

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 19TH JULY 2016

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: Tony Edwards

Councillors Jo Clark
* Barbara Dickens
* Raj Khiroya
* Jill Leeming
Alison Preedy
Martin Trevett
* Steve Watkins (ex officio)
Jane White (ex officio)

* Denotes members present

Officers present Yvonne Merritt – Clerk
Claire James – Deputy Clerk

There was one members of the public present.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Greg Hill addressed the Committee on the subject of cycling on the Common.

16/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Jo Clarke, Tony Edwards, Alison Preedy, Martin Trevett and Jane White. In the absence of the Chairman of the committee Cllr Tony Edwards, The Vice Chairman of the committee Cllr Barbara Dickens chaired the meeting.

16/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

16/17 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 17th May 2016 that had been taken at Full Council on 28th June 2016 with no amendments be approved as a true and correct record.

16/18 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

16/04 - 15/93 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS The Clerk advised Members that the ticket books had now arrived. Photos were required for the warrant cards and once these were in place there would be a soft introduction of the orders with a view to the scheme going live on the 1st September.

16/06 Recommendation 2 Common Management Plan Review: The Clerk advised Members that she had been in touch with CMS who had acknowledged the request for help with the Management plan.

16/19 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2016/17

The Clerk advised that there was an issue with the initial set up of the budget headings on the new finance system which had been identified at the last Policy and Resources Committee and this was being taken up with finance company.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report.

16/20 OFFICER'S REPORT

Recommendation 1 Christ Church Cemetery – The Deputy Clerk explained the background to the recommendation and the health and Safety responsibilities of the Council regarding the memorials that had failed the stress testing.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To accept Quote 2 to correct or lay down the 5 gravestones that had failed stress testing at a cost of £650 inc VAT.

This was proposed by Cllr Raj Khiroya, seconded by Cllr Steve Watkins and carried unanimously.

Recommendation 2 Parking Scheme in Permissive parking areas on the Common –

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the two existing machines are not replaced until parts can no longer be sourced, and that when this is no longer possible the first that is replaced is kept as a source of parts for the other.

This was proposed by Cllr Raj Khiroya, seconded by Cllr Barbara Dickens and carried unanimously.

Recommendation 3 Dog Bins & Litter Bins on the Common

The current situation of overflowing litter and dog bins on the Common with options of larger bins, covered litter bins and recycling bins was discussed. It was agreed that the Officers would get quotes for different options, shapes and designs which would be brought back to the next meeting

Orchids: The Common Ranger asked for permission to put cloche type enclosures around some of the orchids as a trial to see if this would encourage seeding. It was agreed that an article would be put on the website to explain that this was being done to protect them for the future.

It was noted that Brenda Harold had agreed to undertake a chalk grassland survey.

Ponds: Members were advised that quotes had been received for the removal of the waste that had been cleared from Top Common pond. The waste could not be accepted at normal land fill sites due to the possible contamination from road run off and therefore required specialist removal.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To accept the lowest quote of the three with budget cover coming from the budget line of Common Maintenance. Removal of the waste was to be arranged as soon as the chosen contractor could undertake the work.

Cattle: In response to a Member's question the Clerk advised that she was currently investigating options for the return of the cattle later in the year. It was expected that there would be in the order of 140 bales from the cut and lift that would be necessary this year. The Clerk advised that these would be advertised for use in the Scarecrow completion being organised by Chorleywood Magazine.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report

ALLOTMENTS

16/21 OCCUPATION

The Deputy Clerk brought the state of vacant plots at Copmans Wick to the attention of the Committee with some photographs provided by an allotment holder at this site. With the number of vacant plots and the weather conditions experienced this year there were many significantly overgrown plots which allotment holders were complaining about. It was suggested that some could be returned to grass which would allow easier maintenance in due course by the Rangers. If demand for allotments subsequently increased, they could be re-established as plots. This had been done in the past to meet demand. In the meantime it was suggested that although considerable effort s had been made to publicise the availability of plots locally, which would continue, perhaps it would be worth advertising a little wider to cover say Watford. It was noted that as the cows had been returned earlier than anticipated there was budget cover for some overtime by the Rangers if it was necessary to return the allotments to a reasonable state by strimming.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the occupation

16/22 WAITING LISTS

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the details on the waiting list.

