

REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 17TH JANUARY 2017

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * Tony Edwards

Councillors

- * Jo Clark
- * Raj Khiroya
- * Jill Leeming
- * Alison Preedy
- * Steve Watkins (ex officio)
- * Sarah Wright
- * Jane White (ex officio)

* Denotes members present

Officers present

Yvonne Merritt – Clerk
Claire James – Deputy Clerk
Andrew Goddard – Parish Ranger

There was one member of the public present.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. CHORLEYWOOD COMMON NATURE TRAIL

That the Council spend £45K on the Nature Trail at this stage to provide two Wildwood Dens, Notice Boards and carvings with funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL) monies.
See Minute 16/76

16/64 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

16/65 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION

None

16/66 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee
RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 22nd November 2016 which had been taken at Full council and agreed be approved as a true and correct record.

16/67 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes that would not be covered under the agenda.

The action points from previous meetings were updated. It was noted that the Chair of the Council would like a sponsor for the Village Day Cake off to provide the centre piece that would be raffled on the day.

16/68 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2016/17

It was noted that the Personal Protective Equipment for the Rangers was currently being reviewed which would result in a spend under the Health and Safety Equipment budget.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report.

16/69 OFFICER'S REPORT

Introduction of PSPOs on the Common – It was agreed that the PSPOs would be introduced with offenders initially receiving a warning. Notices had been prepared ready to hand out to facilitate this.

Christchurch – Members were given an update on the very positive meeting that had been held with Christchurch the previous week. Christchurch car park had been discussed with particular reference to the tarmac area that was confirmed to be the responsibility of the school. It was noted that the Clerk had made several attempts to open dialogue with the school but nothing had been forthcoming although emails had been read. A copy of the School's insurance document had been requested on more than one occasion but was yet to be received. It was agreed that a letter be sent to the Chair of the Governors raising the issues.

Groveswood: It was noted that the Rangers would be working at Groveswood with the residents on the 27th January. Groveswood had requested some bird and bat boxes and the Committee agreed that an event would be set up separately.

Orchids– The Common Ranger highlighted the reduction in Bee orchids this year.

Cattle – The Common Ranger had met with the grazing contractor and fencing engineer and although one break in the fence had been found and repaired, the fence was still not working and further investigation and consultation with the fence providers was required.

Drainage: It was noted that Herts Highways had advised that they wished to improve the drainage from the A404 which could impact on the Top Common and Christchurch Ponds. The filter systems being proposed were superior to what was in place and provided an ideal opportunity to improve the quality of the water entering the ponds. However Herts Highways would have to work within the Stewardship and it was unlikely that work could take place until December 2017/January 2018.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the report

ALLOTMENTS

16/70 OCCUPATION

It was noted that there was little change in plot occupation at the allotments. The issue of the fencing at Copmans Wick was reported to be moving forward with TRDC.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the occupation

16/71 WAITING LISTS

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the details on the waiting list.

LAWN CEMETERY

16/72 INTERMENTS

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the number of interments that had taken place.

16/73 LAWN CEMETERY NOTICE BOARD

Budget cover in the current year for a replacement notice board was confirmed.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To go ahead and purchase a new notice board for the Cemetery identical to the one outside the Parish Office and reposition it within the cemetery in consultation with the Rangers who would also install the Board.

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

COMMON AND GROVEWOOD

16/74 GROVEWOOD WILDLIFE SURVEY REPORT

It was noted that the survey had not cost the Council anything but had been done through funding from Herts Groundwork. Any work now undertaken by the Parish Council or anything found will be reported to the appropriate body. It will be maintained as a wildlife site which may not match the expectations of all residents and some education may be necessary. It was agreed that the report should be put on the website.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the survey report.

16/75 2016 BUTTERFLY AND MOTH LIST

The Common Ranger advised that the list, compiled by Friends of Chorleywood Common and the Ranger, represented an average year and although no migrant butterflies had been seen, it was noted that it had been a poor year for butterflies. The Committee expressed their thanks to FoCC and the Ranger.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the list

16/76 CHORLEYWOOD COMMON NATURE TRAIL

The meeting was suspended at 8.28pm to allow Greg Hill Chairman of Friends of the Common to address the Committee on the Nature Trail. The meeting was reconvened at 8.33pm.

The Clerk briefed Members on the support received from Natural England and the Planning Inspectorate on the proposals for the Nature Trail. It was noted that the proposed dens and sculptures would not be placed on Stewardship land. The costs of the Chainsaw carvings were discussed and it was noted that the carver may take some of the wood from the Common in return. Funding would come from the Community Infrastructure (CiL) monies which were expected to be in the order of £23K this year with more from developments in progress expected next year. In the short term money would be borrowed from reserves to be replaced by the CiL monies when received. It was noted that whilst CiL money could not be guaranteed, the Planning Committee were seeing a never ending tide of Planning applications, some of which would result in CiL money being received. It was noted that the Nature trail would be both recreational as well as educational. Signage was also discussed and the points made by FoCC acknowledged. It was stressed that CiL money had to be used on Community projects which the Nature trail was an ideal example of. Parishioners needed to be made aware of where the money was coming from and the rules for the use of this money. It was agreed that Cllr Raj Khuroya would write an article explaining this for the next issue of Chorleywood Matters.

