

PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Grounds Committee held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Petersfield, on Thursday 11 July 2013 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs L Farrow (Chairman), Cllr Mrs S Harwood, Cllr W Organ and Cllr Ms M Vincent.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr N Hitch (Town Clerk), Mrs A Church (Committee Administrator), Mr John Crowhurst, two members of the Heath Pond Association and the proprietor of The Plump Duck on The Heath.

G 0180 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman said that there had been local press reports on the potential for using Penns Farm playing fields as a housing development. However, no statement on these reports would be issued by the Committee until the matter had been discussed by Petersfield Town Council.

G 0181 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr G Budden and Cllr Mrs J Dickinson.

G 0182 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Grounds Committee held on 13 June 2013 be approved and signed.

G 0183 DISPENSATION UNDER SECTION 33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)

No requests for dispensation were received.

G 0184 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

G 0185 PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

A request to speak had been received from Mr John Crowhurst concerning encouraging young anglers to The Heath Pond.

Mr Crowhurst explained that local anglers were going to commercial fisheries rather than to The Heath Pond to fish as The Heath Pond had suffered from total neglect.

Mr Crowhurst felt that young anglers also were being totally neglected by Petersfield Town Council. The Pond needed to be fished in an interesting way which would encourage young people to come to fish. The senior anglers themselves did work with young anglers and would help them even if they could not afford to pay. He said that a previous grant of £30,000 for work to be carried out on The Pond had not been fully utilised, with the result that £10,000 of unused grant had to be returned. He felt that around £100,000 would be needed to carry out the objectives of the Heath Pond Working Party.

G 0186

GROUNDS REPORT

Members received and noted the Grounds Report of 4 July 2013 by the Town Clerk.

Penns Farm Playing Fields:

The Town Clerk had received a telephone call from a resident who had complained that the tree-bund had grown so large it was preventing the reception of satellite signals.

The Committee sympathised with the situation and would be happy for the resident to obtain a quotation for work on the tree-bund to put to the Committee. The work would also need a Tree Preservation Application. However, the cost of any work that may be agreed would have to be borne by the resident.

The Committee discussed the frequency of and reasons for cutting Field 'A' at a cost of £114.00 per cut and also the cutting of Field 'B'. It was agreed that Field 'A' should continue to be cut monthly up to October 2013 and that, next year, it should be cut only every 6-8 weeks. It was felt that, because Field 'B' is a good wild area, it should not be cut.

Love Lane Recreation Ground

Japanese knotweed had been on Love Lane at times in the past. The last time it was reported as a problem to Burleys was in 2010. Burleys were now undertaking a continuous programme of work until it was eradicated.

The Committee asked whether the wild flower planting on Love Lane had been carried out and this would be queried with Burleys.

The Heath

It was confirmed that a weekly record of the green algal growth on The Pond is being kept.

G 0187

BARBECUES ON THE HEATH

The Committee considered the views received by e-mail from Mr Nick Heasman of the South Downs National Park on allowing barbecues on The Heath.

RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to allow the two members of the The Heath Pond Association present to speak.

Considerable discussion took place by the Committee who also took into account the experiences of The Heath Pond Association in dealing with informal barbecues on The Heath. Because of the potential fire risk, grass damage and litter problems, it was felt that only authorised, controlled barbecues should be allowed.

Notice boards should be erected in four places: (1) the junction with Sussex Road; (2) near the car park; (3) on the outside of the Wendy House; (4) on The Heath toilets. This should read "NO FIRES OR UNAUTHORISED BARBECUES BY ORDER OF PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL" and be followed by a contact number and address.

RECOMMENDED that barbecues on The Heath not be allowed unless specifically approved by the Council and that signage to advise the public be erected on The Heath toilets, outside the Wendy House and on the two notice boards near to Sussex Road and the car park.

G 0188

PROPOSED COVERED SEATING AREA AT THE PLUMP DUCK

RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to allow Mr Ian Baker, proprietor of The Plump Duck on The Heath, to speak.

Mr Baker was proposing to install a three-sided, covered seating area at The Plump Duck to enable him to expand the services he could offer to customers. He had contacted the South Downs National Park authority who had liked the design but would prefer it to be on two sides only. This would be very restrictive for Mr Baker and the Chartered Architect was currently in discussion with South Downs to modify the three-sided plan so that it could be given their approval. It was confirmed that the new building would not cut into the bank.

With regard to the concession agreement for The Plump Duck, it was confirmed that, at the end of the period of the lease and should it not be renewed with Mr Baker, the fixed structure would be handed over to the Town Council with only the non-fixed items being retained by him.

Mr Baker outlined the many ideas he had for The Plump Duck if approval and, subsequently, planning permission were given.

The Committee approved the designs in principle, subject to planning permission, and

RECOMMENDED that the Finance & General Purposes Committee and the Town Council consider and approve the proposal to install a three-sided, covered seating area at The Plump Duck on The Heath.

G 0189

HEATH POND ASSOCIATION - EXTENDED TERM
(Minute C 0206 August 2011 refers)

The Town Clerk advised the Committee that the Heath Pond Association had taken over the management of The Pond in an efficient and professional way, keeping on top of any problems as they arose. They were also actively involved in The Heath Pond Working Party.

