

**PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of the Grounds Committee held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Petersfield, on Thursday 16th May 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) and 4 members of the public.

**G 0041** **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Mrs Farrow proposed Cllr Budden and was seconded by Cllr Ms Vincent. There being no further nominations and it was

**RESOLVED:** that Cllr Budden be elected as Deputy Chairman of the Grounds Committee for the ensuing year.

**G 0042** **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

The Chairman reminded everyone that the committee had challenges to deal with this year in relation to the future of grounds maintenance and that an invitation had been received for members to attend the AGM of the National Playing Fields association in London on 14<sup>th</sup> June.

**G 0043** **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies had been submitted.

**G 0044** **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Members requested two amendments to the minutes of the previous meeting. The resolution in minute number G 0706 should read 'expires' in the top line; not 'expired' and the heading to agenda item G 0707 should read 'Grounds Maintenance and Cleaning Services'.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Grounds Committee held on 18th April 2013 be approved as amended.

**G 0045** **DISPENSATION UNDER SECTION 33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)**

No requests for dispensation were received.

**G 0046** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

G 0047 **PUBLIC REPRESENTATION**

A request to speak had been received from Rachel Bridgman concerning the fundraising event on Heath Pond but her son had been taken ill and she was unable to now attend.

G 0048 **GROUNDS REPORT**

The Town Clerk apologised for not being able to produce a written report for the committee and reported verbally as follows:

Heath Pond - The Heath Pond Association had reported they caught a member of the public dumping large quantities of goldfish into the Pond. The matter had been reported to The Environment Agency who would follow it up. A Press Release was to be issued warning of the dangers in doing this.

Borough Road - Members were advised that a local group of residents were lodging an application to make the recreation ground a Village Green which would protect it from future development. The Council had been supportive of this in the past but it had never been completed. The Town Clerk was assisting this group in the provision of evidence to support their application.

Penns Field - Members were reminded of the Option Agreement that exists over Field A and the requirement in that agreement to plough the field annually to prevent rights of way being claimed across it. We were now being requested to spray the field and cut it monthly. A price for this had been requested from our grounds contractor and in view of the terms of the Option Agreement we have little alternative but to do as requested. Similarly a price had been requested to do the same to Field B which would be brought to committee for members to discuss next month.

Penns Farm and Love Lane - the sports pitches were in great need of renovation and time is of the essence for the work to be completed. Prices were awaited for topdressing and fertilising, weed spraying plus vertidrainage. The Town Clerk requested permission to discuss the quotes received with the Chairman of Committee when they were available due to the need to get the work done quickly and report back to the committee on the outcome next month.

Rotherlands - there had been reports of a bank collapse near the pumping station which turned out to be a sewerage leak. A meeting had been held that afternoon with The Environment Agency & Southern Water to discuss the way forward. It was planned to divert the sewer pipe so that it was closer to the public footpath and for the river banks to be restored, possibly with the planting of coir rolls or placement of rocks to break up the water's erosion action. Work is to begin in next few weeks and the Rotherlands Conservation Group has been advised of the situation.

G 0049

**HEATH POND FUNDRAISING EVENT**

Members received and considered a request for a fundraising event to be held on Heath Pond in the first weekend of September. The event would last for a couple of hours and entail boat races around the island taking place over the first weekend of September. Small fete type stalls would also be held to raise funds for an expedition to Morocco which would take place over Easter 2014. The event would be fully supervised by adults.

Members were generally supportive of the planned event although there was some concern over whether approval would open the floodgates to similar fundraising event requests. Members considered that if further requests were received they would be considered on their merits.

**RECOMMENDED:** that approval be given to a fundraising event on Heath Pond during the first weekend of September to raise funds for a World Challenge trip to Morocco provided those present in the safety boat were fully qualified to carry out their duties and a risk assessment for the event was produced.

G 0050

**HEATH POND WORKING PARTY**

Cllr Organ reported on the outcome of the recent working party meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2013. The working party seemed to be heading towards both long term and short term objectives that may necessitate the group being split into two sections. The long term group would need to consider funding and aim for grant support. Natural England offer grants for long term work but the needs of the whole Heath and not just the Pond would need to be included for such grants to be successful. The Heath Management Plan will also need revision to take into account wider issues rather than just environmental matters. The short term work may look at matters such as the pollarding of willow trees around the Pond and bank erosion on Sussex Road in particular. There was a real enthusiasm and desire to move forward to achieve action to improve the Pond and much frustration over the years of discussion without getting as far as approving a scheme of work to be costed.

Members were keen for Cllr Organ to continue chairing the working party although he advised that the only reason he was chairing the group was due to his chairmanship of the Grounds Committee in the previous year.

**RESOLVED:** that Cllr Organ continue to Chair the working group until a full report on the activities of the working group was submitted next month when the committee would need to decide how the work would continue into the future and how the Council would be represented.

G 0051

**PLAYBALL BANNER**

Members received and considered a request from Playball Hampshire to erect a banner at the Avenue tennis courts when coaching was taking place.

**RESOLVED:** that permission to display a banner at the Avenue tennis courts be approved whilst coaching was in progress on the courts.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.13p.m.