

## WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Allotments, Playing Fields and Open Spaces Committee  
held on Monday 19th January 2015 at 7.30pm  
in Russell House, Market Square, Westerham

Present: Councillors: Mr R Buckley (RB)  
Mr C Hanson (CH)  
Mrs H Marsh (HM)  
Mrs H Ogden (HO) (Chair)  
Mr N Proudfoot (NP)

In attendance: Deputy Clerk: Mrs D Marshall (DM)  
Mr D Edwards, Mr M Thorpe and 2 members of the public

| Item |   | Action              |
|------|---|---------------------|
| 1.   | <b>Apologies for Absence</b> – Cllr A McCormick had an agreed sabbatical.   |                     |
| 2.   | <b>Declarations of Interest not previously declared</b> – none.   |                     |
| 3.   | <p><b>Reports from Advisory Representatives</b></p> <p><b>3.1 Football –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr Thorpe advised councillors that it had been a good season so far, with few cancelled matches due to weather conditions.</li> <li>The fence has been well received by the footballers and has proved effective at keeping the young footballers away from the water, with no lost balls.</li> <li>There had been a noticeable increase in the amount of dog mess on the pitches, particularly the new pitches: 50 dog bags had already been collected this year. Different measures were discussed to try and improve the situation, but there are already 6 dog bins around KGF. Some authorities have banned dogs from their playing fields. Mr Thorpe suggested that dogs were supposed to be kept on leads. It was agreed to put an article in the gazette and to review notices advising that dogs should be kept on a lead whilst on the field.</li> <li>Mr Thorpe commented that the grass contractor had been unreliable and unhelpful during the past season.</li> <li>The Deputy Clerk advised Mr Thorpe that housekeeping still needed improving as she was still receiving complaints about the number of bottles and cups left by the pitches at the weekend. Mr Thorpe agreed to ensure this was resolved.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.2 Allotments</b> - Mr Edwards was concerned that there were a large number of allotments not being worked at Bloomfield, which should ideally be strimmed and covered over.</p> | <p>DM</p> <p>MT</p> |
| 4.   | <b>Minutes of the Meeting</b> held on the 3rd November '14 were approved as a true record,  |                     |

|    |  |    |
|----|--|----|
|    | following a minor amendment.   |    |
| 5. | <b><u>Information items arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda</u></b> – none.  |    |
| 6. | <p><b><u>Clerk's Report</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Allotment Sites</u></b></p> <p><b>6.1</b> The Land Registry document had been submitted to transfer plot 26, Farley Allotments to Mr &amp; Mrs Kverndal – still awaiting a response.</p> <p><b>6.2</b> A letter advising plot holders of the rent review and a consultation letter were distributed with the annual invoices. No comments/complaints had been received regarding the rent review. Approximately 2/3 of the allotment rents had been received. The Deputy Clerk to issue reminders mid-January. A high percentage of allotment holders had returned their completed consultation letter.</p> <p><b><u>King George's Field</u></b></p> <p><b>6.3</b> There had been recurring instances of vandalism, involving the destruction of 4 dog bins and a rubbish bin at King George's Field. The damage totalled £1,500. The bins had all been replaced. Unfortunately none of the incidents were caught on CCTV, but all had been reported to the police and an article had been put in the local press to raise public awareness.</p> <p><b>6.4</b> The Deputy Clerk met with the local FIT representative and outlined various proposals being considered to develop and improve the pavilion and surrounding area. He was supportive of all of the ideas discussed and outlined which would need formal approval from FIT before commencement.</p> <p><b>6.5</b> The fence bordering the river had been installed at King George's Field. This had caused some discontent with dog walkers and parents wishing their children to play in the river. The Council invited residents with concerns to contact the Council, so that a compromise could be considered.</p> <p><b>6.6</b> The inspection of the bridge over the Darent and its foundations was being undertaken weekly by the groundsman. Council agreed to the request for professional fees to be incurred to design new foundations for the bridge – a revised quotation was awaited.</p> <p><b>6.7</b> The results of the Pavilion Consultation were advertised on the WTC and Town websites and in the gazette.</p> <p><b><u>Open Spaces</u></b></p> <p><b>6.8</b> The paving under the Darent notice board had been completed.</p> <p><b>6.9</b> The loft works in Crockham Hill Pavilion had been completed. The works to the water tank could now be safely undertaken.</p> <p><b>6.10</b> The refurbishment works to the bus shelter in London Road had been completed.</p> |    |
| 7. | <p><b><u>Allotment Sites</u></b></p> <p><b>7.1 Sale of Farley plot</b> – the Land Registry Transfer papers had been lodged with the Land Registry to complete the sale. The Deputy Clerk to follow up.</p> <p><b>7.2 Allotment rent renewals</b> – to date ¾ of the rent renewals had been received. A small number of plots had been given up, with some already re-let. The Deputy Clerk would send out the reminders before the end of January. There had been no adverse feedback regarding the staged withdrawal of the OAP concession.</p>   | DM |