16/23 COPMANS WICK ALLOTMENT SITE

Members discussed the report that had been prepared for Members regarding the dumping of rubbish at the Copmans Wick Allotment site. A visit had taken place with some of the Councillors to see the situation for themselves. The Clerk advised that it had not been possible to determine the ownership of the boundary between the allotments and Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) and it was suggested that a meeting be set up with a representative from TRDC to agree a way forward. The proposal for the wooded area at the edge of the site was further discussed with a number of options being discussed and the implications of each option being covered.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That

1. A meeting be held with TRDC to establish a way forward with the boundary fence issue
2. Notices would be put up stating that the dumping of rubbish was illegal and offenders could be fined
3. A strong letter would be sent to residents and allotment holders advising that the dumping of rubbish was not permitted
4. The Clerk would write to the resident who had offered to lease or buy the wooded area advising that the Council were not able to take up either of these two options and suggest instead that they may like to set up a Friends group to manage and monitor the woodland under the guidance of the Ranger
5. The Clerk investigates the option of enlisting the services of the Young Offenders doing community Service to clear the rubbish.

This was proposed from the Chair and unanimously approved.

LAWN CEMETERY

16/24 INTERMENTS

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the number of interments that had taken place and that the last new full burial grave had now been allocated and Section E would start to be used for new Full Burials.

COMMON AND GROVEWOOD

16/25 FOUR YEAR VISION

Members agreed that the Nature Trail needed to now move forward. The Clerk advised that she had it as a priority and advised that she would be making a presentation to Councillors at the next meeting. In response to the debate she would arrange a walk of the proposed Nature Trail route before the next meeting.

Further discussion took place on the priorities of the items in the Four Year Vision for Open Spaces.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the priorities agreed at the last meeting for Open Spaces be added to the Four Year Vision ie.

Overall priorities were agreed as follows although it was noted that the items could and would be progressed in tandem:

1. Nature Trail and Signage
2. Security of the Common (e.g. Barriers)
3. Permissive Parking Area Improvements (surfacing)
4. Copmans Wick

16/26 REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FOR A MIRROR ON CHORLEYWOOD COMMON NEAR COMMON ROAD

The request from a resident of Darvells Yard for permission to install a mirror on the common near the corner of Common Road opposite Darvells Yard and the background to this request was discussed and noted by Members. However the Committee was concerned that it was Herts Highways that should be asked to investigate the issue and come up with the best solution, not the Parish Council. It was also noted that mirrors were still not an option that Highways supported.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Clerk writes to the Resident advising of the Herts Highways guidance in place, that it was not within the remit of the Parish Council to resolve what was a Highways issue and suggesting that the issue be raised with Highways for resolution.

16/27 PROPOSAL FOR AN ANNUAL 10K RUN ON CHORLEYWOOD COMMON

Members felt that in principle this was a good idea but that there were a number of points that needed clarification, the main ones being consultation with Highways over necessary road restrictions and / or closures, provision of toilets, parking, and first aid. It was also necessary that the proposer meet with the Parish Ranger to understand what can be offered for a possible route on the Common. It was felt that the proposer may also want to consider Chorleywood House Estate if the Common did not provide a sufficient route for 5K of the 10K run.

GENERAL

16/28 HEALTH AND SAFETY

It was noted that the Common Ranger had recently renewed his First Aid Training Certificate through a three day training Course.

16/29 CLOSURE

The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm closed at 9.32pm.

SignedBY EMAIL..... Date22/07/2016.....

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

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