

PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Grounds Committee held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Petersfield, on Thursday 13th June 2013 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs L Farrow (Chairman), Cllr G Budden, Cllr Ms J Dickinson, 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), 4 members of the public and the Petersfield Herald.

G 0109 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman had one comment about the Petersfield Pond. A local resident had reported that, about three weeks ago, a Canada goose on the pond had made a noise, disappeared under the water and not resurfaced. There had been a later incident when a duck had been taken under the water by something in the pond. The Town Clerk said he had reported these two incidents to the Heath Pond Association.

G 0110 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies had been submitted.

G 0111 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Grounds Committee held on 16th May 2013 be approved and signed.

G 0112 DISPENSATION UNDER SECTION 33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)

No requests for dispensation were received.

G 0113 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

G 0114 PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

A request to speak had been received from Mr Nigel Wells concerning Phase 2 of the Skate Park.

Mr Wells said that a footprint of Phase 2 had already been approved and the design was now in hand. As a large part of Phase 2 will be for disabled users and for youngsters on scooters, eight students from Treloar School will be visiting the Skate Park at approximately 11.15 am. on Thursday 20th June 2013 to give their ideas on suitable gradients for ramps and moguls from horizontal to vertical. Young people were helping with the changing of transitions to obtain the best thrill and height when using the ramps and moguls either in wheelchairs or on scooters. They already had previous experience, having helped to design the privately-owned skate-riding tunnel at West Meon.

Mr Wells invited Committee members to visit the Skate Park and students on 20th June. This would give an opportunity for photographs to be taken to show the support of the Town Council and this could be helpful in obtaining further funds for the project.

Mr Wells reported that another Working Party meeting would be needed shortly and he confirmed that he would prepare the planning permission to put before the Town Council for signature.

G 0115

GROUNDS REPORT

Members received and noted the Grounds Report of 6th June 2013 by the Town Clerk.

The Heath: With regard to the report of recent incidents of barbecues on The Heath, the Committee discussed the question of whether or not this practice should be allowed.

RESOLVED that the Town Clerk contact the Queen Elizabeth Park and/or National Park to ascertain their policies on safe barbecue areas.

RESOLVED that the debate on barbecues on The Heath be added to the Agenda for the Grounds Committee meeting on 11th July 2013.

G 0116

OUTDOOR FITNESS CLASSES ON THE HEATH

RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders to allow Mr and Mrs B Alexander to speak.

Mr Bruce and Mrs Amanda Alexander had requested permission to run weekly outdoor fitness classes on The Heath.

Mr Alexander detailed the following points:

- The company, running outdoor fitness classes consisting of functional training techniques, would be called OUT-FIT.
- Mr Alexander is an ex-Royal Marine, currently working for British Military Fitness in London. He is a qualified, experienced Personal Trainer.
- Mr and Mrs Alexander have recently moved from London to Petersfield and have realised that this type of outdoor fitness training is not yet available at weekends in this area.
- The classes would be one hour sessions at 10 am. every Saturday morning.
- The first class that people attend will be free and thereafter the charge would be £10.00 per hour on a 'pay as you go' basis or with a monthly membership fee of £30.00. Often, barriers to joining an indoor Gym are expensive membership fees and time.
- There would be one instructor per 20 members although it was not anticipated that start-up numbers would be high - possibly 8-10. If numbers were to increase, it was hoped to run an evening class during the week and also one weekly session geared to young mothers with prams.
- Inclement weather was not a problem as people love to exercise outdoors in all weathers.
- Changing facilities would not be required.
- The Plump Duck cafe on The Heath would look at the possibility of serving porridge or coffee after the classes.
- The correct Public Liability and other insurances were in place.

The Committee discussed the request in considerable detail, particularly in view of the delicate areas of ground, barrows, heather and fauna on The Heath.

RECOMMENDED to give approval to Mr and Mrs B Alexander to use the area on The Heath towards the nursery building and Heath Road East as their meet point for Saturday fitness classes for a trial period over the summer, with a review at the Grounds Committee Meeting on 12th September 2013.

RECOMMENDED that, in view of the start-up costs involved and time required to attract members, no fee for the use of The Heath for fitness classes would apply during the summer trial period. This would be reviewed in September 2013.

