

PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Grounds Committee held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Petersfield, on Thursday 13 November 2008 at 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mrs H Ayer (Chairman), Mr R Ayer, Mr W Organ and Mr C Shore

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr N Hitch (Town Clerk), Mrs S McMorran (Deputy Town Clerk), Petersfield Post, Petersfield Herald and 3 members of the public

G 0381 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Bill Organ to the Grounds committee. She also wished to thank the retiring secretary of the Allotment Association, Kathy Higgs, for her hard work over the last two years. The Chairman also advised that Portsmouth and Southsea Rotary Club had decided that they would not be holding a dragon boat racing event at Heath Pond in 2009. They had decided to use Lakeside at Cosham instead.

G 0382 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Jenner and Mr Aiston.

G 0383 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Grounds Committee held on 16 October 2008 be approved.

G 0384 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Shore declared a personal interest as he was a tenant at Sheet Allotments, minute number G 0389 refers.

Mr Organ declared a personal interest as the tenant of plots 78 and 80 at Sheet was a personal friend, minute number G 0389 refers.

RESOLVED: that the meeting be adjourned for a 5 minute period, in order for members of the public to discuss matters of interest with Councillors.

As no members of the public wished to speak the meeting was re-convened.

G 0385 GROUND'S REPORT - TOWN CLERK

Members received and noted the grounds report a copy of which is attached to these minutes at Appendix A.

G 0386 THE HEATH – PETERSFIELD CRICKET CLUB

Members received a proposal from Petersfield Cricket Club regarding the maintenance of the cricket ground on The Heath, copy attached to these minutes at Appendix B. Members felt that this matter should be considered as part of the discussions for the new grounds maintenance contract.

To allow Mr Blakstad of the Cricket club to address the meeting it was

RESOLVED to suspend standing orders.

Mr Blakstad informed those present that at the present time the club mowed the outfield and the contractor paid the club. The club also maintained the cricket square totally at their own cost. It was hoped that, from January 2010 the club would have a direct contract with the Town Council for all the maintenance of the cricket ground.

The meeting was re-convened.

Following further discussion it was

RESOLVED that the letter and proposal be noted and would be given further consideration when the specification/draft grounds maintenance contract had been received from the Town Council's consultant.

G 0387 LOVE LANE SPORTS GROUND – SKATEPARK

Prior to discussion, to allow Mr Wells to address the meeting it was

RESOLVED to suspend standing orders.

Mr Wells advised that the height of the fence had been increased from 6 feet to 10 feet. This would mean that the fence would be a maximum of 18 feet high in some places. It was intended that planting be undertaken to soften the appearance of the fence. The football club had been asked for comments but had not yet responded.

The meeting was re-convened.

Members voiced concerns at the scale of the plans which were very small. Any increase in the height of the fence would need to be agreed by the Planning Authority. Following further discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk and Mr Wells visit the Planning Department at EHDC with the revised fence height plans to seek their opinion and report back to the Grounds committee.

G 0388

SHEET RECREATION GROUND - SCOUT HUT

Members received details of a revised site for the proposed new Scout Hut which would now be sited alongside the current hut.

Following consideration it was

RESOLVED that the revised site next to the existing Scout Hut be agreed subject to the necessary planning permission.

G 0389

ALLOTMENTS**A. Newsletter**

Members received and noted the autumn newsletter from Sheet and Tilmore Allotment Association.

B. Plot 78 and 80 at Sheet Allotments

Members received a letter from the tenant of plots 78 and 80 at Sheet Allotments. Members were advised that the Allotment Act of 1922, s.22(1) and 1950 Act s.14(1) stated that an allotment garden meaning was "an allotment not exceeding forty poles in extent which is wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for the consumption by himself or his family".

It was commented that it was obvious from the letter from the tenant that she was a very keen tenant but noted that her plots did not look like others on the site. Members were loathe to terminate the tenancy of the plots at this time, however it was felt that improvements should be requested and agreed with the tenant and reviewed in the Spring.

RESOLVED that the tenant of plots 78 and 80 at Sheet Allotments be allowed to continue the tenancy providing improvements agreed at a site visit with the tenant, the Chairman of Grounds and the Deputy Town Clerk be carried out to establish a way forward with the cultivation of both plots with the situation being reviewed in March 2009.

C. Tap at Tilmore Allotments

An estimate in the sum of £694.18 plus VAT was received for the installation of a tap at Tilmore allotments (G 0153 refers). Discussion took place regarding a bid for developers' contributions for this work.

RECOMMENDED that a bid for developer's contributions be made for the installation of a tap at Tilmore Allotments in the sum of £694.18.

G 0390 **THE HAMPSHIRE PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION**

An invitation to attend the Hampshire Playing Fields Association AGM on 18 November 2008 at Winchester Tennis and Squash Club was received. Anyone interested in attending was asked to contact the Town Clerk.

