

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 21st MAY 2013

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * T Edwards

Councillors Mrs W Boatman
Mrs M Jarrett
R Khiroya (ex officio)
* F Mahon-Daly
* Mrs A Preedy
* Mrs L Sutherland (ex officio)
* S Watkins
* Mrs J Worrall

* Denotes members present
There were six members of the public present.

13/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Mrs Boatman, Mrs Jarrett and Khiroya.

13/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

13/03 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee
RESOLVED

That the minutes of Open Spaces Committee held on the 12th March 2013 be approved as a true and correct record.

13/04 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

12/114 The Clerk was thanked for arranging the Beating of the Bounds of Chorleywood Common.

12/116 Members were updated on the current position with the Ice Cream concession on the Common and it was agreed that the Clerk would raise the licensing process at the next Joint Parish Meeting.

At this point in the meeting it was agreed to bring agenda item 14 forward to allow three members of the public from the Woodoaks Association to make a presentation

13/05 REQUEST TO WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WOODOAKS ASSOCIATION

After the presentation members were advised of the partnership proposal to run a course one day a week in the summer hosted at Chorleywood Parish Council venues, two hours of which would be given over to the Council to run an educational session about the Common. These would link in to the Higher Level Stewardship Programme which pays an amount per such educational session. Feedback forms would need to be filled in following the events. It was noted that there was no financial contract

between the Woodoaks Association and the Parish Council for such events. If the association chose to use Parish Council venues and facilities for other purposes eg children's birthday parties etc then such events would be contractual similar to any other user of the Common or Halls. It was agreed that some sort of licence would be required.

The Committee
RESOLVED

That the Parish Council pursue a contractual dealing with the Woodoaks Association with a view to providing the facilities described for 2013 and if successful beyond this.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Mahon-Daly and carried unanimously.

13/06 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2012/13

Following explanations of the revised budget and Grants

The Committee
RESOLVED

To note the report.

COMMON & GROVEWOOD

13/07 OPEN SPACES OFFICER'S REPORT

Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM)

Members were advised that the Parish Council has now been accepted as a Corporate Member of the ICCM and can put the ICCM logo on the website to reflect this.

Shepherds Bridge

Members were updated on a meeting that had taken place with London Underground, TRDC, Herts Highways and Watford Planning on the potential for making Shepherds Bridge safer for pedestrians in partnership with London Underground's Maintenance programme. A number of proposals are being considered but there could be a price to pay in terms of the Common. Members were advised that at some stage in the future a proposal will come through to the Council.

Ponds

The Parish Ranger advised that Christchurch Pond is progressing well; natural regeneration had been assisted by some movement of plants from further up the bank to help the newts laying eggs. Duck weed removal was discussed and September/October was advised to be the best time to do this. Discussion took place on the issue of the fish in Darvells Pond and it was suggested that the notice regarding the illegal dumping of fish in this pond be replaced. It was suggested that something be put on the website on the subject also mentioning that aquatic centres will take in fish although no money was likely to be given for them. Members were advised that guidance was being sought on the subject of electro-fishing to control the numbers of fish in the pond. There were other control measures also being looked at and although electro-fishing was the best option, even this option would need to be repeated. Timing of such a process would be in the winter.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report

ALLOTMENTS

13/08 OCCUPATION

The Committee
RESOLVED

To note the occupation of the allotments.

13/09 WAITING LISTS

The Committee
RESOLVED

To note the numbers on the waiting lists for an allotment.

LAWN CEMETERY

13/10 INTERMENTS

The Committee
RESOLVED

To note the number of interments that had taken place.

COMMON AND GROVEWOOD

13/11 BEATING OF THE BOUNDS

There had been a good turnout to the Beating of the Bounds and a number of issues had been highlighted. With respect to the galvanised sheeting on Footpath 14, members were advised that whilst it was somewhat unorthodox it provided a habitat for newts, grass snakes and slow worms and as such it would be useful to leave it but to encourage growth to camouflage it

The Committee
RESOLVED

To leave the sheeting in place

This was proposed by Cllr Mahon-Daly, seconded by Cllr Edwards and carried unanimously.

