

PETERSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Grounds Committee held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Petersfield, on Thursday 8th October 2015 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr J Deane (Chairman), Cllr J Matthews, Cllr S Noble and Cllr M Vincent.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr N Hitch (Town Clerk), Mr D Budd (Senior Groundsman) and Town Mayor, Cllr Mrs Farrow were also present. There was 1 member of the public and no press present.

G 0369 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman thanked all staff and volunteer councillors for their assistance with the Petersfield in Bloom prizegiving event. He also said that the Community Forum on the Neighbourhood Plan had been well received by the public, in particular with regard to the Plan protecting the town's green spaces.

G 0370 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr's N Orr and P Strawbridge.

G 0371 DISPENSATION UNDER SECTION 33 OF THE LOCALISM ACT (2011)

No requests for dispensation were received.

G 0372 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr J Deane declared a potential interest in the item concerning maintenance of land on the Rams Hill Estate as he lives on the Estate.

G 0373 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Grounds Committee held on 17th September 2015 be approved and signed.

G 0374 PUBLIC REPRESENTATION

No requests from members of the public to speak had been received.

G 0375 GROUNDS REPORT

Members received and noted the Grounds Report for October 2015 by the Senior Groundsman. *(A copy is attached to these Minutes as Appendix A).* Members were also advised that quotes for the hedge trimming had been accepted and the work should be completed within the next month.

G 0376 FRIENDS OF PETERSFIELD HEATH

Members received and noted the minutes of the Friends of Petersfield Heath's Committee meeting held on 15th September 2015.

G 0377 LOVE LANE PLAYING FIELDS

Members received a request to consider planting some additional trees alongside Moggs Mead next year in honour of the Queens' 90th birthday. It was noted that some of the original trees in the row planted alongside the metal railings had died and could be replaced.

Some discussion followed on the types of tree considered suitable. It was considered desirable to have trees that blossomed along the Moggs Mead fenceline but the idea of creating a wooded oak glade in the old 'wild area' was also attractive to members.

RECOMMENDED that a budget of £2,000 be approved for tree purchases on Love Lane playing fields in recognition of the Queen's 90th Birthday with the decision on exact species to be planted to be delegated to the Chairman of the Grounds Committee, Town Clerk and Senior Groundsman.

G 0378 PENNS FIELD 'B'

Members received and considered a report from the Town Clerk concerning the potential for developing this area as additional sports pitches, a copy of which is attached to these minutes as Appendix B. It was recognised that this project needed to be progressed and that a working Party was the most appropriate way of doing this and that a detailed 'Terms of Reference' document was desired.

RECOMMENDED: that a working party be established comprising Cllr's Strawbridge, Orr, Chairman of the Grounds Committee and Town Clerk and that the Terms of Reference document would be prepared for consideration by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

G 0379 BOATHOUSE SLIPWAY.

Members received and considered an updated report from the Town Clerk on the proposal to construct a slipway adjacent to the boathouse by the Pond in order to facilitate the concessionaire's transportation of the boats to and from the Pond as and when required following the initial discussion at the previous meeting. Two quotations were presented to members for each potential solution with the concrete slipway being more expensive than the compressed scalplings option. The Town Clerk advised that funds were held in Earmarked Reserves for the project.

Members discussed the proposal and considered that it was desirable to complete the work promptly and that as neither quotation had expressed any concerns over the use of compressed scalplings or the effect of 'wash' from wave action in the Pond that this was the chosen solution bearing in mind it had a much better visual impact.

RESOLVED: that a slipway be constructed adjacent to the Boathouse jetty with compressed scalplings by Company B at a cost of £2,900 with monies held for the purpose in Earmarked Reserves.

It was confirmed by the Town Clerk that Company B is 'Building Steps', a local Social Enterprise company.

G 0380 **BELL HILL RECREATION GROUND**

Members received and considered a report from the Town Clerk concerning the poor condition of the entrance to the car park at the recreation ground. Two quotations had been obtained for the works and these were considered by members. The Town Clerk advised that funds for the completion of this work were held in Earmarked Reserves.

Following discussion it was:

RESOLVED: that Company B be approved to carry out the resurfacing works at the entrance to Bell Hill recreation ground at a cost of £2,400.

Company B was identified as being Building Steps by the Town Clerk.

