

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 10th SEPTEMBER 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 three members of the public present.

13/36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

13/37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

13/36 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee
RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2013 be approved as a true and correct record.

13/37 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

13/32 Resurfacing of Christchurch Car Park. The Ranger explained that there was a national shortage of pea shingle and therefore the work proposed for the summer had not taken place. Once the materials could be sourced the work would be programmed in to hopefully happen during the school holidays. The Clerk confirmed that she had spoken to the Church regarding a contribution towards the cost but until a price was obtained this had not gone any further.

13/32 Parking issues at the War Memorial Hall permissive parking area. The Clerk advised that she had been put in touch with a company who provided the equipment free of charge but the land owner had to take the photos of vehicles without tickets and send them off to the company who then took the necessary action. The Chairman, Cllr Edwards stated that this would give the Council discretion and also there was a financial incentive as the Council would get back some of the fees collected. It was agreed that further investigation should take place and report to the next meeting.

The Meeting was suspended at 8.22 pm

Gregory Hill from Friends of the Common spoke about the support of the grazing on the Common.

He also raised concerns about the proposed works to Shepherds Bridge and asked that Friends of the Common be kept informed with this process.

Mr Robert Mann advised that there were proposals to carry out Fracking in Beaconsfield and Chalfont St Peter. He asked if the Parish Council had considered a policy about Fracking and how it may affect Chorleywood. He also asked for details on why the Play Area report had been postponed.

The Clerk advised that any issues relating to the bridge repairs would go to the Planning Committee as would any suggestions regarding Fracking. The report on the proposed play area had been postponed whilst clarification was sought. It was likely that this item would be discussed in the near future.

The meeting resumed at 8.29pm

13/38 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2013/14

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report.

13/39 OPEN SPACES OFFICER'S REPORT

Members thanked the Officers for a very comprehensive report.

Allotments: Members were informed that whilst cutting Copmans Wick allotment bits of carpet that had been left abandoned in the allotment site had become tangled in the machinery. The Rangers had asked if a notice could be put up in all the allotment sites asking them not to use carpet as a form of weed control.

The Committee
RESOLVED

That officers email all allotment holders asking them to refrain from using carpets on the allotments sites as a form of weed control as abandoned carpet was causing damage to the vehicles.

The Chairman advised that he had received a letter from the Horticultural Society inviting Committee Members to visit the allotment sites. It was agreed that suitable dates and times would be circulated once the Senior Admin Officer returned from annual leave.

The Chairman also advised that he had contacted Little Chalfont Beekeeping Association to ask if any of their members would be prepared to put hives into the allotment sites. Cllr Edwards advised that he would report back any progress.

Cemetery: The Clerk advised that there was to be another burial in Section A. The ground was unstable in this area and therefore it was a priority to sort out the grave shoring, and that a report would come to the next agenda.

Website: It was agreed that something should go on the Council's website regarding the two new flowers found on the Common and also the abundance of orchids this year. When discussing the website, it was agreed that photos of the vicarage pond before during and after should also be published, as the pond had rejuvenated with between 10 -12 new species of new pond life. Another suggestion was to have a kid's corner with monthly updates on activities that children could do on the Common. This was considered a good idea but could be a lot of work and perhaps it would be a good idea to get a volunteer to put this together.

It was generally felt that there was a lack of understanding the Common and it was up to the Council to address this situation with positive stories and information.

Butterflies: The Ranger explained the benefits of keeping areas of long grass during the winter to encourage butterfly species for the following year.

The Committee
RESOLVED

Those areas of long grass should be left on the Common to allow for butterfly larvae to pupate in the spring.

That information be publicised to inform the public of what we were doing.

May Bushes: The Ranger explained that the area known as the May Bushes was a targeted grassland species area within the HLS. Whilst trees had been cut and taken away, there was still leaf litter and early signs of regeneration were showing rank species. If there was to be any hope of regenerating this area it was suggested that the Council engage a contractor to take out trees and remove the fertile layer of leaf litter which fuels the rank vegetation. It was agreed that the Rangers obtain a price to carry out this work and report to the next meeting.

Village Day: Members noted that there was litter left after the Village Day and suggested that a skip be hired for next year's Village Day to take all the rubbish. If there was a big enough receptacle stall holders would then be told to put their rubbish in the skip.

Cemetery Path: The Clerk advised that two quotations had been received to carry out his work to the cemetery path running from section D through to the main roadway.

The Committee
RESOLVED

That the cheapest quotation be accepted to carry out the work to the cemetery path.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Jarrett, seconded by Cllr Watkins and unanimously approved.

ALLOTMENTS

13/40 OCCUPATION

The Council
RESOLVED

To note the occupation

13/41 WAITING LISTS

The Council
RESOLVED

To note the details on the waiting list

LAWN CEMETERY

13/42 INTERMENTS

The Committee
RESOLVED

To note the number of interments that had taken place.

COMMON AND GROVEWOOD

13/43 PROPOSED SEED HARVEST ON THE COMMON

The Parish Ranger advised that by having a seed harvest it would collect seed from all the areas but the seed would only regenerate in the areas where the soil suited it best.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That a seed harvest be organised for 2014 on Chorleywood Common.

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

13/44 GRAZING UPDATE

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report.

13/45 PLAY EQUIPMENT OF CHORLEYWOOD COMMON

This item was taken off the agenda until clarification was obtained on a technical matter.

13/46 STEWARD OF THE COMMON

The Clerk explained that John Warren had been the Steward of the Commoners since the 1960's assisting commoners through the Commons Registration Act, the Local Government Act and many other Acts of Parliament. The role of the Steward is to act as an interface between the landowner and the commoners, guiding commoners as to their rights and duties. The Clerk advised that John Warren had offered her a great deal of advice and help over the past 15 years. Sadly he had tendered his resignation due to ill health. The Clerk confirmed that it was the Parish Council's role as land owner to advertise for a replacement. The candidate should have legal experience and it was a non-fee paying position.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Clerk advertises for a new Steward of the Common

That a letter of thanks be sent to John Warren on behalf of the Council and Commoners with a suitable small gift of appreciation.

This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Worrall, seconded by Cllr Khiroya and unanimously approved.

GENERAL

13/47 FOUR YEAR VISION

Notice Boards: The Clerk showed the design for the noticeboards proposed by the Chiltern Conservation Board as part of the grant funding which had successfully been applied for. It was important for members to approve the design before moving forward. Members agreed that they approved of the design which was hand made from sustainable woodland. It was agreed that one sign would be on Larks Meadow and the second near one of the ponds. It was also agreed that the Clerk obtain the price for these boards as it may be suitable to order some more for the parking areas welcoming people to Chorleywood Common and advising them of some of its attributes. It would also be a good idea to show what was and was not permitted on the Common. It was also noted that the noticeboards on the Common were in a poor state of repair. Cllr Mrs. Preedy offered to have them looked at with a view to having them refurbished in order that they could regularly be updated with relevant information.

13/48 YELLOW DOG CAMPAIGN

The Committee

RESOLVED

To promote the Yellow Dog Campaign on the Council’s website

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

13/49 REQUEST TO USE A GOLF CART ON THE COMMON

Cllr Mrs Jarrett advised that permission had been granted in the past, but with conditions that it was for the applicant only and that permission did not set a precedent for the future,

The Council

RESOLVED

That permission be granted for a golf cart on the Common to the applicant as a one off permission.

This was proposed from the Chairman and unanimously resolved.

13/50 CLOSURE

The meeting having commenced at 8.02 pm closed at 9.42 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.....