

PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Grounds Committee held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Petersfield, on Thursday 12 February 2015 at 6.30 pm.

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

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr N Hitch (Town Clerk), Mrs A Church (Committee Administrator), the Town Mayor, Mrs S Shippen of the Local Government Resource Centre and two members of the public. There were no press present.

G 0586 **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

The Chairman had no comments

G 0587 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Mrs J Dickinson, Cllr P Marshall and Cllr C Mills.

G 0588 **DISPENSATION UNDER SECTION 33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)**

No requests for dispensation were received.

G 0589 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

G 0590 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Grounds Committee held on 15 January 2015 be approved and signed.

G 0591 **PUBLIC REPRESENTATION**

Requests to speak had been received from Mr David Burstall and Mr Richard Warton of the Friends of Petersfield Heath in respect of agenda item No.9.

RESOLVED to evoke Standing Order 36(c) to alter the order on the agenda to consider next item No.9 on the proposed extension to the path on The Heath.

G 0592

PROPOSED JOINT PROJECT BY THE FRIENDS OF PETERSFIELD HEATH AND CHURCHER'S COLLEGE TO CONSTRUCT AN EXTENSION TO THE RAISED PATH ON THE HEATH

Mr Burstall of the Friends of Petersfield Heath (FoPH) said that FoPH and Churcher's College had been involved in joint projects to construct a raised path on The Heath for the last two years. The current proposal was to build three further extensions, totalling 25 m, to the raised path to cover boggy sections of the path. The three sections would measure 7.2m, 10.8m. and 7.2m respectively and, to preserve the integrity of the path, it was proposed to use just one type of gravel - Romsey Path Gravel which is a dark red in colour and would be simpler and less costly to use than combining two gravels. It was noted that some drainage channels and pipes would also be installed. The estimated cost of the whole project was £1,000.00 and Churcher's College would be happy to fund this proposal.

The Committee congratulated and thanked the FoPH and Churcher's College for their wonderful achievement and generosity in improving the pathway on The Heath and they offered their full support for the new project. The Chairman said that the Committee would liaise with David Burstall when the contractors submitted proposals for the clearing of silt from The Pond to ensure that any of their mechanical equipment did not damage the new extensions to the raised path. The contractors would be given a copy of the plans submitted by the FoPH.

The meeting then re-convened

RESOLVED that the proposed joint project by The Friends of Petersfield Heath and Churcher's College to carry out three extensions to improve the existing raised path on the Heath be accepted with grateful thanks.

G 0593

GROUNDS REPORT

Members received and noted the Grounds Report for February 2015 by the Town Clerk. *(A copy is attached to these Minutes as Appendix A)*

The Heath: A member of the public had complained about rats on The Heath. The Town Clerk advised that the grounds contractor had re-baited the boxes. The problem was mainly in two areas: along the western side of The Pond where it leads on to properties and around the Sussex Road car park where a skip is usually positioned.

Borough Road Recreation Ground: The Town Clerk confirmed that he had asked Hampshire County Council to put forward the application for Village Green Status as soon as possible.

RESOLVED to evoke Standing Order 36(c) to alter the order on the agenda to receive and consider item No.16 next concerning the Tender Specification for the new Grounds Maintenance Contract.

TENDER SPECIFICATION FOR THE NEW GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

Mrs Samantha Shippen of the Local Government Resource Centre had prepared the draft tender document for the new Grounds Maintenance Contract. She took the Committee through the papers and documents comprising:

- Covering letter to contractors
- Bill of Quantities
- Part A - Form of Tender
- Part B - Condition of Contract
- Part C - Technical Specification
- Part D - Maps & Plans

General comments and insertions were agreed by the Committee with Mrs Shippen and discussion took place to finalise the following items to comply with current practice and standards:

- Letter: Mrs Shippen would be named as the Town Council's representative and any queries from contractors should be made to her in writing by letter or e-mail to ensure that there was an audit trail. The tender document itself would be sent out to contractors by the Town Council.
- Bill of Quantities: Various amendments were discussed and agreed and, following their incorporation into this document, the Bill of Quantities would be re-submitted to the Chairman and Town Clerk.
- Form of Tender: All contractors would have to tender on the full specification as stated. If any contractor wished to tender on an alternative specification, then the alterations must be submitted separately.
Paragraph 2 will be amended to clarify this
Point 3.1 from Part B will also be inserted in the Form of Tender
- Condition of Contract: Concern was expressed that raising the Public Liability Insurance for contractors from £5m to £10m could exclude smaller contractors from tendering. However, after detailed discussion, it was agreed that, as current practice for this type of contract required Public Liability Insurance of £10m, there was no option but to incorporate the higher level of insurance into the contract.

The meeting then re-convened

RESOLVED that, subject to agreed amendments, the draft Tender Specification for the new Grounds Maintenance Contract, be approved.

