

CHORLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

To be received by Council
4th December 2012

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 13th NOVEMBER 2012

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * T Edwards

Councillors * Mrs W Boatman
* Mrs M Jarrett
* R Khiroya (ex officio)
* Mrs V Lantree
* G Liley
* Mrs A Preedy
* Mrs L Sutherland (ex officio)
* Mrs J Worrall

*Denotes members present

Also present: S Watkins.

There were six members of the press and public present.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. REFURBISHMENT OF THE HOLLYBUSH HALL

Cllr Watkins advised that the Village Halls Committee had already looked at the Hollybush Hall and had decided that no money should be spent on the hall. Some Members were concerned that no specification had been obtained from the education authorities to find out what would be required by OFSTED for the building. Other concerns were that the Committee had not demonstrated need for the local area to use this facility and therefore this quotation may not be relevant.

There appeared to be some confusion as to which committee was responsible for the hall. The Clerk confirmed that all the halls were the property of the Parish Council. The Management Committee managed the bookings for hirers, and the day to day running of the halls. It was agreed that the Village Halls Trust was struggling financially and therefore the Open Spaces Committee wished to source grant funding to improve the facilities of the Halls to make it a more useable space. The lack of disability access was discussed.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To refer the issue to Full Council to set up a small group to assess need, the target audience and based on the feedback look at ways to fund any project.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Mrs Boatman and unanimously agreed.

12/67 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence

12/68 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest:

12/69 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the minutes of Open Spaces Committee held on the 11th September 2012 be approved as true and correct record.

12/70 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

12/56 Proposed low voltage underground electricity cable installation on Chorleywood Common

The Clerk confirmed that the company had agreed the terms and conditions specified by the committee including the £1,000 fee and were now applying for the Section 38 Approval from DEFRA.

12/71 FINANCIAL COMPARISON YEAR END STATEMENT 2012/13

In response to a question from a member the Clerk confirmed that two grants were still expected, one was for the Countryside Stewardship Grant and the second for the maintenance of the Parish Paths. She also advised the Committee that communication had been received that day from Natural England confirming a successful application for Higher Level Stewardship which would commence on 1st December 2012. To her knowledge Chorleywood was the only Parish Council to have received this level grant funding, proving that Natural England had confidence in the maintenance regime of the site. It would mean that grant funding would be increased from £1175.00 to £5860.00 per year, and this grant was for a period of ten years. It was agreed that this should be publicised. The Chairman of the Council congratulated the Staff for the success of the application.

Questions were asked relating to the legal fees spent this year. The Clerk confirmed that monies would have to come from elsewhere in the budget to balance the over spending on legal fees. This could ultimately be to the detriment of the maintenance of the Common.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the statement.

COMMON & GROVEWOOD

12/72 REPORT OF THE PARISH RANGER

The Committee wished to congratulate the Apprentice for his high success rate in his Entry Level Exams. The Clerk advised that she had been asked by the Chairman of the Council to carry out an assessment of the Rangers work in view of replacement of the Senior Parish Ranger. She explained that whilst the Apprentice was in training he was not insured to carry out the majority of the work unsupervised. This meant that there were weaknesses which needed to be addressed. She advised that a full report would be forwarded to a future meeting.

The Parish Ranger updated members on the illegal work carried out by a resident of Berry Lane on Ash Trees belonging to the Council .

Members discussed the recommendations within the report and the

Committee

RESOLVED

That the Millennium Roses be taken up and disposed of.

That the Apprentice design a new bed in replacement of the roses and bring this to a future meeting.

That the Rangers replace the bark on the heather beds

That the two Juniper bushes be replaced

That further research take place on the control of moles.

That the Rangers and Clerk organise a programme of replacement bird boxes on the Common in conjunction with local school children.

The Committee thanked the Rangers for their comprehensive report.

12/73 BOUNDARY REVIEW OF THE CHILTERN AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

Cllr Mrs Jarrett advised the Committee that there was to be a new Designation Strategy to Review the AONB Boundaries sometime in the future. The Chiltern Conservation Board would need to gather evidence and local opinion if the boundaries were to be changed. At present Chorleywood Common was just outside the AONB, but the Parish Council were a member of the Chiltern Conservation Board. There were many advantages of being within the AONB, including greater protection of the green spaces as well as planning protection. It was noted that Sarratt and Croxley Green were both on the outskirts of the Conservation Area. Cllr Mrs Jarrett wished to contact the two other parishes in view of putting together a combined proposal as to where the boundary should be. If good evidence could be gathered at this stage, evidence would then be on file when the Commission came to look at the AONB boundary in this area. It was agreed that there was already concern for the Green Belt and being part of the AONB would add an additional layer of protection for the area.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That Cllr Mrs Jarrett and the Clerk have a meeting with Sarratt and Croxley Green Parish Council in view of putting forward proposals regarding the Boundary Review of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

12/74 AREA OUTSIDE SHEPHERDS COTTAGE – CHORLEYWOOD BOTTOM

The Chairman asked if any Councillors had inspected the site. He stated that he had and whilst the resident had removed the majority of stones he could see that the stones were ornamental and out of keeping for the common. It was also agreed that the area in general is in good shape as maintenance of the whole area had taken place the previous year.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That permission be withheld for work to be carried out in this area, but the area be monitored.

ALLOTMENTS

12/75 OCCUPATION

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the occupation of the allotments.

12/76 WAITING LISTS

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report.

A number of issues had arisen from the Allotment user group which will be discussed at the next meeting.

LAWN CEMETERY

12/77 INTERMENTS

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the Report.

12/78 ALLOTMENTS AND CEMETERY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

9.05 pm Cllr Mrs Worrall joined the meeting.

The condition of the entrance to the Swillet Allotment was discussed. It was agreed that quotations would be obtained to repair the ground and make a more secure entrance that would withstand vehicles. The debate regarding the footpath running alongside the Swillet allotment site continues and once a proposal from Herts County Council is agreed, Members will be informed.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To approve the increase in plaque charges with affect from 1st January 2013

PARISH PATHS

12/79 PARISH PATHS GRANT FUNDING

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report

GENERAL

12/80 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

There was nothing to report.

12/81 REQUEST FROM THE BLACK HORSE FOR WORKS TO BE CARRIED OUT

Members read the details within the report and agreed that this was a safety issue which needed to be addressed.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To allow the works to be carried out at the Black Horse as specified within the report.

12/82 REQUEST FROM RESIDENTS OF CLEMENTS ROAD TO PLACE A MIRROR AND SALT BOX ON COMMON LAND

Members were reminded that the Highways Authority did not allow mirrors on highway land as they consider them to be a danger, and therefore the Parish Council had to follow suite. It was noted that there are already four salt bins in Clements Road, and having one placed on Common land would create insurance complications.

The Committee
RESOLVED
That due to insurance reasons and advice from the Highways Authority permission could not be given.
That the Clerk notify the local resident accordingly.

12/66 CLOSURE

The meeting having commenced at 8 pm closed at 9.53 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.....