G 0391 **PITCH HIRE POLICY**

The Chairman asked members to consider formulating a pitch hire policy. The Chairman had noticed what she thought maybe unauthorised use of pitches for coaching at Love Lane during the recent half term holiday. It was suggested that a list of bookings be produced for both Love Lane and Penns Farm. The Town Clerk informed those present that the pitches were used at weekends by the Town Juniors Football Club, Liss Athletic and the Rugby Club on a regular basis. Some casual hires were also booked. Nearly all the Town Council's leases stated no sub-letting without permission of the Town Council. The Chairman felt there was a lot of casual use but that the pitches were not officially hired. It was suggested that if goal nets were not in the goals it was quite possible that the pitches had not been hired officially.

Following further consideration it was

RESOLVED that Officers write to the Town Juniors Football Club regarding use of the pitches at Love Lane for coaching during October half term and once a reply had been received Officers to also write to Aspire Coaching (if necessary). Members would be notified of any casual hires of pitches and a pitch hire policy would be discussed at a future meeting of the Grounds committee.

G 0392 **MAINTENANCE OF HEATHFIELD/BARNFIELD LINK**

Members gave consideration to the on-going maintenance of the Heathfield/Barnfield Link. It was suggested that shrubs be removed and that the area be grassed. This was not felt to be a suitable solution. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that the maintenance of the emergency link at Heathfield/Barnfield Road remain as written in the current grounds maintenance contract.

G 0393

GROUNDS POLICY DOCUMENT - ANNUAL REVIEW

Following consideration it was

RESOLVED that the Grounds Policy Document be amended as follows:

Remove the following "dependant upon financial restraints placed upon the committee"

Allotments: ...To ensure all sites are maintained in a reasonable condition.

Fairs/Circus:In letting any facilities The Town Council...

Dogs:..signs and dog bins.... Remove "to help to ensure that the public are aware of their responsibilities".

Litter: remove "to help control the problem of litter".

The Heath: remove "and restoration". ...and The Heath Pond as advised by the Heath Integrated Management Plan

Play Equipment: add " To put in place a strategy document to determine appropriate play provision for both children and young people".

Access for the Disabled: To provide access.... add "and facilities where reasonable".

Conservation Groups: To work in partnership with conservation.....

Add: Children and Young People: To recognise the needs and requirements for both children and young people of Petersfield.

Add This policy is subject to the Town Council's financial strategy.

An amended policy is attached for information at Appendix C.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.47 pm

Appendix A.



GROUNDS REPORT

To Grounds Committee
Thursday 13th November 2008

Members will be aware that the Maintenance Contracts Officer has now returned to work on a phased basis on the recommendation of his medical practitioner. He will be back to his full 4 days per week at the end of the month

Grass Cutting

Grass growth has slowed significantly. All open spaces have had a cut within the last fortnight.

The Heath

I have met the Forestry Commission concerning the licence for the woodland work adjacent to the cricket pitch who was content with the proposals outlined. Interestingly, in the north-east corner of the Heath where woodland was cleared earlier this year, there is evidence of heather regeneration already. This is most encouraging and the 'good news' has been passed to the 'Friends'

Penns Farm

The winter feed of the pitches has been ordered as per the budget. I have been approached by the Petersfield Town Juniors with an offer from them to replace all the goalposts on the pitches at Penns. They are seeking a grant from the Football Association for the work and require a letter from me confirming the arrangements in place for them to use the facilities. If we wanted the Liss Athletic pitch to have the same posts, we would need to provide half the cost (£1,500) which is clearly not within our budget at present.

Woods Meadow

The football goal in the playing field has been replaced. A complaint has been received from a neighbouring landowner that the fence between the recreation ground and his land has been trodden down by youngsters fetching their footballs. The Order to repair the fence (which is our responsibility) has been issued and the goal is being moved nearer the centre of the field to try to combat the number of balls that go over the fence.

The Avenue

The new fence has now been installed which I am sure has been noticed by members. Also, the chestnut paling fencing beside the private road has been installed and the hawthorn hedge alongside it has been planted.

Bell Hill

Following the fireworks display I am told that the recreation ground is not in the greatest condition. To date, I have not been able to go and inspect myself but will do so in the not too distant future.

Neil Hitch
Town Clerk

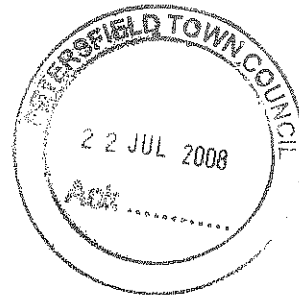
13th November 2008

Please reply to
10 Blackmoor House
Sotherington Lane
Blackmoor
Liss
Hampshire
GU33 6DA

Appendix B
Petersfield
Cricket
Club



Mr N Hitch
Town Clerk
Petersfield Town Council
The Town Hall
Heath Road
Petersfield GU31 4EA



22nd July 2008

Dear Mr Hitch,

Re: Proposal for Maintenance of the Heath Cricket Ground

Further to the meeting with Petersfield Town Council and Mr Martin Ford on Thursday 3rd July 2008 regarding Grounds Maintenance, Petersfield Cricket Club would like Petersfield Town Council to consider a direct maintenance contract with the Cricket Club for the Cricket Ground at the Heath. As you are most probably aware maintenance of a Cricket Pitch is very specialised and is not well suited to be included in a general grounds maintenance contract, a point which was agreed at the meeting on 3rd July.

