

**REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 16TH MAY 2017**

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * Tony Edwards

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

* Denotes members present

Officers present Claire James– Deputy Clerk
Michelle Putman – Admin Officer

There were two members of the public present.

17/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Raj Khiroya, Martin Trevett and Sarah Wright. Cllr Jane White was absent from the meeting.

16/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION

None

17/03 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 21st March 2017 which had been taken at Full Council and agreed, be approved as a true and correct record.

17/04 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

16/87 Allotments – Members discussed the idea of quarter plots being available to let. It was agreed that one full plot at each site would be made available as quarter plots to assess demand for this size of allotment plot.

16/89 Officers Report – Christchurch Parking. The Chair Advised that Cllr Raj Khiroya, himself and the Clerk had met with the Headmaster of Christchurch School the previous week and had a very good meeting with a number of issues being discussed and resolved. The licence to use the common for after school activities had been signed and the Parish Council had been given a copy of the School's insurance. The Cricket Club had voiced concerns regarding the use of lime based paint to mark out the football pitch and sports day lines as the lime element burns the grass, causing damage to the outfield

and the school had been asked to find a different type of paint that is not lime based. They had also raised concerns regarding the location of the afterschool activities and the School were asked not to run outside the pavilion area as over the winter months the grassland has been damaged. The School had also been requested to notify the Parish Office in advance of any activities planned on the Common in order that the Office could advise if appropriate, any areas to avoid due to works taking place etc. With respect to the playground area, It was noted that both the School and Parish Council were looking through the archives to try to ascertain the history of maintenance for the area. It was also noted that the playground was now not required by the School, as due to increased cars parking it was not feasible to use this area, and alternative arrangements within the curtilage of the School had been made. Since the meeting Cllr Tony Edwards had looked at the area in question. The possible long term solution of grasscrete over the whole area would be very expensive and would therefore need budget allocation to be made. In the short term he proposed that quotes for repair of the tarmac area be sought for consideration. It was suggested that contribution from both the School and the Church be sort, in the order of a third each given their use of the land.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That quotes to repair the tarmac area of Christchurch Car Park be sought.

This was proposed from the chair and agreed unanimously

16/89 Officers Report – Allotments: It was noted on the recent visit that a large number of plots at Copmans Wick had gone to grass. It was suggested that the Rangers be consulted on whether the hire of a turf cutting machine would be of any practical help in returning these to allotments.

The action points from previous meetings were updated.

17/05 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2017/18

There was no financial statement for this meeting as the Accounts were currently being closed for the end of year.

17/06 OFFICER'S REPORT

Lawn Cemetery Notice Board: It was noted that the new board was now in place and looked very smart.

Grazing: Members were concerned at the continued vandalism of the fence and asked that Cllr Martin Trevett be approached to see if there was any surveillance equipment that could be loaned from Three Rivers District Council.

Surveys: it was noted that the TRDC surveys currently being undertaken on the Common for the possible play area were at a cost of £7,500 which had apparently been authorised by the leisure committee although no resolution could be found.

Permissive Parking Areas – War Memorial Hall and Shepherds Bridge: it was noted that both these parking areas were being used persistently by two local companies. **Sky Vision** were known to be regularly parking 6 – 8 vehicles all day at the War Memorial Hall parking area and the local **Taxi Company** was using the Shepherds Bridge parking area as a waiting area. Both had been told that this use of the parking areas was not what the areas were provided for but both companies were choosing to ignore the Council. It was agreed that formal letters would be sent in the first instance with further action to be considered if these had no effect.

Parish Paths: A meeting was to be held with the residents who had volunteered to assist with documenting the parish paths in Chorleywood.

Allotments: Members were reminded that the Allotment Users Forum would be held before the next Open Spaces Committee Meeting on the 11th July. It was also noted that the Copmans Wick Clearance days had been arranged for Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd June and tenants had been informed by email. It was hoped that tenants would take advantage of this opportunity to clear their plots of rubbish and tackle the rubbish dumping that had been taking place. Two Rangers would be in attendance on both days with a skip being provided for one day only on the Saturday.

Members noted the number of new plots that had been taken on recently and also the small number of outstanding renewals which would incur a late payment charge of £10 if they did not pay by the end of the month. It was noted that some tenants had given up their plots due to failing health or age and it was felt that the quarter plots may be an option in these circumstances.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report

ALLOTMENTS

17/07 OCCUPATION

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the occupation

17/08 WAITING LISTS

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the details on the waiting list.

17/09 ALLOTMENT USERS FORUM

It was noted that the Allotment Users Forum would be held prior to the July meeting with a visit to the allotments organised just prior.

LAWN CEMETERY

17/10 INTERMENTS

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the number of interments that had taken place.

COMMON AND GROVEWOOD

17/11 ORGANISED ACTIVITIES ON THE COMMON

The meeting was suspended at 8.07 to allow Greg Hill, Chairman of Friends of Chorleywood Common to address the committee with respect to this agenda item.

The meeting was reconvened at 8.13pm

Members were advised of the background to the request from Moving Mums to use the Common. The current licence and charging arrangements for commercial users of the Common were discussed. It was felt that a licence was essential to manage numbers and the areas of the common used given the nature reserve status and areas under Stewardship. Similar ventures were discussed and charges that were made by them.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To inform Herts County council that a licence is a prerequisite of any organised activity on the common and that the standard licence charges would apply. This would also be copied to HAPTC.