G 0381 **ALLOTMENT USERS MEETING**

Members received and noted the report from Allotments Users meeting held on 8th September 2015 which is attached to these minutes as Appendix C.

G 0382 **RAMSHILL OPEN SPACES**

The Chairman advised members of the developments that have taken place since the presentation from the Ramshill Residents Association (RRA) last month. A meeting had taken place with the RRA to consider the viability of undertaking the grounds works that would be required and the Senior Groundsman was content that the works could be absorbed within our normal operations. It was clear from this meeting that maintenance works needed to be done better as the grass was very long and it was considered a good idea to have the support of the residents for the Council to undertake the work.

Details of a meeting with Taylor Wimpey to discuss the practicalities of any land transfer to the Town Council and any other issues involved were still awaited. All members of the committee would be informed and invited to the meeting when a date was known.

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 for the confidential session and the Councillors in attendance plus the proprietor of The Plump Duck be granted permission to stay.

CONFIDENTIAL

G 0383 **THE PLUMP DUCK**

Mr Baker outlined the progress made by The Plump Duck since its inception to members. The initial concession had been granted for a 5 year term with a basic rent plus profit sharing agreement. Mr Baker requested that this agreement be reviewed to reflect the growth made in the business and to provide greater job security for the staff he now employs.

Following discussion it was:

RECOMMENDED: that with effect from 1st April 2016 a 10 year concession agreement be entered into with The Plump Duck for the refreshment kiosk on The Heath at a fixed rent of £800 per calendar month subject to annual RPI increases

G 0384 **EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

RESOLVED: that the proposed 'Heads of Terms' for renting a 40ft x 16ft yard area for three years at the Durford Road Depot be approved at a maximum cost of £640.00 per annum

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.08p.m.

Petersfield Town Council

Allotment Holders Meeting held at the Avenue Pavilion at 7.15 pm on Tuesday 8 September 2015

Present: Cllr James Deane (Chairman of Grounds Committee)
Cllr Paul Strawbridge (Grounds Committee Member)
Mrs Fiona Mort (Office Administrator)
3 x Allotment Holders

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Allotment Holders Meeting 2015 and said he hoped that plot holders had had a good growing season.

The Allotment Holders raised the following points:

- **Green Waste & Scalpings**

David Barton (Plot 6) asked about the pile of green waste & scalpings near the entrance of the allotments. He requested that the scalpings be removed as they had been there for a long period of time and none of the plot holders were making use of them. He also asked if the green waste would be a permanent feature at the allotments as this was taking up parking spaces.

The Chairman advised that a Senior Groundsman had just been recruited and that one option being considered is to obtain a green waste skip elsewhere and therefore the green waste at the allotments was a temporary solution. The scalpings would be arranged to be taken away by the grounds contractors as soon as possible.

- **Plant & utilities swap**

David Barton (Plot 6) mentioned that the plant and utilities swap area near the entrance to the allotments was proving to be a good idea but requested that plot holders remove any items that were placed there after a month if no other plot holders had taken them. It was also requested that rubbish not useful to other plot holders be taken to the local refuse dump and not dumped in this area.

Fiona Mort advised that a notice would be placed in this area to inform people to refrain from dumping items that were not useful to plot holders.

- **Grass Cutting**

Gordon Churchill (Plot 9) asked how often the grass was cut and also mentioned that when it had been done it was not cut very short.

The Chairman explained that the whole structure of the Council's grounds maintenance had been changed and it had been brought in-house.



Previously the grass had been cut according to a schedule with a certain number of cuts per year. Now that the contract has been brought in-house this would be changed and it is hoped that the grass would be able to be cut more strategically. He also requested that plot holders help by informing The Town Council office if the grass needed to be cut.

- **Drainage**

Alan Paice (Plot 32a) mentioned that due to the drainage problems the bottom area of the allotments is extremely wet when there has been a bad rainfall. He requested that plot holders refrain from taking their vehicles to their plots when this happens as often vehicles get stuck.

Fiona Mort advised that the drainage problem had been discussed in the past at various meetings but it had been decided that The Town Council unfortunately could not sort this problem as it was a Highways issue.

The Chairman suggested that the vehicle access problem be discussed at the plot holders Annual General Meeting in November.

