

**REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**  
**HELD ON 13<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2011**

**MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE**

- Chairman:** \* Mrs M Jarrett
- Councillors** \* Mrs W Boatman  
\* T Edwards  
N Eve  
\* Mrs A Hayward (ex officio)  
\* Mrs A Preedy  
\* Mrs L Sutherland (ex officio)  
\* S Watkins  
\* Mrs J Worrall

\*Denotes members present

There were four members of the public present.

**RECOMMENDATIONS -NONE**

**11/40 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Eve.

**11/41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest: Cllr Mrs Worrall advised that she had not been at the Friends of Chorleywood Common meeting the previous evening when Grazing and the Section 38 application by Veolia Water had been discussed and therefore did not need to declare an interest in this respect on this occasion.

**11/42 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

11/25 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence – remove ‘through TRDC funding’  
11/26 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence – replace ‘great’ with ‘large’

The Committee  
RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011, with these amendments be approved as a true and correct record.

**11/43 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**11/25 Play Area on Chorleywood Common:** Members were advised that all names had now been received for the Advisory Committee to look at play on Chorleywood Common for both formal play areas and natural play areas. Members were asked that as the preference for timing of meetings of the advisory committee was during the day, would the Parish Council accept named substitutes which was agreed. It was also agreed that the meetings should preferably be held in the first half of the week i.e. Monday to Wednesday.

**Dog Fouling Notices:** Members were advised that temporary notices regarding dog fouling had been put up around the Common.

#### **11/44 APPLICATION FOR A CONCESSION TO TRADE ON CHORLEYWOOD COMMON**

At this point in the meeting the Chairman advised that there was a member of the public who wished to address the meeting under **Agenda Item 8 Application for a Concession to Trade on Chorleywood Common**. The meeting was suspended to allow the member of the public to address the Committee regarding his application for a concession to trade on Chorleywood Common to provide a kebab van in the area of the Lorry Permissive parking area. The meeting was reconvened at 8.21pm.

The Committee discussed the following concerns with the application:

- The time requested was not suitable for local residents
- The conditions of the existing Ice Cream concession were clarified
- Bye Laws of the Common do not allow this type of activity without specific agreement from the Parish Council
- Some members felt that such ventures frequently become a drop off point for other activities
- A food outlet on the Common would attract an already large population of foxes to this area and how would this be dealt with.
- Although the applicant had undertaken to clear all litter, as the hours of trading requested would be after dark and there is no street lighting in the area requested this would be difficult to carry out.
- It was understood that a fast food outlet in Chorleywood was being changed to a Kebab shop and this venture would therefore duplicate a local shop.
- Lack of public conveniences in the area requested for the food trading concession.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the application for a concession to trade on Chorleywood Common was not granted

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Mrs Preedy and carried unanimously.

#### **11/45 APPLICATION FOR WORKS ON THE COMMON FROM THE CRICKET CLUB**

The Chairman advised that there was a member of the public that wished to address the meeting under **Agenda Item 11 Application for works on the Common from the Cricket Club**. The meeting was suspended to allow the member of the public to address the Committee regarding the application for works on the Common from the Cricket Club and the meeting was reconvened at 8.31pm.

The Cricket Club had requested that a French drain be put in along the side of the Cricket Club to alleviate flooding at the corner of the pavilion when it rains. The Parish Ranger suggested that at the next downpour he would go and investigate the problem to agree the best course of action.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the works be agreed in principle and that the matter be delegated to the Clerk and the Ranger.

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, seconded by Cllr Mrs Boatman and carried unanimously

**11/46 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2010/11**

Members were advised that over the next four days following the Open Spaces Committee meeting the BBC were filming in the War Memorial Hall for a pilot of a comedy show to be shown around Christmas on the BBC. If successful it was possible that the follow up series would be based in the War Memorial Hall. Permission had been given and charges made for part of the War Memorial Hall parking area and the Lorry Parking area to be used by BBC vehicles. Members were also advised that regular hall users had been very helpful in moving to alternative venues and that the BBC were paying for the relocation of these hall users.

The Committee  
RESOLVED  
To note the statement.

