

PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Grounds Committee held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Petersfield, on Thursday 14 November 2013 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs L Farrow (Chairman), Cllr G Budden, Cllr Mrs J Dickinson, Cllr J Deane, Cllr Mrs S Harwood and Cllr W Organ.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr N Hitch (Town Clerk), Mrs A Church (Committee Administrator), and four members of the public.

G 0438 **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

The Chairman had no comments.

G 0439 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence had been received.

G 0440 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Grounds Committee held on 17 October 2013 be approved and signed.

G 0441 **DISPENSATION UNDER SECTION 33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)**

No requests for dispensation were received.

G 0442 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

G 0443 **PUBLIC REPRESENTATION**

Two requests to speak had been received from

1. Mr Robin Hart
2. Mr Robert Mocatta, Secretary of Petersfield RFC

Mr Hart spoke with reference to ragwort on The Heath

Mr Hart said that, following the recommendation of the Grounds Committee (*Minute G 0365*) and the Town Council's resolution (*Minute C 0399*) that the ragwort on The Heath be totally eradicated, he was requesting that the

decision be reconsidered. Mr Hart referred to the Code of Practice 2003 which gave recommendations but not regulations for the control of ragwort. Mr Hart explained that the plant could exist in a low risk zone, into which most of the Heath fell, where it could maintain its role in the UK Biodiversity Plan and remain as an important component of native flora and for rare insects.

Considerable discussion then took place on the points raised, with concerns again being raised by Members on the effect of ragwort on nearby agricultural land and animals, and also whether it could be successfully controlled in the long term. It was felt to be totally impracticable to control the higher risk zone area of The Heath and not the other.

The Chairman said that Committee members would walk over The Heath and digest the views presented by Mr Hart.

Cllr Budden joined the meeting at 6.36 pm

Mr Mocatta wished to speak about the erection of new fences at Petersfield RFC

Mr Mocatta explained that the Rugby Club wished to be more pro active in encouraging advertising at the pitch side and their decision was totally driven by the current commercial situation of the Club. He had ascertained from East Hampshire District Council that planning permission would not be necessary. Petersfield Town Council had previously given authorisation for advertising fencing and this request was merely to change the current fencing to a more robust structure, which would take up to 44 advertising banners, and to obtain the views of Councillors of the Grounds Committee on the choices of fence available.

RESOLVED that the order of business be altered to allow the item concerning the request from Petersfield Rugby Football Club to erect new fences besides the pitch to be discussed next.

G 0444

REQUEST FROM PETERSFIELD FOOTBALL RUGBY CLUB TO ERECT NEW FENCES BESIDES THE PITCH

A request had been received from the Petersfield Rugby Football Club to erect new fences beside the pitch which would be robust enough to support sponsorship banners and which would replace the existing temporary wooden fences.

The Committee discussed the proposals put forward and accepted that there was growing commercialism in all national sports. Members were in agreement that the preferred choice of the Rugby Club for green and white fencing was the most acceptable. The most valuable side for advertising was considered to be opposite the club house but all advertisements would be sensibly placed and possibly rotated. One side would be left open for emergency vehicle and maintenance access. Mr Moccatta confirmed that the

wooden posts would also need to be replaced but that these would not be concreted into the ground.

RESOLVED that permission in principle be given to Petersfield Rugby Football Club to erect new fences beside the pitch which would be robust enough to support sponsorship banners and which would replace the existing temporary wooden fences, subject to the final choice of fencing being submitted to the Grounds Committee for approval.

G 0445

GROUND'S REPORT

Members received and noted the Grounds Report of 7 November 2013 by the Town Clerk.

With regard to the trees brought down on The Heath by the storm, the Town Clerk confirmed that records were kept on all work carried out on The Heath and trees were checked within the resources available.

The Town Clerk advised that he had just received a request concerning the churchyard at St. Peter's Church, where the paths were slippery with fallen leaves, and he had asked the Council's contractors to clear them. The Town Clerk explained that the churchyard is a closed one and there is an obligation on the local authority to maintain the area in its current condition, a task which had been taken on by Petersfield Town Council. He confirmed that the potential hazard of a rising paving stone in the churchyard, brought to his attention, would be addressed.