The Committee
RESOLVED to recommend
To Full Council

That the Council spend £45K on the Nature Trail at this stage to provide two Wildwood Dens, Notice Boards and carvings with funding from the CiL monies

This was proposed by Cllr Jane White, Seconded by Cllr Tony Edwards and carried unanimously.

16/77 APPLICATION TO USE THE COMMON FROM CHRISTCHURCH YOUTH TEAM

The Committee
RESOLVED

To agree to the request for Christ Church Youth Team to use the Common on 19th March for an activity event subject to the usual caveats of provision of Public Liability Insurance and Risk Assessment documentation and ground conditions on the day.

This was proposed by Cllr Steve Watkins, seconded by Cllr Tony Edwards and carried unanimously.

GENERAL

16/78 PARISH PATHS

The Clerk advised Members that the current contract with Herts County Council was for strimming and cutting back of the Parish Paths. If the condition of a particular path beyond this was of concern, the Council did not have the resource or the responsibility to resolve, but the office could raise this for resolution with the HCC Rights of Way officer.

It was noted that the intention to produce a Parish Paths Leaflet had been on the work list for some time and although some work had been done it had not yet concluded. The Deputy Clerk advised that the Residents Association were interested in the initiative and that she also had a couple of contacts for U3A walking Groups. It was suggested that the website could be used in the first instance to document particular paths which might also encourage members of the public to provide details of paths walked ie points of interest, things to be seen etc. The key paths could then be pulled together to create a Parish Paths leaflet. Cllr Tony Edwards volunteered to be the lead Cllr for the project with the goal of creating the leaflet by September 2017.

16/79 DRAFT BUDGET 2017/18

It was noted that a new Assistant Parish Ranger had been appointed following interviews held the previous week. The individuals budget lines were reviewed with reasons given for the under and overspends. It was noted that the Parish had not cut any services and in fact had absorbed some District services

The Committee

RESOLVED

To accept the draft budget 2017/18 for Open Spaces

This was proposed from the chair and carried unanimously.

16/80 FOUR YEAR VISION

It was agreed that number of the items had been discussed as part of the meeting and were moving forward. It was agreed that the priority of the items Security of the Common and Parking Improvements would be switched.

16/81 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Members were advised that the French Student on work experience in the Parish Office had redone the Risk assessments documentation and that these were now being reviewed by the Rangers. Any necessary changes would then be made and actions identified ready for adoption.

Personal Protective Equipment was currently being reviewed and the new Ranger would be included in this review.

16/82 CLOSURE

The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm closed at 9.50pm.

Signed Date

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

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

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS REQUIRING ACTION

REFERENCE	RESOLUTION / ACTION	ACTION REQUIRED	BY WHOM
OS 16/51	Resolution	To remove the arch hedge and to bury the water pipe under the path with grating to cover the pipe on the path to allow access to it should it be necessary. <i>Likely to be done next Autumn</i> Ongoing	Parish Rangers
OS 16/52	ACTION	The maintenance contract for the churchyard to be re-negotiated with the Church and the results brought back to the next Open Spaces. <i>No increase for 2017/18</i> Completed	Officers
OS 16/58	Action	The agreed Winter Works programme 2016-17 to be put on the website. Completed	The Clerk
OS16/58	Action	To update the committee in the Spring with progress on the Winter Works 2016 – 17 programme of works. Ongoing	The Clerk
OS 16/60	Action	To investigate the costs of bringing in an outside company for parking management on Village Day. <i>Parking company details had been provided and costs for Village Day would be sought.</i> Ongoing	The Clerk
OS 16/67	Action	To seek a sponsor for the Centre piece cake for the Village Day cake off	Officers
OS 16/69 Christchurch	Action	A letter to be sent to the Chair of the	The Clerk

		Governing Body of Christchurch School raising the issues so far raised unsuccessfully direct with the school.	
OS 16/69 Grovewood	Action	To set up a bird and bat box building event at Grovewood	The Clerk
OS16/74	Action	Grovewood Wildlife Survey report to be put on the parish Council Website	The Clerk
OS 16/76	Action	To write an article for the next edition of Chorleywood Matters explaining the CiL rules and the use of the initial monies received for the Nature Trail.	Cllr Raj Khiroya
OS 16/77	Resolution	To agree to the request for Christchurch Youth Team to use the Common on 19 th march for an activity event subject to the usual caveats of provision of Public Liability Insurance and Risk Assessment documentation and ground conditions on the day.	The clerk
OS 16/78	Action	Cllr Tony Edwards to be the lead Cllr for the Parish Paths project with the goal of creating the leaflet by September 2017.	Cllr Tony Edwards & the Deputy Clerk
OS 16/80	Action	It was agreed that the priority of the items Security of the Common and Parking Improvements would be switched.	The Clerk