**COMMON & GROVEWOOD**

**11/47 REPORT OF THE PARISH RANGER**

The Committee noted the report from the Parish Ranger commenting that the wild flowers this year had been quite spectacular. Members were advised that Grazing had commenced that day with the same herd as previously with the exception of the one that had been a trouble maker at the start of the grazing earlier in the year prior to being removed from the Common. Removal of the fence posts was covered later in the meeting under the Grazing agenda item. Discussion took place on the injuries to both sheep and alpacas by dog(s) in the Chorleywood House Estate but it was felt that this had been confined to that area and that cattle were less likely to be attacked by dogs.

The Clerk advised the Committee that she had spoken to the Contractors about the part of the flint wall at Christchurch which had recently been repaired following the building work at the Church and did not match the rest of the wall. They had confirmed that sand and cement had been used instead of the proper lime mortar and agreed that it will be redone.

The height of the laurel hedge in Christchurch churchyard was questioned and members were advised that due to Health and Safety regulations for working at heights, the hedge needed to be kept at its approximately six foot height to allow safe working during maintenance.

Members were advised that the population of Goldfish was decreasing and those recently caught were now in the Fire Pond at Chorleywood House Estate.

Contractors were coming out to assess some tree work on the Common that would be done under essential works.

**11/48 APPLICATION FOR ALTERATION TO LAND REGISTER**

The Committee  
RESOLVED  
To agree the application.

**11/49 REQUEST FOR WORKS NEAR DOG KENNEL LANE**

The request had turned out to be for the footpath on the opposite side of the road to the Dog Kennel Lane Allotments which had therefore been referred back to the Rights of Way Officer as the Parish Council does not own the land in question.

## **11/50 COMMONS ACT 2006 – SECTION 38 APPLICATION FROM VEOLIA WATER**

The Chairman advised that there was a member of the public that wished to address the meeting under **Agenda Item 10 Commons Act 2006 – Section 38 Application from Veolia Water**. The meeting was suspended at 8.45 to allow a representative from Friends of Chorleywood Common (FOCC) to address the Committee to hear views on this and a number of other Common related matters and the meeting was reconvened at 8.51pm.

Friends of Chorleywood Common had agreed not to oppose the Veolia Water Section 38 application as it was in the public interest but asked that the practicalities of such work be considered in terms of undertakings by Veolia Water with respect to preventing avoidable damage to trees and consideration to the Parish Council for such work. The FOCC also thanked the Committee for making the winter work programme available to them. With respect to the Section 38 fencing for grazing application by the Parish Council the FOCC had sent their comments in to the Planning Inspectorate and were in favour subject to striking a balance with other interests. They had been glad to hear of the post extractor solution advised by the Clerk to the problem of getting out the posts out of the Slotties. They also asked whether the slotties could be used for the kissing gates that could then be taken off the Common when the cattle were not grazing.

Returning to the Veolia Water Application, members were advised that to date no consideration had been requested of Veolia Water with respect to the planned borehole and the Clerk had been unable to find evidence of suitable charges from elsewhere. Members were advised that the borehole was likely to be there for 3-7 years. The idea of approaching Veolia to become involved in the installation of a water irrigation system at the allotments with additional water troughs for the cattle would be considered as a possible form of consideration that would benefit the community. This might be more palatable to the water company than a cash figure, but costs for such a system would need to be assessed first. Members were advised that comments made on the application could be viewed on the Planning Inspectorate's website.

The Committee  
RESOLVED

That the request from Veolia Water be agreed in principal subject to the Planning Inspectorate's report and the situation should continue to be monitored..

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Mrs Sutherland and carried unanimously.

## **11/51 PARKING RESTRICTION ON CHORLEYWOOD COMMON**

Members were advised that the parking restrictions had been in place for nine years with the majority of people in favour of the restrictions. Notices advising of the restrictions were clearly displayed in the parking areas concerned. If the appeals were upheld the refunds would come out of Parish Council funds as the Parking Solutions company had operated within their contract and the clamp was legal. There was a view that there were no clear mitigating circumstances in this case or the other appeal that had been received prior to the meeting.

The Committee  
RESOLVED

That the appeal would not be upheld.

This was proposed from the chair by Cllr Mrs Jarrett and carried unanimously.