Currently the Club maintains the ground but is reimbursed by the grounds contractor purely for mowing the outfield.

Please find below the necessary yearly maintenance which needs to be carried out at the Heath Cricket Ground.

1 a) Mowing the Heath Outfield

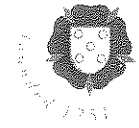
The annual cost is assessed at £125 per cut x 20 cuts ie. £2,500. This includes for labour, fuel, depreciation and RPI at 4.3%. Full details can be provided.
The Club currently has a similar arrangement with EHDC for the Penns Place Ground, which works very well.

1 b) Periphery Mowing

During the cricket season the periphery beyond the outfield needs to be cut to keep long grass, brambles, etc in check and to avoid the loss of expensive cricket balls.
The annual cost is assessed at £610. Full details can be provided.

2 Winter Maintenance Materials

The Club currently purchase materials for winter maintenance. These include loam, grass seed, fertiliser and weed killer.
The annual cost is assessed at £1064 including RPI at 4.3%. Full breakdown details can be provided.



3a) Groundsman

The annual cost of a groundsman for:

- i) Pitch preparation is assessed at £2,125
 - ii) cutting and rolling the square is assessed at £825
- TOTAL £2,950

Please note this figure does not include RPI.

Full breakdown details can be provided.

3b) Fuel for Square

This is assessed at £410 per annum

Full breakdown details can be provided.

3c) Depreciation for Replacement of Machinery used on the Square

This is assessed at £700 per annum.

Full breakdown details can be provided.

4 Spiking Outfield

To help with the problem with drainage, maintenance is carried out using specialist machinery on the outfield twice a year.

The annual cost is assessed at £1,375

5 Machinery Maintenance Fund

Because of the specialist nature of our machinery, when there is a breakdown it usually means high expenditure. For instance, last year we spent £1,400 on a major repair to the 'Turf Cutter' cylinder mower.

Also each year the machinery goes for annual servicing.

We assess the annual overall cost on average for servicing, repairs and blade sharpening is £1,500.

TOTAL COST PER ANNUM £11,109.

We would suggest that this is a four year contract between Petersfield Cricket Club and Petersfield Town Council, commencing on 1st January 2010, with annual price reviews in line with RPI (or the same period as the main grounds contract if this differs).

The Club do make grant applications to various organisations for other items not covered in the above costs.

It is hoped that the Town Council will agree that this is the best way forward for the proper maintenance of this beautiful Cricket Ground which is enjoyed by many visitors as well as Cricketers, and with correct maintenance will continue to be enjoyed for many years to come.

Yours sincerely,

N Blakstad
Chairman PCC

POLICY FOR GROUNDS COMMITTEE - G 0393 November 2008 refers

To encourage and promote full use of Petersfield Town Council's Open Spaces and Sports Grounds for the enjoyment of the public.

- Allotments:** To hold users meetings every year in the Autumn. To ensure all sites are maintained in a reasonable condition.
- Fairs/Circus:** To allow a maximum of 3 fairs/circus per year at each venue although this may be waived in exceptional circumstances. In letting any facilities the Town Council to be mindful of the impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- Trees and Hedgerows:** To maintain existing trees and hedgerows and protect worthwhile specimens. To plant trees as necessary, in consultation with an arboricultural expert. To remove all dead/dying trees in accordance with Health and Safety policy
- Dogs:** To place dog signs and dog bins at all open spaces and sports grounds.
- Litter:** To place litter bins at all open spaces and sports grounds.
- The Heath:** To encourage and promote the management of The Heath and The Heath Pond, as advised by the Heath Integrated Management Plan.
- Angling:** To work together with the Petersfield Angling Club to promote good fishing practice at The Heath Pond.
- Boats:** To work together with the Boating Concessionaire to ensure boating is carried out in a suitable and safe manner. To limit the number of boats on The Heath Pond to a maximum of 45.
- Model Boats:** To allow use of the Pond for the purpose of sailing model boats.
- Play Equipment:** To maintain, repair, enhance and replace (when necessary) play equipment at open spaces and sports grounds and to put in place a strategy document to determine appropriate play provision for both children and young people.
- Seats:** To maintain and repair existing seats at open spaces and sports grounds.
- Contractors:** To use local workforce whenever possible.
- Access for the Disabled:** To provide access for the disabled to all Petersfield Town Council's open spaces, sports grounds and facilities, where reasonable.
- Recreation Grounds:** To allow occasional use for overnight camping by established, organised groups.
- Fencing:** To maintain and repair existing fencing at sports grounds and open spaces.
- Sports Grounds:** To encourage full use by the public of all facilities available at Petersfield Town Council's Sports Grounds and to facilitate User Meetings.
- Conservation Groups:** To promote work in partnership with conservation groups working on Petersfield Town Council land.
- Carbon Footprint:** To pay due regard to the Town Council's carbon footprint and the environmental impact of the Grounds policies and activities.
- Users Meeting:** To hold a Grounds Users Meeting in November each year
- Children and Young People:** To recognise the needs and requirements for both children and young people of Petersfield

This Policy is subject to the Town Council's Financial Strategy.