RESOLVED that the Friends of Petersfield Heath and English Heritage be contacted by the Town Clerk for their advice.

G 0117

PAINTED GOAL POST - THE AVENUE PLAYING FIELDS

A complaint had been received in writing from a resident about footballs coming over the wall from The Avenue Playing Fields into adjacent gardens, with a request that the goal post, painted on the wall, be removed. The Committee discussed this request. It was noted that:

- the number of balls going over the wall had dropped over the past year but was currently increasing again.
- the painted goal post had been in place on the old wall for many years and it was a tradition to kick balls against the wall.
- the old paint would be difficult to remove without damaging the wall.
- the notices in place about ball games were damaged and not clearly legible.
- installing netting for the current actual goal posts may help to prevent the number of balls going over the wall.

RESOLVED that the existing notices, made of laminated sheets, be replaced with new laminated sheets.

RESOLVED that a price be obtained for netting the actual goal posts.

G 0118 **ROOF REPAIRS – THE LITTLE SCHOOL DAY NURSERY**

The Committee considered a request from The Little School for the Town Council to pay for a current roof repair. In the request, The Little School had questioned the quality of workmanship by the Town Council's contractor when the unsafe sheds were demolished and new guttering installed last year.

The Little School had entered into a Full Repairing Lease for the day nursery premises on The Heath. To date, The Little School had raised no complaint concerning the demolition and guttering work carried out last year and the Town Council had been satisfied that all the work had been completed to the required standard. There was no evidence that the need for the current roof repair was related to the work done last year.

RESOLVED that the Town Council contact the contractor for their views on the complaint raised by The Little School.

RECOMMENDED that the Finance and General Purposes Committee consider this matter at their meeting on 15th July 2013.

G 0019 **CUTTING OF FIELD 'B' AT PENNS FIELD**

The Committee received and considered the cutting of Field 'B' on a monthly basis, at a cost of £84-£85 per month, in an attempt to control the spread of the ragwort weed. The field was currently cut once per year.

The Committee noted that Field 'B' was a ploughed field and presently waste ground until its eventual use as a sports field. It was felt that more information was needed about how to control ragwort before committing to a monthly cutting expenditure.

RESOLVED that professional advice on the control of ragwort be obtained from Clive Essex of Abbey Landscapes.

G 0020

HEATH POND WORKING PARTY

The Committee received and considered the notes of the Heath Pond Working Party held on 2nd May 2013.

It was noted that, as yet, there was no work programme for carrying out the aspirations of the Heath Pond Association and there would need to be another meeting of Working Party.

Reference was made to:

Item 2 (Trees) - Following a report on the trees, addressing the problem of the willow trees in the water had been identified as a top priority.

Item 4 (Heath Management Plan) - There was still a considerable amount of outstanding work to be done, including coppicing, and firm costings needed to be obtained.

Item 5 (Grant Funding) - Discussion took place on the possibility of obtaining grants from bodies such as English Nature. With their experience of successfully obtaining grants for environmental projects, Ms Jo Edwards and Mrs Carolyne Haynes would be invited to a Grounds Committee Meeting to give their advice. At their next meeting, the Heath Pond Working Party should make a firm decision at what items of work needed to be costed.

The Committee was advised that the Town Council was seeking quotations for work to be carried out to sort out the dead trees and for the thinning of trees on The Heath. These would be presented to Committee for consideration when they were available.

RECOMMENDED that, following the next meeting of the Heath Pond Working Party, costings be obtained for the priority work identified.

RECOMMENDED that a copy of the Heath Management Plan be issued to all Councillors.

RESOLVED that this Agenda item be reviewed at the September 2013 meeting of the Ground Committee.

In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed, it was
RESOLVED that the public and press be asked to leave the meeting.

CONFIDENTIAL

G 0021 THE DISTRICT VALUER REPORT
ON THE RENT REVIEW AT PENNS FARM

The Report from the District Valuer was received and considered by the Committee who felt that further clarification was required.

RESOLVED that, following receipt of further clarification from the District Valuer, relevant correspondence would be issued.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30 pm