audit (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2006, there was a requirement for the Committee to undertake a review of the effectiveness of its internal control. A draft review was considered by the Committee. It was AGREED that, when the Internal Auditor carried out his next internal review in Hartley, possibly during September or October 2007, that two members of the Northfield Management Committee visited and spoke to him and that this would be added to the draft review. It was suggested that a member from Ash and a member from Hartley undertook the visit. It was likely that this would be the two Co-Chairmen.

5.5 (ii) Notice of Appointment of date for the exercise of electors' rights – It was NOTED that the notice of appointment of date for the exercise of electors' rights was displayed in both parishes on 16th April 2007. Any persons interested has the opportunity to inspect and make copies of the Annual Return and all books, deeds, contracts, bills and receipts etc. relating to them and for the year ended 31st March 2007 these documents will be available on reasonable notice on application to the

Treasurer at the offices of Hartley parish council commencing on 15th May 2007 and ending on 12th June 2007.

5.6 Standing Orders – As there were likely to be changes to the Committee's Standing Orders as a result of the publication of the Revised Code of Conduct, it was AGREED that their review be deferred until such time as the parish councils had conducted a review of their own Standing Orders. PROPOSED Cllr. Brown, SECONDED Cllr. Gaywood and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.

5.7 Financial Regulations – It was AGREED that the review of the Committee's Financial Regulations be deferred and dealt with at the same time as the review of the Standing Orders.

6. Land and Site Maintenance

6.1 Cutting of Silage/Hay 2007 – It was NOTED that the quotation from Messrs. HF and JH Glover for £500 for the work had been accepted.

6.2 Footpath barrier leading into Stocks Field – It was PROPOSED BY Cllr. Mrs Clark, SECONDED by Cllr. Barnett and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the quotation from TD Munday for **£156.50** to supply and erect a footpath barrier leading into Stocks field be accepted.

6.3 Ragwort removal – Cllr. Barnett reported that he had been on to Northfield to assess if there was a problem with the ragwort and whether or not it required removal. In his opinion it should be removed and he suggested that the most effective way would be to spray it. A spray could be purchased which cost about **£50**. It was PROPOSED by Cllr. Barnett, SECONDED by Cllr. Mrs Clark and UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the spray be purchased and the authority given to action its removal at the appropriate time.

7. Recreational Facilities – Horse Riding Route

7.1 Re-opening of the ride and the continuing vandalism to the route – Cllr Mrs Oxtoby reported that the ride had opened on the 18th April. The vandalism to the route continued with notices being taken down. The Crime Prevention Officer had visited the site and had suggested marking the intersections of the ride with dustbins, filled with concrete and reinforcing rods, which would act as marker posts. The mown strip was now growing out and the Committee were asked to consider the use of Roundup which would be sprayed on the grass to mark the route and ensure that it remained defined. This was AGREED and Cllr. Mrs Oxtoby agreed to organise the spraying.

7.2 Insurance – It was NOTED that the parish councils insurers had confirmed their acceptance of the changes to the way the route was now marked out and that the existing Public Liability Section of the policy would extend to include the legal liabilities of the parish councils as far as they could apply.

7.3 Emails of objection from a resident of Farm Holt, New Ash Green to the horse riding route – The Committee discussed the emails that had been received outlining objections to the horse riding route and in particular the fact that the horse riding route was not physically separated from the rest of the of Northfield. The Committee NOTED the concerns of the resident but it was re-iterated that the route was initially for a trial period of six months and if after that time, during the review process, there were issues of this kind they would be addressed and any action necessary would be taken. The Secretary was requested to write to the correspondent and thank him for his emails.

7.4 Letter from the Meopham & District Bridleways Association - The letter from the Meopham & District Bridleways Association was NOTED.

8. Boundaries

8.1 Boundary between Courtfield and Northfield – A reply had been received from one of the landowners concerning the boundary fence. However, it was AGREED that the matter would be deferred until the Committee had heard from both.

8.2 Western boundary fence – It was NOTED that a detailed specification for future consideration of post and rail fencing would be drawn up.

8.3 Hedge along the Ash Road Boundary – It was NOTED that the Highways Authority had been asked to re-consider topping the hedge via their monthly spreadsheet. The Secretary was now asked to write a specific letter to the Highways Authority requesting that the hedge was topped and await their response. If that response was negative, it was suggested that a letter be written to Hadlow College to see if they would be able to assist.

Cllr. Barnett said that the hedge along the Caling Croft boundary required attention and a specification would be drawn up and quotes obtained in time for the next meeting. The Village Association would be reminded to clear the brambles along this stretch of the southern boundary.

9. Barnetts Wood and New House Shaw

9.1 Log Barrier New House Shaw – Cllr. Gaywood felt that the structure was not substantial enough to withstand in the long term. It was proposed that further careful thought was given to its future.

9.2 Quantitative Risk Assessment on New House Shaw – It was NOTED that the Contractor had visited the site as part of the assessment process.

9.3 To consider planting more trees on Northfield – It was NOTED that information would be sought from the Forestry Commission.

9.4 Barnetts Wood – It was NOTED that the retained portion for the planting of Barnetts Wood had been received from the Forestry Commission.

10. Health and Safety

10.1 Visual Inspection Sheets – The visual inspection sheets for March/April 2007 were available for members to view and was NOTED.

10.2 EDF Energy – It was NOTED that following the meeting held on 12th April the VA's Solicitor had written to EDF's Solicitor to see if they were willing to agree to a sub-lease. Once this had been determined, the Northfield Management Committee would have to arrange for the land to be demised to be valued by the District Valuer and he would have to fix the rent. The proposed disposal would then have to be advertised in the local press before the sub-lease could be granted.

11. Single Payment and Environmental Stewardship Scheme

11.1 Single payment scheme – Cllr. Barnett reported that DEFRA had finally sorted out what the correct hectorage of Northfield was in connection with our SPS payments. Cllr. Barnett had obtained forms for the ELS scheme and would be completing these in the near future. Thanks were recorded to Cllr. Barnett for all the hard work that he had undertaken in dealing with DEFRA.

12. Correspondence and date of next meeting

12.1 – 12.2 NOTED. The date of the next meeting was set for **Friday 27th July 2007 in the Pavilion, Manor Field, Hartley.**

13. Any other business

Quotations for weedkilling and fertilizing the play area would be obtained.

Meeting closed at 11.15am