

**REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**  
**HELD ON 9<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2010**

**MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE**

- Chairman:** \* Mrs M Jarrett
- Councillors** \* Mrs W Boatman  
\* T Edwards  
\* N Eve  
Mrs A Hayward (ex officio)  
\* R Kipps (ex officio)  
\* G Liley  
\* Mrs A Preedy  
\* S Watkins

\*Denotes members present

Also present were Cllr M Green and Cllr Mrs J Worrall

There was one member of the public present.

**RECOMMENDATIONS -NONE**

**10/37 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Mrs A Hayward.

**10/38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was one declaration of interest:

Cllr Liley Agenda Item 10 – Common Management Plan Consultation Process (Cricket Club).

**10/39 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Informal Common User Group and Open Spaces Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2010 be approved as a true and correct record.

**10/40 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**Common User Group:** Friends of the Common attended the Common User Group which was currently held six monthly and had suggested that it would be of benefit for the meetings to be held quarterly. The Clerk suggested that rather than the full meeting be held quarterly that she could offer a similar arrangement to that undertaken with both the Golf Club and Cricket Club where she and the Rangers meet with them individually on a quarterly basis. It was felt that it might be more beneficial for the

officers to discuss items of interest with volunteers and suggested that this would be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

The Clerk advised that she had held a meeting with the Parish Rangers to agree a Winter Programme and that notices would be displayed in the areas they were working on as well as the Website. This had recently been done for the work at Grovewood and had been well received.

**10/34 Clamping:** The Clerk advised that although clamping had not yet become illegal the view was that it would happen at some point and therefore the alternatives were being explored. It was hoped that at the next meeting she would have details of three companies for the Committee to consider.

**War Memorial Hall Entrance and Exits:** The Clerk reported that the work to change these over would take place on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> January 2011. The timing of the work had been discussed with the Golf Club and regular users of the Hall and notices would go up before Christmas in the area and on the Website.

**Parking on the Highway:** The Clerk advised that the feasibility of putting logs on the verge had been considered but that this would introduce further dangers and was therefore not advisable. Representatives from Highways had been seen in the area but it was not yet known what they were planning.

#### **10/41 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2010/11**

The Clerk advised the Committee that the spend on Item 214 Grass Cutting/Grazing would be offset by the grant of £5,860 from Natural England which had been confirmed in writing but not yet received.

The Committee  
RESOLVED  
To note the report

#### **ALLOTMENTS**

#### **10/42 OCCUPATION & WAITING LISTS**

The Committee  
RESOLVED  
To note the occupation of the allotments and the current waiting lists.

#### **10/43 ALLOTMENT ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

##### **Key Deposits**

The Committee  
RESOLVED  
That the current allotment key deposit be changed to a non refundable key charge of five pounds to adequately cover the cost of provision of the keys and padlocks

##### **Administration Fee for New Allotment Tenants**

The Committee  
RESOLVED  
That a one off charge of ten pounds be introduced from April 2011 for new allotment holders to cover the additional administration costs associated with new allotment tenants which would be collected with the allotment rental.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs W Boatman, Seconded by Cllr Mrs A Preedy and carried unanimously.

## **COMMON & GROVEWOOD**

### **10/44 REPORT OF THE PARISH RANGER**

#### **Common**

The quote for bunding to replace the logs in the area of Clements Road where persistent parking was taking place had been received at a cost of £650 plus VAT which the Committee felt was a considerable amount. Alternatives were discussed including extending the kerbing however this option would still cost the Council. It was suggested that the option of six bollards may be a simpler and cheaper option. It was agreed however that the individual concerned would be contacted once again but that if no progress was made that the Clerk would put in a formal complaint to Inspector George Holland covering the danger and obstruction of the Footpath and the obstruction of the emergency services before any work was undertaken.

#### **Groveswood Management**

The Clerk advised that the work at Groveswood had been completed very effectively by the Contractor. The advance communication and notices appeared to have worked well and endeavours would be made to do this for other areas where appropriate.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the Ranger's report.

### **10/45 COMMON MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Three responses had been received which were discussed. A proposal from the Cricket Club to thin the trees in the wooded area between the Cricket Club and the Horse track was rejected on the grounds that it would remove the natural barrier to the horse track which would then involve the moving of the Horse track which would be a cost. However individual trees will be removed as part of the Rangers' usual maintenance work.