## **11/52 VOLUNTEER WORK ON CHORLEYWOOD COMMON**

It was agreed that using volunteers on the Common had the benefits of getting parishioners involved in the maintenance of the Common who then gained a better understanding of the reasons for the work

being done and that more work would get done as a result. The Parish office would liaise with Friends of Chorleywood Common with respect to the work planned. The Clerk advised that she had a meeting in the diary for the following week with the Golf Club to identify the locations for the replacement benches on the Common. It was confirmed that the volunteers were covered by the Parish Council Insurance provided they were properly overseen by Parish Rangers.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To accept the plan as outlined in the report.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Mrs Sutherland and carried unanimously.

#### **11/53 APPLICATION FOR A MIRROR TO BE PLACED OPPOSITE BETJEMAN GARDENS**

Advice from the Highways Department had been received that stated "Hertfordshire Highways do not support the use of mirrors on the public highway as they will give a false impression of vehicle speed and distance. As they do not comply with the Traffic Signs and General Directions they are considered an unauthorised sign and should not be erected on the highway". Members agreed street furniture should not be placed on the Common in the light of this advice. The applicant could mount a mirror on their own property and angle it appropriately to overcome the issue that they had raised.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To refuse the application to place a mirror on the Common opposite Betjeman Gardens and suggest that one could be placed on the applicant's own property.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Mrs Preedy and carried unanimously.

#### **11/54 GRAZING UPDATE**

The Clerk advised the meeting that she had gone back to the contractor who had originally supplied the slotties and posts who had devised a solution for getting the swollen posts out of the slotties. In the worst case scenario if this solution did not work, the fence posts together with the slotties would be removed, stored in the rangers shed, holes filled in and the fencing posts and slotties replaced next year. The costs associated with this would be down to the contractors with some time from the Rangers.

In a response to a question regarding what would happen if permission to erect the fencing was not given, the Committee was advised that depending on the reasons the Parish Council could appeal. In the worst case all the fencing would be removed. Concern was expressed that at a number of the squeeze points the Common was being eroded. With the Council's policy of not repairing worn out areas of the Common this situation should be monitored going forward.

Clarification was sought as to whether the Parish Council had received a petition from residents of Dog Kennel Lane on the way the Parish Council had handled the grazing. Members were advised that a letter from residents of Dog Kennel Lane regarding the Section 38 application had been sent direct to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the consultation exercise and no such petition had been received directly by the Parish Council

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report.

## **ALLOTMENTS**

### **11/55 OCCUPATION & WAITING LISTS**

The Committee was advised that the Allotment Administrator had been asked to write an article for the next edition of Chorleywood Matters to address public perception of the space available at the allotments and provide some background as to how the allotment space was managed. The Clerk advised that at the next review of Fees and Charges, allotment rentals should be looked at with a view to the charges more accurately reflecting the time taken to manage them by both the Officers and Rangers.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the occupation of the allotments and the current waiting lists.

## **LAWN CEMETERY**

### **11/56 INTERMENTS**

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the interments that had taken place at the Lawn Cemetery.

### **11/57 ALLOTMENTS AND CEMETERY ADMINISTRATORS REPORT**

The Committee agreed that replacement of the standard roses would be deferred until more roses have been lost. The idea of grave markers to be placed on new graves until a plaque is placed on the graves was discussed. The walkabout of the Cemetery and Allotments was fixed for Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September at 2.30pm starting at the Lawn Cemetery

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the Allotments and Cemetery Administrator's report.

## **PARISH PATHS**

### **11/58 2010-11 Signage**

The Committee noted the current position on the Parish path signage.

## **GENERAL**

### **11/59 PROJECT UPDATES**

The Clerk was thanked for providing the list of project updates which she advised would be done for the other Committees. Cllr Edwards volunteered to help on the Signage project.

### **11/60 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT**

Nothing to report.

**10/61 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Committee  
RESOLVED

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest, that the press and public be temporarily excluded for an urgent item and they are instructed to withdraw.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Jarrett from the Chair and carried unanimously.

**PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

**11/62 CLOSURE**

The meeting having commenced at 8 pm closed at 10.30 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.....