- **Vacant Plots & Waiting List**

David Barton (Plot 6) asked whether at present any plots were vacant.

Fiona Mort explained that at present there was a waiting list for plots and that due to the recent allotment rental invoices that were sent to plot holders a few had given up their plots. There are currently a few plots that would be re-let. One of the plots that had been vacant for a while needed a lot of work done and this would be carried out as soon as possible by our groundsmen and this plot would be split and re-let.

- **General**

David Barton said that the Plot Holders Annual General Meeting was due to be held at the Half Moon on Wed 11 Nov 15 and that Councillors were welcome to attend. The Chairman requested that an invitation from the Allotment Association be sent by letter or by email to The Town Council inviting a Councillor as quite often some Councillors are very busy. The Town Clerk would then inform all Councillors.

David Barton thanked The Council for sorting out the wasps nest so quickly and also for the area used for their barbeque.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm

Grounds Report

October 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

- Lower branches of trees located around the Millennium walk area of the Heath will be trimmed or lower bows removed to improve the experience.
- This month I am introducing an attention to detail initiative. This is basically looking at the smaller picture with regards to the follow up work that is undertaken by Burleys (strimming underneath benches, bins etc). The whip is out!
- Hopefully looking to cut the hedges and bracken around the edge of the Heath with tractor and flail.
- Topping up the sand pits in the childrens play area after the fair has finished.

Love Lane Playing Fields

- Carrying out regular litter picking and bin emptying (every other day).
- Hedges to be cut by tractor and flail.

Penns Farm Playing Fields

- Looking to cut back with tractor and flail all hedges and lower tree limbs removed around the playing field. This is to stop the woodland creeping onto the playing areas.
- Awaiting a quote for fencing to replace the dragons teeth. I've suggested knee high fencing to be in keeping with the present aesthetics.