|           |  |                               |
|-----------|--|-------------------------------|
|           | <p><b>7.3 Allotment holder consultation</b> – there had been a high return rate for the allotment consultation. The Deputy Clerk was asked to analyse the findings to present to the APFOS meeting in March.</p> <p><b>7.4 Clearance works at Farley</b> – it was agreed to spend the remainder of the maintenance budget on cutting the hedges and clearing the uncultivated plots at Farley, followed by Bloomfield, budget allowing. The Deputy Clerk to investigate the possibility of corporate days with UK Power Networks and Avant Homes.</p> <p><b>7.5 Request to waive allotment rent</b> – one of the plot holders had paid for a tree to be professionally felled and removed from the allotment site at Farley, which had benefited a number of the surrounding plots. Councillors agreed to waive the plot holders rent for the year, in view of the level of his expenditure.</p> <p><b>7.6 National Allotment Society</b> – Councillors approved annual membership.</p> <p><b>7.7 Westerham Horticultural Society (WHS)</b> – Councillor Proudfoot advised Councillors that the WHS would be interested in introducing children to allotment gardening. The Council would be interested in supporting this venture and would be able to provide an allotment at the Currant Hill site for this purpose.</p>  | <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>           |
| <p>8.</p> | <p><b>King George's Field</b></p> <p><b>8.1 FIT</b> – Councillors approved annual membership.</p> <p><b>8.2 Westerham Bowling Club accounts</b> – were received.</p> <p><b>8.3 KGF Fencing</b> – There had been a number of comments and complaints about the installation of the new fence on social media. The Town Council issued a statement explaining the reason for the installation of the fence and invited members of the public to contact the Council with any concerns. The Deputy clerk had received an email and two phone calls supporting the installation of the fence and two emails and three phone calls in complaint. The complainants wanted their dogs and children to be able to access the water and found the suggestion to remove some of the wire an acceptable compromise. A member of the public attended the public session and suggested that the fence should be extended to the very end of the field. The Deputy Clerk was asked to investigate whether the fence needed to be extended. Councillors agreed to remove some sections of the wire (nearest the bridge) and install a sign in the area saying 'Danger Water' – the Deputy Clerk to action. Councillor Marsh suggested writing a statement to inform residents of the Council's intention and actions.</p> <p><b>8.4 Mowing Contract 2015 Season</b> – councillors considered three quotations in detail and agreed to award different areas to different contractors, due to the price variations and dis-satisfaction with the mowing in some areas during the 2014 season. The Green was awarded to Clark Ground Care; Crockham Hill Playing Field to Kent Landscape Services; and King George's Field and the remaining open spaces in Westerham to Proground Ltd.</p> <p><b>8.5 Pavilion Consultation</b> – Councillor Ogden advised the committee that an update meeting had been attended by Cllr Ogden, the Deputy Clerk, Mrs Hunter and Mrs Moore to crystallise ideas into feasible plans. The plans would be shared with the key users at King George's Field (Junior Football Club, WSA, proposed Cycling Club and Churchill School) before proceeding. The Deputy Clerk had met on site with the representative from Fields In Trust, who had approved the outline plans and advised which would need formal approval from the trust. The Deputy Clerk had also made initial contact with a number of suppliers to discuss feasibility and to secure outline costings. Further information and prices were required. In the meantime, it was agreed</p> | <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> |