The Heath Pond Association had an almost full take-up of fishing permits. With reference to the previous Minute G 0185, the Association representatives confirmed that there were fewer younger anglers fishing at The Heath and it was an experienced anglers site. Disabled anglers were always welcomed and paid a reduced price. In August 2011, the Grounds Committee had agreed to a one year rolling programme for the Association. The Association was now asking for continued operation but for an extended period of 3 - 5 years.

The Committee went through the approved July 2011 paper by the Heath Pond Association and the Association members explained the situation with regard to stocking The Pond, controlling the algae, monitoring the oxygen levels and the fact that The Pond was too big to net. The following amendments to the July 2011 paper were agreed:

- Pages 1 (front cover) and 2: Contact names to be updated.
- Page 3 (f) to read: "We will endeavour to monitor the fish population by appropriate means."
- Page 3 (g): Remove the word "catfish".
- Page 3 (i): Remove reference to the Maintenance Contracts Officer.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council consider and approve that the amended Heath Pond Management Paper be accepted for five years, subject to a review after three years.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council consider and approve an annual ticket pricing review each March (1st July being the start of the fishing season).

G 0190

PLAY AREAS AT BOROUGH ROAD AND WOODS MEADOW

The Committee considered the re-development plans for the play areas at Borough Road and Woods Meadow put forward, after consultation, by Greenspan Projects. The layout was the first phase of the project and the provision of equipment would be the second phase. If Greenspan were awarded the contract for the whole project, they would deduct the layout costs of approximately £900 - £1,000.

Some doubts were expressed about the proposed changes to the Borough Road site as it was currently very attractive, in good condition and well used. However, it was noted that, at the last Play and Say Day, there was a demand for improvements to the Borough Road play area.

The Committee requested that the words "Car Park" on the right hand side of the Borough Road plan be removed.

It was agreed that a consultation day for the public on the proposed developments should be held in the Avenue Pavilion during August 2013, following which the Grounds Committee could consider the matters raised at their September meeting. It was suggested that the date for the consultation day should be between 19 - 23 August. Committee members would be advised of the date. It was noted that The Avenue Users Group would be holding their meeting on Tuesday 20 August.

The consultation day should be widely advertised and also notices about it should be put up at the play areas at The Heath, Bell Hill, Borough Road and Woods Meadow.

RESOLVED that the Grounds Committee reconsider the proposed development plans for the play areas at Borough Road and Woods Meadow at their meeting on 12 September 2013, following the consultation event to be held at The Avenue Pavilion during August.

G 0191

REPAIR OF THE TOILETS ON THE HEATH

The Committee considered the three quotations/information received for the repair to the outer door of the toilets on The Heath, the door to be either of powder coated steel or of wood as at present. It was felt that there were insufficient details available to compare the three quotations.

RECOMMENDED that the decision to repair the toilets on The Heath be deferred until further information was available to the Grounds Committee.

G 0192

PERIMETER FENCE OF THE LITTLE SCHOOL

The Committee considered the proposal from The Little School to alter the perimeter fence on The Heath side of the nursery and studied the plans.

RESOLVED that the Grounds Committee defer making a decision on the proposal to alter the perimeter fence of The Little School until the terms of their Lease have been reviewed.

G 0193

PROVISION OF A 'KICK WALL' AT THE AVENUE PLAYING FIELDS

Considerable discussion took place about the possible provision of a kick wall and where it could be sited. In general, it was not felt that this would prevent balls being kicked at the perimeter wall.

The Town Clerk confirmed that there was no CCTV camera available to use at the Avenue Playing Fields. It was possible that he could obtain some free netting for the existing goal posts. It was noted that the grass area around the current goal posts needed to be re-seeded and, in the Autumn, the goal posts could be moved 20 yards towards the road while re-seeding took place.

The Committee were informed that the tennis courts on the Avenue were well used and members discussed the possibility of fitting in a third tennis court on the Playing Fields by re-locating the goal posts. In looking at the site plan, it appeared possible to fit an extra tennis court into the playing fields.

RECOMMENDED that the young people using The Avenue Playing Fields for football should be canvassed for their views on the provision of a kick wall.

G 0194

(Addendum)

MEETING HELD ON 5 JULY 2013 CONCERNING 'SECRETS OF THE HEATH' EVENT ON 31 AUGUST AND 1 SEPTEMBER 2013.

The Committee received and considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2013 concerning the 'Secrets of The Heath' event. Members felt it was a positive, high profile event which would increase the public's knowledge of The Heath.

It was planned to have a Hog Roast on The Heath and the Committee agreed that this would be considered as an authorised request to barbecue.

There was also a request for certain areas on The Heath to be mown for the event but this would be an extra cost to the grounds maintenance contract.

RESOLVED that the August 2013 grass cutting for Field 'A' at Penns Field be diverted to the mowing required for the 'Secrets of the Heath' event to offset that cost, with any additional cost to be paid by the South Downs National Park Authority.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15 pm