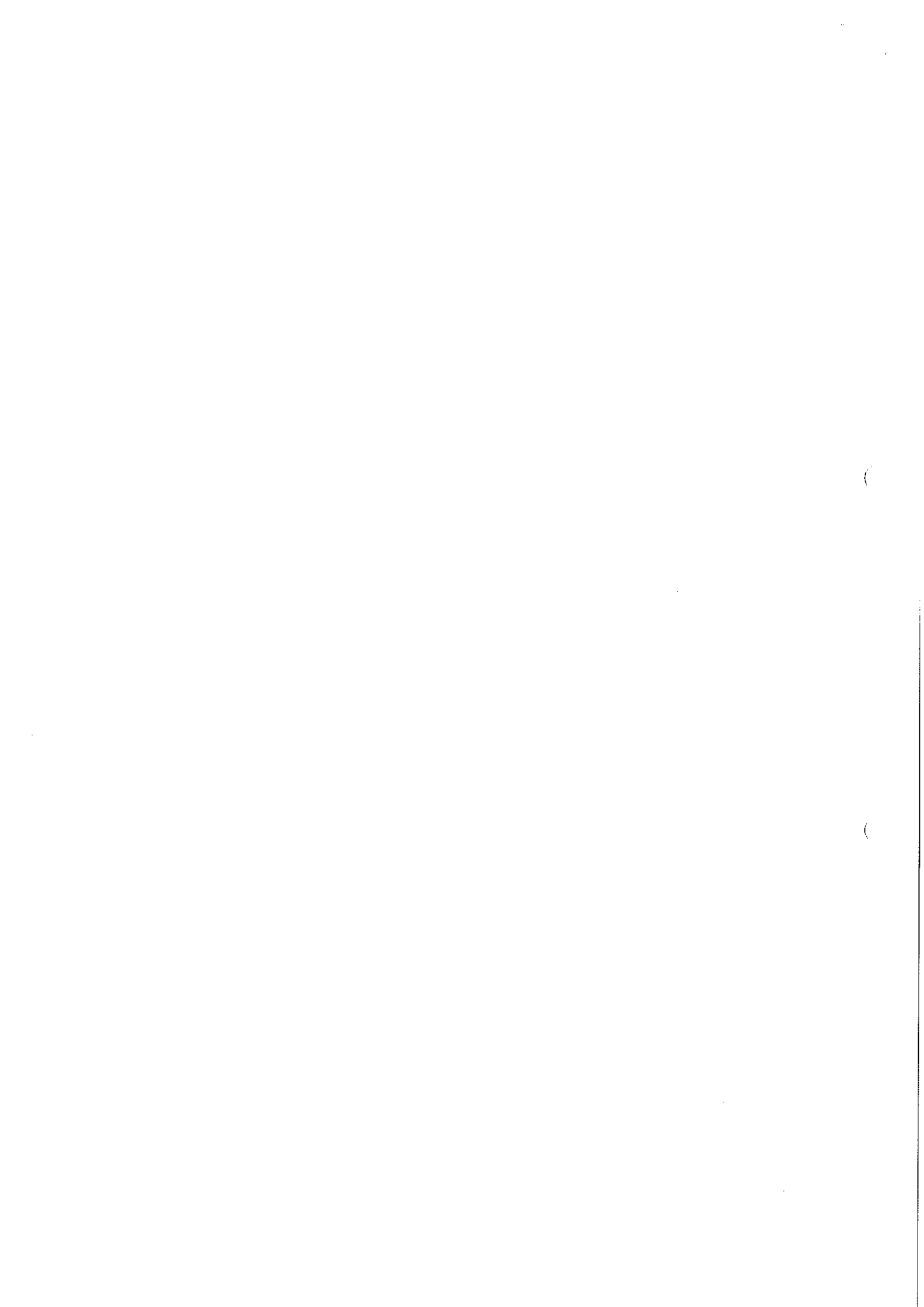
Bell Hill Recreation Ground

- Awaiting a quote for post and rail fencing plus gate to block off access to the field from the car park. This is to stop anyone without proper authority gaining access with their car (late night joy-riding or as an air cadet overflow car park!).

General

- A quote is hopefully forthcoming to improve security at Borough Road recreation ground with a gate plus post and rail fencing.
- Fingers crossed, we should be at the point where we'll have our own green waste skip and equipment container installed this month at the EHDC compound. Once installed the professional equipment requested will be purchased and used from then on.
- I'm looking to further Ally's work based education by sending him on an intensive first aid course. With this I'm hoping to give Ally a small piece of responsibility by ensuring all first aid kits within the town hall and work vehicle are fully stocked and up to date.
- Planting up the containers dotted around Petersfield with a last drop of colour before winter approaches.

Dugg Budd
Senior Groundsman
8th October 2015





Grounds Committee

Penns Field 'B'

Background

This field has remained 'barren' with no real purpose of use for a number of years. It has been used intermittently by walkers only. The potential for expanding the sports facilities on the Penns Field site has been recognised for several years along with the idea of making the area a 'sports hub' for the town.

It was around three or four years ago that the Petersfield Town Juniors Football Club made a presentation to Council outlining their future plans and vision and this included a desire to move most, if not all, of their operations to the Penns Farm site along with an intended expansion of the number of teams that they would be running, including a significant increase in the amount of girls football. It is clear that an expansion in the number of teams run by the club has happened as can be seen from the wear and tear being seen on the football pitches at Penns Farm due to their intensive usage during the season. It is not unusual for the Town Juniors to be playing ten or a dozen games per week on our football pitches at both Love Lane and Penns Farm.

Historically (pre 2005) the Town Council hired some changing rooms from the Taro Centre however, it was decided to cease this arrangement I understand, on the grounds of cost and a lack of usage. As a result, the football pitches at Penns Farm no longer have any changing facilities, which is no longer viable with the present requirements of the Football Association and the developments seen in recent years with womens and girls football.

Summary and recommendation

There is a clear need for additional football pitches in the town and some discussion has already taken place over whether an artificial pitch could be provided as part of the development of Field 'B' and whether there is potential for involving the Hockey Club as part of this work. Equally, there is a clear need for changing facilities to be provided that are compatible with the requirements of the Football Association which could include a second storey for viewing games and the provision of refreshments.

It has also been recognised in recent months that there is a need for a review of the sports facilities layout at Penns Farm in consultation with both the Town Junior Football Club and the Rugby Club in order to maximise the potential and usage of the site, whilst seeking to provide the clubs with the facilities they require.

Bearing in mind the scope and extent of this project, it would seem logical for a working party to be established in order to start this process although members will need to define the Terms of Reference for the working party.

Neil Hitch
Town Clerk
1st October 2015