

PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Grounds Committee held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Petersfield, on Thursday 15 January 2015 at 6.30 pm.

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

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

G 0512 **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed the Committee to the first meeting of the new year. She expressed concern at the current very wet state of all the land.

G 0513 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

G 0514 **DISPENSATION UNDER SECTION 33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)**

No requests for dispensation were received.

G 0515 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

G 0516 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Meeting of the Grounds Committee held on 13 November 2014 be approved and signed.

G 0517 **PUBLIC REPRESENTATION**

No requests to speak had been received.

G 0518

GROUNDS REPORT

Members received and noted the Grounds Report for November 2014 by the Town Clerk. *(A copy is attached to these Minutes as Appendix A)*

The Town Clerk said that he had today again reported to Southern Water the overflowing manhole on Woods Meadow which was discharging effluent into Tilmore Brook and onto the public footpath. Nothing had been done since he had reported the problem last November.

The Town Clerk also reported that

- he was working on an agreement to go out to tender for the play equipment at Woods Meadow and
- that the portacabins at the Petersfield Town Football Club would be in place for no more than a few weeks

The Heath: Cllr Organ advised that, unfortunately, he would be away on 29 January 2015, which was the date of the meeting arranged with the South Downs National Park Authority at The Heath. The Chairman said Ms Jo Edwards of East Hampshire District Council had also been invited to the meeting and, if that date was not suitable for her either, the meeting could be re-arranged.

G 0519

PRESENTATION FROM MR F McCAIG ON HIS REQUEST TO CONDUCT OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES ON THE HEATH

The Committee received and considered a presentation from Mr F McCaig on his request to have a Forest School for sustainable outdoor woodland activities on a small area of The Heath. It was necessary that the location should be near to facilities for car parking and toilets.

Members had already received a document from Mr McCaig which detailed his proposals. Mr McCaig gave a summary of the document to the Committee and answered questions that arose. The activities would provide a context to learn and become familiar with outdoor space for small groups of pre-school children and also for small groups of adults who, for various reasons, were isolated within the community. Mr McCaig stressed that the woodland activities operated with the environment and the concept of leaving no trace at the end was paramount to the Forest School approach.

The request from Mr McCaig was received sympathetically by members but, after further discussion, they agreed that The Heath was not a suitable venue for the proposed woodland activities. A suitable location might be the Rotherlands area which was a contained area with wild life and was not subject to the same restrictions as The Heath. It was agreed that, in the first instance, the Town Clerk would e-mail Mr Jamie Cummins of the Rotherlands Conservation Group to ascertain the views of the Group on the feasibility of running a Forest School on the Rotherlands area.

G 0520

REQUEST FROM JWS PLEASURE FAIRS TO HOLD A VINTAGE SHOW ON THE HEATH

The Committee received and considered a request from Mrs Bernice Wall of JWS Pleasure Fairs to hold a vintage vehicle show on the Heath in October 2015. The Town Clerk advised that, although the original request was to hold the vintage show on the same day as the Taro Fair on Tuesday 6 October, Bernice Wall had said that was now no longer viable as it would need to be held on a weekend.

Considerable discussion took place on the implications on the Taro Charter Fair by the changes being requested. The Committee agreed that the full Taro Fair must be held on the Charter Day of Tuesday 6 October 2015. However, they would grant permission to JWS Pleasure Fairs to hold a fair on The Heath on the Saturday and Sunday, 3rd and 4th October, and to allow them a rest day of Monday 5 October at no charge. If a larger area of The Heath was to be used for the weekend fair/show, then the appropriate extra rental would apply.

RESOLVED

- that JWS Pleasure Fairs must hold a full Taro Fair on The Heath on the Charter Day of Tuesday 6 October 2015;
- that permission be granted to JWS Pleasure Fairs to hold a fair/show on The Heath on Saturday and Sunday, 3 and 4 October 2015, at the appropriate rental charge for the area used.
- that JWS Pleasure Fairs be given a rest day of Monday 5 October 2015 at no charge.

G 0521

REQUEST FROM PETERSFIELD RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB TO UNDERTAKE MAINTENANCE OF RUGBY PITCHES
(deferred from November 2014 – Minute G 0399 refers)

The Committee received the deferred request from Petersfield Rugby Football Club dated 25 September 2014 to formally register their interest in undertaking the maintenance of the land it rents from Petersfield Town Council at Penns Place.

The Chairman reported that the tender document for the grounds maintenance would be finalised shortly and, at that time, a copy would be available for the Petersfield Rugby Football Club. The Town Clerk advised that there may be the possibility of having a separate contract for the Penns Farm playing fields.

RESOLVED that, when the tender document for the grounds maintenance is finalised, the Petersfield Rugby Football

Club be invited to tender for that part of the Penns Farm playing fields for which they are responsible.

G 0522 RIGHTS OF WAY VEGETATION PRIORITY CUTTINGS LISTS

The Committee received and considered the Parish Guidance Notes for Hampshire's Rights of Way Priority Cutting Lists – 2015. Any comments or suggestions on the Priority Cutting Lists should be made by e-mail to Hampshire County Council (HCC) by 1 February 2015.