The issue of the orange netting put up around the Cricket Square was discussed and the differences between the notice requirements of routine maintenance work and 'Ground under repair' explained to the Committee. Correspondence had been entered into with the Cricket club which had culminated in the Parish Council removing the netting and returning it to the Cricket Club. It was emphasised that the laws of Common Land needed to be adhered to by all users.

In their response to the Management Plan the Golf Club had identified work that was beneficial to both the common and the Golf Club. Mark Carter of the CMS would be asked to add the items to the Management Plan.

The Clerk advised that the plan would be going into the Library on the 11<sup>th</sup> December for a four week public consultation period with a copy on the Website and an article would be in Chorleywood Matters.

### **10/46 PROPOSED WINTER WORK FOR CHORLEYWOOD GOLF CLUB**

**Tree work:** The Rangers had agreed the work identified by the Golf Club was required and would be assisting the Golf Club with this work.

**Wooden Benches:** A number of benches that had been put on the Common by the Golf Club had been taken out and replaced with log benches which had not worked. These will now be replaced with memorial benches.

**Winter Programme:** The winter programme of work detailed in the report to the Committee was agreed.

## **LAWN CEMETERY**

### **10/47 OCCUPATION**

The Committee  
RESOLVED

To note the occupation of the Lawn Cemetery understanding that the number of interments taking place since the report had been produced had increased considerably.

### **10/48 CEMETERY ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

#### **Pedestrian Access**

The Committee  
RESOLVED

That a pedestrian gate would be created in the Hedge along the front of the new Cemetery at the quoted cost of £168.

This was proposed by Cllr N Eve, seconded by Cllr G Liley and carried unanimously.

#### **Cemetery Management Training – Shoring of Graves**

A recent training course attended by the Cemetery Administrator had highlighted the recommendation that all graves should be shored when being dug. This had arisen some time ago and funds had been set aside at the time but had not subsequently been used due to assessment of the risks and advice taken at the time. The method of shoring and reasons for not progressing with shoring were explained. It was suggested that before shoring is purchased which, whilst it protects against some hazards, introduces others, that we write to the Insurance Company and HSE with our Risk Assessment to seek their views

## **PARISH PATHS**

**10/49** The Committee noted that work is underway on the 2010-11 Parish path signage for which the grant of £1000 had already been received. The Committee was advised that further monies may also be available from Herts County Council

## **GENERAL**

### **10/50 BUDGET STRATEGY 2011/12**

The Clerk went through the key points in the report advising that the Committee should be mindful that although the Government had agreed that Parish Councils should not be charge capped, that there was no guarantee that this might not change in the future. In response to a question on the state of the reserves the Clerk detailed what was allocated. The Committee was advised that as a service industry we buy in services from outside companies who were each putting up charges. Without an increase in the rate these

increases would somehow have to be absorbed at the expense of some service that the Parish Council offers. The Policy and Resources Committee had asked the Clerk to prepare a budget of 5% increase which the Clerk had managed to reduce to 1.9% yet still offer the same services as currently offered by the Parish Council. However it was pointed out that the Government had said that parishioners should not be asked to pay more and this budget still represented an increase. It was suggested that if it was such a small amount could the Council not come up with a nil budget. The Clerk advised that to do this the Council would have to advise what service would be cut and be mindful of the reaction that such cuts would receive from the Parish. It was pointed out that with inflation at 5%, 1.9% was not an unreasonable amount although it was highlighted that the increase was actually 3.3% for this committee. The view was expressed that hopefully next year Councillors would get more involved earlier to get a better understanding of the figures, although it was pointed out that Members receive all the figures on a monthly basis with few queries being raised. Two areas of apparent slack were identified, Christchurch Cemetery which the Committee advised was already allocated to work on the wall and the maintenance of the Christchurch Cemetery which the Committee was advised was also allocated as this covered the annual maintenance contract.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To accept the budget strategy for 2011 /12 as detailed

This was proposed by Cllr G Liley, seconded by Cllr S Watkins and carried with the following votes

Seven in favour

One abstention

### **Lawn Cemetery Charges 2011/2012**

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the fees and charges for the Lawn Cemetery for 2011 /12 be agreed.

This was proposed by Cllr R Kipps, Seconded by Cllr S Watkins and carried unanimously.

### **10/51 CLOSURE**

There being no further business, the meeting having commenced at 8 pm closed at 10.25 pm.

Signed ..... Date .....

These minutes were agreed as a true and correct record at the Open Spaces meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Signed..... Date.....