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

With respect to the HAPTC Running Free Consultation, Members asked that the question be raised whether this applied to Common Land and Nature reserves.

GENERAL

17/12 FOUR YEAR VISION

Nature Trail: Members were provided with details of Chainsaw carvings and their respective prices for consideration for inclusion in the Nature Trail. It was noted that the Chainsaw carver was available to start work now with a view to completion of most by Christmas and therefore a decision was needed on which carvings to go for before he got diverted onto other projects. The following list of carvings was considered:

Village Day Fire Ride: Trio of Squirrels - Agreed

Holly Tunnel - Hedgehogs and Bats – Agreed

Top Common Pond (1) (subject to tree works permission) – Dragonflies rejected due to size and replaced with Red Kite and Woodpecker with scope given to carver for any additional carving appropriate noting that the committee liked the carved owls in the tree.

Top Common Pond (2) (subject to Tree works permission) Great Crested Newt - agreed

Common Road - Red kite removed as placed elsewhere, otherwise scope given to carver on number and mix subject to a limit of £3,500. If insects were to be part of carvings, the committee would like stag beetles.

Common Road – Grass Snake – agreed

Darvells Pond – Frog – Agreed

Shepherds Bridge – Carvings of fallen tree - agreed

Behind Larks Meadow- Musical instruments rejected. Possibility of muntjac deer to be explored with carver

Fairy Ring at Church Pond – Story telling chair. The Committee asked for alternative designs to be sourced from the carver.

Gnome House – Agreed

Picnic tables and benches deferred, concerns of rubbish and fires from BBQs raised

Extras – family of foxes.

Owls, Squirrels, Rabbits (not hares) to be used as way markers. Number to be determined.

It was agreed that the list of people wanting a bench on the Common be approached for interest in sponsoring carving or way marker.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To instruct the Chain Saw Carver to proceed with items as specified, noting that the two requiring tree works permission and the way markers would need to be tackled later

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

17/13 HEALTH AND SAFETY

There was nothing to report on this item.

17/14 CLOSURE

The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm closed at 9.40pm.

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 REQUIRED	BY WHOM
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	/ ACTION		
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>Arch removed, pipe to be re-laid, quote for works accepted. Ongoing</i>	Parish Rangers
OS16/58	Action	To update the committee in the Spring with progress on the Winter Works 2016 – 17 programme of works. <i>Completed – update given in Officers report to Open Spaces 16.05.17</i>	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. Ongoing</i>	The Clerk
OS 16/67	Action	To seek a sponsor for the Centre piece cake for the Village Day cake off <i>Completed – Sponsor found.</i>	Officers
OS 16/69 Christchurch	Action	A letter to be sent to the Chair of the Governing Body of Christchurch School raising the issues so far raised unsuccessfully direct with the school. <i>Letter had been sent but no response had yet been forthcoming</i> <i>Completed – issues discussed and resolved at meeting with Headmaster 12.05.17</i>	The Clerk
OS16/74	Action	Groewood Wildlife Survey report to be put on the parish Council Website <i>Completed – Survey on the latest News page of the website</i>	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
OS16/87	Action	To look into the costs of strimming and rotavating vacant plots and the costs of weed suppressant membrane for plots given up.	Allotment Administrator
OS16/87	Action	To arrange a site visit in April to the allotments for members to assess the current issue of the vacant allotment plots <i>Completed – Meeting had taken place.</i>	Allotment Administrator
OS16/88	Action	To investigate whether notes could be added against budget lines in the Financial comparison statement	The Clerk
OS 16/89	Action	To analyse the actual costs incurred by the officers in the preparation of a grave for burial and the ongoing maintenance to input	The Deputy Clerk

		to the meeting of the Open Spaces that discussed the fees and charges for 2018/19.	
OS 16/89	Action	To research the charges made at other Cemeteries in the surrounding area for the next committee meeting that discusses the 2018/19 Fees and Charges	The Deputy Clerk
OS16/89	Action	To send another reminder to Christchurch school requesting a copy of their insurance policy. <i>Completed – issues discussed and resolved at meeting with Headmaster 12.05.17</i>	The Clerk
OS 16/89	Action	To arrange a parish paths meeting to move the leaflet forward	Deputy Clerk
OS16/89	Action	Consideration to be given to deposits and/or advance payment of licence fees for any new to be put to the next Open Spaces Committee	The Clerk & Deputy Clerk
OS16/92	Action	To arrange the next Allotment Users meeting prior to the July meeting of Open Spaces with a visit to the allotments to be set up for Members just prior to this.	Allotment Administrator
OS17/04	Resolution	Quotes to repair the tarmac area of Christchurch Car Park to be sought.	Deputy Clerk
OS 17/04	Action	Rangers to be consulted on whether the hire of a turf cutting machine would be of any practical help in returning allotments that had been covered in grass to a lettable state.	Allotments Administrator
OS 17/06	Action	That Cllr Martin Trevett be approached to see if there was any surveillance equipment that could be loaned from Three Rivers District Council to tackle the vandalism of the cattle fencing.	Deputy Clerk
OS 17/06	Action	Formal letters to be sent to Sky Vision and the local Taxi company that were abusing the parking arrangements in the permissive parking areas.	Clerk
17/06	Action	A meeting to be held with the residents who had volunteered to assist with documenting the parish paths in Chorleywood.	Deputy Clerk
17/11	Action	HAPTC Running Free Consultation- question be raised whether this applied to Common Land and Nature reserves.	Clerk