The Town Clerk also advised the Committee that one of the two benches at Woods Meadow had been burnt but no repairs would be carried out at the present time as the new play area at Woods Meadow was in hand.

G 0446

INSPECTION SHEETS ON THE PLAY AREAS AND EQUIPMENT DATED 14 OCTOBER 2013 FROM S D PLAYGROUND SERVICES

The Committee received the inspection sheets dated 14 October 2013 from S D Playground Services.

The comment on the access net of the Zingo Dek on The Heath play area was noted and it was agreed that Greenspan Projects, who carried out the installation, should be requested to investigate the required action.

RESOLVED that Greenspan Projects be requested to inspect and comment on the access net of the Zingo Dek play equipment on The Heath.

G 0447

REQUEST FROM WALLS FUNFAIR THAT THE TARO FAIR ATTEND AGAIN ON THE HEATH IN 2014 BUT THAT THEY BE GRANTED PERMISSION TO OPEN ON SATURDAY 4TH AND SUNDAY 5TH OCTOBER, LEAVING A CHILDREN'S RIDE IN PLACE FOR MONDAY MORNING 6TH OCTOBER WHICH IS THE TRADITIONAL FAIR DAY

The Town Clerk said that he had received the above request on 20 October 2013 from Walls Funfair requesting changes to their opening days for 2014 for commercial reasons. He also confirmed that the Town Council had a duty to keep alive the Charter Day for the Taro Fair which was 6th October.

The Committee discussed the request in detail but felt that the tradition of a day fair each year on 6th October was an important one, albeit that they understood the commercial reason for the request by Walls Funfair. A full fair should be held on the Charter Day and the Committee were prepared to recommend some financial assistance for that day.

RECOMMENDED that, for 2014, permission be granted to Walls Funfair to hold the Taro Fair on both Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th October, with the proviso that a full fair was held on the Charter Day of Monday 6th October but at half rental for that Monday.

G 0448

REQUEST FROM THE PROPRIETOR OF THE PLUMP DUCK ON THE HEATH TO PUT A BANNER ON THE HANDRAIL

The proprietor of The Plump Duck had requested permission to put up a banner on the handrail near his establishment to advertise that it is open seven days a week. The design of the proposed banner met with the Committee's approval but it would have also to be approved by the Highway Authority.

RESOLVED that permission be granted to the proprietor of The Plump Duck to put a banner on the handrail near that establishment, subject to his obtaining approval from the Highway Authority.

G 0449

REQUEST TO USE PART OF THE HEATH AND POND FOR HORSE TREKKING FOR YOUNG, ACCOMPANIED CHILDREN

A request had been received from Mr John Irving for permission to use part of The Heath and Pond for horse trekking for young, accompanied children for his proposed venture "Young Rambling Adventure on Hooves".

After discussion, the Committee agreed that it was not appropriate for such a venture to use The Heath and Pond area.

RECOMMENDED that permission be refused for the proposed venture "Young Rambling Adventure on Hooves" to take place on The Heath and Pond area.

G 0450

AREA AND TIMING FOR THE SOWING OF A PACK OF 10,000 POPPY SEEDS PURCHASED FROM THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Committee considered the area and timing for the sowing of a pack of 10,000 poppy seeds purchased from the Royal British Legion as a symbol of remembrance for the 100th Anniversary on 4 August 2014 of the outbreak of WW1.

It was agreed that the seeds should be sown in a dense patch, visible to passers-by, on an area of disturbed ground of approximately one-fifth of an acre.

RECOMMENDED that the 10,000 poppy seeds, purchased from the Royal British Legion as a symbol of remembrance for the 100th Anniversary on 4 August 2014 of the outbreak of WW1, should be sown on the verge opposite Dickins Gardens and Antrobus House on Tor Way.

G 0451

PROPOSED RAILWAY TOURIST ATTRACTION ON THE HEATH

The Committee received and considered details of a request for permission to have a Heath Rail with a 15-inch gauge railway line on The Heath. It was noted that a previous request for this project had already been considered and turned down by the Town Council.

After reconsidering this request, the Committee still felt that such a project was not appropriate to have on The Heath which was a site of historical importance.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Council not grant permission to have a railway tourist attraction on The Heath.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.00 pm