The four instances of flying tipping would be cleared by the Rangers. All other items were encroachment and residents would be informed of this by letter and the corrective action that was required with the timescales for this. This letter would also include the point that if chemicals were used on residents property, care needed to be taken to ensure that they did not drift onto the Common where no chemicals are allowed to be used. The gravel issue at Cherry Tree Dell had already been sorted with the resident now aware of their responsibility to inform the Parish Council in future.

With respect to the parking issue in Chorleywood Bottom, members were advised that it had now been resolved. Although permission had been given by the Council for the Bollards to prevent illegal parking, it was not intended to install them at this stage

13/12 CHORLEYWOOD COMMON WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14

Members were advised of an additional item relating to the permissive Horse Track. The Rangers had noticed that the part of the Horse track next to the holly tunnel being formed by the Rangers as part of the Play Trail preparation was significantly wet. The proposal was to temporarily close this part of the track to restore it. The temporary closure for about three weeks would be done in consultation with horse riders.

Members were advised that attempts were being made to arrange the visit to Epping Forest to see the virtual fencing in use there.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the programme be accepted and should be put on the Website.

13/13 PURCHASE OF A HEAVY DUTY FLAIL

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the heavy duty flail be purchased.

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

13/14 PROPOSED EDUCATION PACK FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS

Members were advised of progress being made as part of the Higher Level Stewardship Educational Programme requirements. One of the Rangers had been on a Training Course and the Rangers and the Clerk had met with a consultant to understand what was required of the education packs. A student would be working with the Council, reducing the pressure on the office staff producing education packs. Contact had been made with Parish Clerks in the surrounding area and interest in educational sessions on the Common had already been shown from Abbots Langley, Croxley Green and Watford. The consultant had also come up with a number of ideas for funding that could be taken forward.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To move forward and work with the Student and Consultant to progress educational packs for use by school children visiting the Common.

This was proposed by Cllr Watkins, Seconded by Cllr Mahon-Daly and carried unanimously

GENERAL

13/15 PLANTING PROJECT

Members were advised that unfortunately the Apprentice Ranger was unable to be present at the meeting due to sick leave. In his absence the Clerk explained how the apprenticeship worked and what the Apprentice Ranger had to undertake as part of the apprenticeship with respect to planting projects.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To approve the planting proposals for the Cemetery and outside the Parish Office at a total cost of no more than £400, with £100 of this to be met from the Miscellaneous budget for the container planting and the remaining covered by the reserve creditor already set aside for this purpose.

13/16 FOUR YEAR VISION

Water Harvesting: Cllr Edwards, Rangers and Allotments Officer were due to walk the Dog Kennel Lane allotments on the next Friday to assess the practicality of water harvesting options at this site.

Signs and Lecterns on the Common: Members were advised that putting a lectern over at Christchurch pond would be looked at in the autumn.

Investigation of a leisure trail: Members were advised that Groundwork can provide grant funding for such areas and this would be followed up.

Butterfly Surveys Training had started the previous year and would continue in the current year. The ten year calendar of surveys was going well with a large number of different surveys completed over the previous year and planned into the current year. Members were advised that so far this had not cost the Council anything as they had either been grant funded or undertaken by volunteers.

13/17 URGENT ITEMS

At the discretion of the Chairman, the following urgent items were considered.

Friends of Chorleywood Common had requested that the Common User Group meeting be re-instated. If this was agreed efforts would be made to set it up before the next Open Spaces Meeting on July 9th.

Members were also advised that a Family Fun Day run by the Group Detonate had been proposed for the 22nd June. Although the date would now be changing the event was still likely to be taking place and would be similar to events run previously and would be subject to the usual conditions with respect to Public Liability and care of the Common.

A position had been agreed for the bench in memory of the late Cllr Norman Eve in Larks Meadow and the draft wording for the plaque on the bench agreed.

Proposals to divert the footpath through Warrings Field had been submitted and Cllr Edwards had visited the site. It was clear that the proposed diversion was now the worn path and as such it was felt that the Committee had no objection to it. This had also been the view of the Open Spaces Committee when it had been raised a few years ago.

The Committee
RESOLVED
That these items be noted and agreed.

13/119 CLOSURE

The meeting having commenced at 8 pm closed at 9.38 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.....