It was noted that the vegetation clearance for the paths in Petersfield were scheduled for July 2015. Cllr Organ volunteered to check the paths and report back prior to a response being sent to HCC by 1 February 2015.

G 0523 REPORT FROM THE PETERSFIELD CRICKET CLUB

The Committee received and noted the "Value for Money" report from the Petersfield Cricket Club for the period November 2013 – October 2014.

Members agreed that the drawing up of a new lease for the Cricket Club was now a matter of high priority.

G 0524 FRIENDS OF PETERSFIELD HEATH - COMMITTEE MEETING

The Committee received and noted the Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the Friends of Petersfield Heath held on 18 November 2014.

G 0525 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY - NOVEMBER 2014

The Committee received and noted the Geophysical Survey of November 2014 from the People of The Heath.

G 0526 FRIENDS OF PETERFSFIELD HEATH - AUTUMN 2014 NEWSLETTER

The Committee received and noted the Autumn 2014 Newsletter from the Friends of Petersfield Heath.

G 0527 PROPOSED STRATEGY FOR COUNCIL OWNED LAND IN PETERSFIELD (*Minutes G 0338/ C0360 October 2014 refer*)

Members received and considered the Working Party's updated report on the proposed strategy for Council owned land in Petersfield. Subject to five amendments, the Committee agreed that the proposed policy document be recommended to Council for approval. It was greatly appreciated that the key objective of having a policy document, to be reviewed annually, for Council owned land in Petersfield had been realised.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve the policy document for Council owned land in Petersfield, subject to amendments to the following five points:

- 3.5.1 *Correct typo in third line*
- 3.7.1 *Remove capital letters from "play area"*
- 3.7.2 *Remove this point completely*
- 3.14.1 *Insert reference to Churchyard*
- 3.15.1 *Correct typo in second line*

G 0528

SUPPORT AND SERVICING FOR NEW MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

The Town Clerk reported that he had requested quotations from six companies for the cost of providing the Council with support and servicing during the tender process in setting up the new Maintenance Contract. However, only one company had had the ability to do the work and within the timescales. The Council's Internal Auditor had confirmed that, if the Grounds Committee felt that the one quotation received complied with the ruling of "Value for Money", then it could be accepted. The Town Clerk confirmed that the company in question was experienced in preparing tenders for local councils.

The quotation received from Local Government Resource Centre Associates for an estimated cost of £2,700 - £3,300 plus VAT and expenses was considered by the Committee to represent "Value for Money". The Town Clerk advised that an estimated cost had been given as the exact number of consultancy days required were unknown. An estimated cost was likely to be less than having a fixed quotation based on a maximum possible number of consultancy days.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that two options for the length of the maintenance contract to be offered should be considered: a four-year contract, as currently in place, or a three year contract with a two year optional extension. The new contract should be in place for the beginning of April 2015. The Chairman and Cllr Organ would assist in preparing the brief for the contract and Cllr Marshall offered his additional help if required.

RECOMMENDED that the Finance & General Purposes Committee approve and recommend to Council the estimated quotation of £2,700.00 - £3,300.00 + VAT and expenses from Local Government Resource Centre Associates to provide support and servicing through the tender process in setting up the new Maintenance Contract.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Grounds Report January 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

- Purchase Orders have been issued recently for the erosion control work in the Toddler Play Area as well as for repairs to the top step of the steps leading to the Heath Toilets from the road and the wall repairs following them being damaged by a lorry some months ago.
- Replacement parts have been ordered for the cantilever swing.
- Jo Edwards and myself have met with a couple of potential contractors in relation to the Pond erosion control scheme. Their costed plans are awaited. Cllr Mrs Farrow was able to join us at one of these meetings and when we met with Bruce Middleton from the South Downs National Park Authority, Bruce suggested that one of their contacts may be able to provide something similar for our consideration so a meeting has been arranged for Thursday 29th January.

Tilmore Allotments

- The legs to the notice board in the allotments have rotted beyond possible repair. Fresh legs have been ordered and the notice board will be re-erected in the near future.

Love Lane Recreation Ground

- Repair work to the Skatepark has now been completed by Wheelscape.
- Burleys have cleared the entire 'wild area' as well as any saplings that were growing in the vicinity.
- Petersfield Town Football Club has asked permission to place a couple of portacabins in the car park adjacent to the football ground. This is pending the Planning Application that they are submitting and it is intended to ultimately use the portacabins in order to construct the new stands that the club requires to provide for ground improvements in order to be able to progress into the next league, should they win promotion. Formal landlord's permission for the work will be requested in due course.

Penns Farm Playing Fields

- Someone has been removing the dragons teeth adjacent to the low level gate at the rear of the Taro Centre in order to drive onto the sports fields. At this stage it is unclear who the culprit is and investigations are ongoing. One of the dragons teeth has now been totally replaced and is more secure and a similar exercise is to be followed with the tooth closest to the low level gate.

Neil Hitch
Town Clerk
8th January 2015