G 0595 **REVIEW OF THE OUT-FIT OUTDOOR FITNESS CLASSES ON THE HEATH** *(Minute G 0244 September 2014 refers)*

The Committee received and reviewed an update on the OUT-FIT Outdoor Fitness Classes on the Heath run by Mr Bruce Alexander. Members were pleased to note that these continued to be well attended and three classes a week were being run. It was agreed that the Outdoor Fitness Classes should continue without charge but that Mr Alexander be asked to advise the Town Clerk should he notice any areas of concern on The Heath during the regular use of the area by OUT-FIT.

RESOLVED that the OUT-FIT outdoor fitness classes on The Heath should be allowed to continue without charge until further review.

G 0596 **INSPECTION SHEETS FROM S D PLAYGROUND SERVICES**

The Committee received and noted the Inspection Sheets dated 12 December 2014 from S D Playground Services. The Town Clerk advised that the part for the Cantilever Swing on The Heath had been ordered and, in the meantime, it has been roped off. Councillors agreed that the children's area now looks superb after the installation of the artificial grass.

G 0597 **GROUND USERS MEETING**

The Committee received and noted the Notes from the Ground Users Meeting held on 27 January 2015.

G 0598 **REPORT FROM WEST SUSSEX ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

The Committee received and noted a report dated January 2015 from West Sussex Archaeology Ltd on the Archeological Excavation of Barrow 11 on The Heath.

G 0599 **PETERSFIELD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB**

A request dated 5 February 2015 had been received from the Petersfield Town Football Club to erect a new stand under the terms of their lease with the Council. Councillors considered and agreed this request, subject to planning permission.

RESOLVED that permission be granted to Petersfield Town Football Club to erect a new stand, under the terms of their lease with the Council, subject to planning permission.

G 0600

PROPOSED REFURBISHMENT OF THE TOILETS ON THE HEATH

Members considered possible options that had been received and put forward by the Town Clerk as a starting point for consideration concerning the proposed refurbishment of the toilets on The Heath. He advised that the project had the potential of successfully obtaining grant funding.

Considerable discussion took place on the options available - either to refurbish using the current basic structure or to demolish the existing structure and build a new toilet block. It was felt generally that a new building would be the best option but the Committee would welcome the views of the Petersfield Society and any advice that the National Park Authority could give.

RECOMMENDED that the Council approve the option of a new toilet building on The Heath, subject to the views of the Petersfield Society and the South Downs National Park Authority.

G 0601

NEW SEATING AT THE PLUMP DUCK ON THE HEATH

The Committee had been concerned to note the installation of new seating at the Plump Duck which had been done without submitting an official application to the Council. The Town Clerk advised that the previous lightweight tables and chairs were often moved around by the general public and this had probably led to their replacement by heavier seating arrangements.

RESOLVED that the new seating at the Plump Duck be permitted to remain in place but that a written letter be sent by the Town Clerk to the proprietor advising that an official application should be have been made to the Council before any changes had taken place.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55 pm.

Grounds Report February 2015

This report seeks to inform councillors of matters of interest affecting any of the public open space land which we own or manage. Members are reminded that its contents are not available for debate, but questions can always be asked and we will seek to answer them, however it should be borne in mind that if they involve the need for investigation or would be complex or lengthy, answers will need to be given outside of the meeting. If councillors consider that any matter on the report is in need of debate, the subject can be added to a future meeting's agenda for this purpose.

The Heath

- The restoration works to the Heath Toddler play area have now been completed. The surface beneath the middle seat still needs to be done because weather conditions were not suitable at the time of their visit to undertake the work.
- Having spoken to the Chairman, we have agreed that Rob Burleigh be awarded the work to undertake the next phase of the tree thinning programme. The area to be worked on is around the Sussex Road car park up to the barrow that was cleared last year as part of the People of the Heath project.

Borough Road Recreation Ground

- Mysteriously signs have been erected by the developer who owns the land near the railway line stating that anyone entering onto that part of the recreation ground is trespassing and will be prosecuted. I am aware that the community group in the area has been in contact with Hampshire County Council with a view to getting their application for Village Green Status to be fast-tracked in the light of the current planning application and the activities of the developer. I have supported the group in this with a submission to Hampshire County Council. Additionally I have written to the landowner complaining that they trespassed over our land with their vehicle to erect these signs and reminded them that they have no right to access their land with a vehicle without our express permission.

Tilmore Allotments

- The large oak tree on the allotment border adjacent to the footpath has been inspected by Rob Burleigh and in his view needs to be reduced in size on the grounds of safety. He also looked at three other trees on the allotment boundaries that are in need of crown lifting and/or reducing and having spoken to the Chairman it has been agreed that

Love Lane Recreation Ground

- Planning permission for the skatepark phase 2 extension has now been approved.

Penns Farm Playing Fields

- One of the dragons teeth has now been totally replaced at the rear of the Taro Centre.
- Following the Grounds Users Meeting, where potential issues of dog fouling nuisance was highlighted by Petersfield Rugby Club, I am looking to install a further waste bin to take general and dog waste near the car park and provide additional signage reminding members of the public to remove any waste produced by their dogs from the playing fields.
- Additionally I have asked our usual pest control contractor to take a look at the area between rugby pitches 2 and 4 where the club believe there is a potential problem with moles. The result of his inspection is awaited.

Neil Hitch
Town Clerk
8th February 2015