|     |  |              |
|-----|--|--------------|
|     | <p>that it would be beneficial to have an artist's impression of the proposed development to share with residents. Funding had been discussed and the widespread requirement for match funding had been acknowledged, which would necessitate an element of fundraising within the community.</p> <p><b>8.6 Picnic Tables</b> – councillors had previously agreed to replace the picnic tables on King George's Field in the Spring, subject to budget. It was agreed that these could now be ordered.</p>   | DM           |
| 9.  | <p><b><u>Open Spaces</u></b></p> <p><b>9.1 Tree Survey</b> – councillors considered three quotations for tree surveys and agreed to make a recommendation to Council to award the contract to Down To Earth Trees Ltd.</p> <p><b>9.2 The path across the Green</b> – a complaint had been received from a member of the public that the path was uneven and slippery. Councillor Ogden and the Deputy Clerk undertook a risk assessment. The path was not felt to pose major concern on health and safety grounds, but was overgrown and unsightly. It would benefit from clearing the vegetation and repointing. The Deputy Clerk to seek quotations.</p> <p><b>9.3 Talking Statues</b> – The Deputy Clerk had attempted to contact the company introducing the Talking Statues initiative and the company supplying the software. Despite extensive enquiries, she had received no response. Councillors felt there were other priorities and advised the Deputy Clerk not to spend further time seeking information at this time.</p> | DM<br><br>DM |
| 10. | <p><b><u>Crockham Hill Pavilion</u></b></p> <p><b>10.1 Legionella</b> – The loft works had been completed and Water Wise would now be able to modify the water tank. The December testing hadn't taken place due to a staff accident. Councillors felt that a half yearly report should be available for the committee to review the test findings – Deputy Clerk to discuss with Water Wise.</p>  | DM           |
| 11. | <p><b><u>Public Rights of Way</u></b> – Nothing to report.</p>   |              |
| 12. | <p><b><u>Finance</u></b></p> <p><b>12.1 Committee Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> December '14</b> – were received.</p> <p><b>12.2</b> There was still money in the notice board budget and it was agreed that the Deputy Clerk should seek quotations for notice boards at Farley and Bloomfield Allotments.</p>  | DM           |
| 13. | <p><b><u>Correspondence</u></b></p> <p><b>13.1</b> Councillors received Mr Holman's letter with ideas for the pavilion consultation, which he outlined during the public session.</p> <p><b>13.2</b> A resident had complained that the dustcarts were persistently driving over the edge of the green at Glanville Road and badly damaging the grass. The Deputy Clerk to contact SDC to investigate and respond to the complaint.</p> <p><b>13.3</b> The Bowls Club had provided Councillors with an update on their plans to replace their club house.</p>  | DM           |
| 14. | <p><b><u>Reports from Councillors</u></b></p> <p><b>14.1</b> Cllr Marsh advised Councillors that the fencing around the re-seeded areas at KGF had collapsed and needed reinstating. The Deputy Clerk to instruct the</p>  | DM           |

|            |  |                                     |
|------------|--|-------------------------------------|
|            | <p>groundsman.</p> <p><b>14.2</b> Cllr Ogden advised Councillors that she had attended a Westerham Society meeting where Henry Warde had presented his plans for Charmans Farm, to be renamed Westerham Valley Farm. This included plans for a cycle path – the Deputy Clerk to liaise with Henry about how his plans could compliment the pavilion redevelopment project.</p> | <b>DM</b>                           |
| <b>15.</b> | <p><b><u>Newsletter and web-site</u></b></p> <p><b>15.1</b> Re-advertise allotment vacancies.</p> <p><b>15.2</b> Provide the public with an artists' impression of the pavilion redevelopment.</p> <p><b>15.3</b> Advise the public of the Council's intention to remove some of the fence panels at KGF.</p>  | <b>DM</b><br><b>DM</b><br><b>DM</b> |
| <b>16.</b> | <p><b><u>Matters for District and County Councillors</u></b></p> <p><b>16.1</b> Approach District Councillors regarding an application for the Big Community Fund for outside gym equipment for KGF as part of the pavilion redevelopment.</p>   | <b>DM</b>                           |
| <b>17.</b> | <p><b><u>Further Matters for Consideration at the next meeting</u></b></p> <p><b>17.1</b> Review allotment plot renewal.</p> <p><b>17.2</b> Review allotment consultation feedback.</p> <p><b>17.3</b> Maintenance schedule.</p> <p><b>17.4</b> Pavilion consultation update.</p>  |                                     |
| <b>17.</b> | <p><b><u>Date of next meeting</u></b></p> <p>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015.</p>  |                                     |

The meeting was concluded at 10.07pm

Minutes confirmed as a correct record:

Chairman