

WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Allotments, Playing Fields and Open Spaces Committee
held on Monday 2nd November 2015 at 7.30pm
in Russell House, Market Square, Westerham

Present: Councillors: Mrs H Ogden (HO) (Chair)
Mr A Bates (AB)
Mr A Holman (AH)
Mr N Moore (NM)
Mr N Proudfoot (NP)

In attendance: Deputy Clerk: Mrs D Marshall (DM)
Mr D Edwards

Item		Action
1.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> – None.	
2.	<u>Declarations of Interest not previously declared</u> Councillor Ogden declared an interest in item 9.2 and left the room whilst the application was being discussed.	
3.	<u>Reports from Advisory Representatives</u> 3.1 Bloomfield Allotments – Mr Edwards reported that he felt the committee site meeting at Bloomfield went well and was useful. The idea of creating a community area on the site had been well received – a picnic table had already been delivered.	
4.	<u>Minutes of the Meeting</u> held on the 7 th September '15 were approved at Full Council on the 12 th October 2015.	
5.	<u>Information items arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda</u> (8.1) Fireworks at King George's Field – WTC had received complaints about the noise level during this event, which had apparently rattled windows and knocked tv signals out. The groundsman had to spend two hours clearing KGF of firework debris. The Deputy Clerk was asked to write to the organiser advising that the clear up plan must be adequately implemented in future. (8.9) Costells Meadow Car Park – F&GP had discussed the funding needed to extend and refurbish the car park and agreed that this would be an ideal project to be	DM

	<p>funded by a CIL payment. The issue of how to protect an extended car park from usage from non-field users had been referred to Highways and Lighting Committee and included in the agenda for the Parking Working Group.</p> <p>(9.4) Talking Statues – the Deputy Clerk had given WTP feedback on the prototype, which had been well received. The Deputy Clerk was asked to since an update on the timescales for the project.</p> <p>(18.1) New Street to Croydon Road footpath – the Deputy Clerk had not established the ownership of this footpath and was asked to make further enquiries to establish whether it was a public right of way and who should be maintaining the path – roll forward to the next meeting.</p>	<p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Clerk's Report</u> <u>Allotment Sites</u></p> <p>6.1 Allotment Rents – the allotment renewals had been sent out at the beginning of October, together with a letter informing plot holders of a freeze in the rent and an article about Japanese knotweed.</p> <p>6.2 Farley Trees – the joint letter from WTC and the police had been received via registered post. The gentleman had sent the Council Chairman a letter of complaint.</p> <p>6.3 Management of uncultivated plots – follow up letters had been sent to the handful of plot holders who had not responded to their first warning letter regarding the condition of their plot.</p> <p>6.4 Site visits – were organised for Saturday 24th October at Farley and Bloomfield.</p> <p>6.5 Plot markers – were ready to be installed at Farley and Bloomfield sites.</p> <p>6.6 Mowing – the contractor had been asked to undertake an end of season cut at all three sites.</p> <p><u>King George's Field</u></p> <p>6.7 Leak – there is an intermittent roof leak at KG Pavilion.</p> <p>6.8 Worm caste treatment - had been very successful in keeping moles off the pitches at King George's Field, but seemed to have moved the problem to the playground area. The Deputy Clerk would explore the feasibility of having this manually treated.</p> <p>6.9 Darenth Bridge – the slip prevention wire had been replaced with a more substantial galvanised wire.</p> <p>6.10 Skate park – we have been experiencing a problem of broken glass at the skate park for several weeks, which is dangerous to users and time consuming to clear up.</p> <p>6.11 Westerham Football Club – a meeting had been set up between WTC, the Senior Footballers and the Junior Footballers for the 2nd November.</p> <p>6.12 Defibrillator – the WSA had been unsuccessful in securing a free defibrillator and suggested that WTC and WSA purchased one jointly.</p> <p>6.13 Outside Gym – Councillor Parry had been approached for funding for a piece of equipment for an outside gym.</p> <p>6.14 Westerham Bowling Club – decided to install a new electricity meter adjacent to their club house and no longer wished to use the groundsman's hut supply.</p> <p>6.15 Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme – the Deputy Clerk attended the Countryside morning on the 24th September to understand the timeline and funding available to extend the Darenth Valley path from Sevenoaks to Westerham.</p> <p>6.16 KG Pavilion – Bond Bryant had completed the refurbishment plans for the pavilion and these were ready for consideration by the committee.</p>	

	<p>Open Spaces</p> <p>6.17 Permissive Paths - Henry Warde confirmed that none of the permissive paths across his land were currently closed. There would be some closures during the Autumn, as per previous years, for the shooting season and these would all be well marked.</p> <p>6.18 Hanging Baskets – the Westerham Society had confirmed that the Council's £850 donation would be refunded – the cheque had now been received.</p> <p>6.19 Japanese Knotweed – the Deputy Clerk had written to the estate agents in Westerham and to the allotment holders with an information sheet on Japanese Knotweed. This had also been placed on WTC website and face book page. Unfortunately the article had not been produced in the Gazette.</p> <p>6.20 Additional dog bins – one had been installed in Croydon Road and another was awaiting installation at the Round Pond.</p>	
7.	<p>Allotment Sites</p> <p>7.1 Allotment occupancy – councillors considered the maps provided by the Deputy Clerk, identifying the allotments that had been renewed on each site, those that were vacant and those still awaiting payment/termination. It was agreed that the allotments at the top of the Currant Hill site should be cleared and offered as vacant plots. The Deputy Clerk was asked to investigate where the access to the site negotiated with Linden Homes would be, in order to ascertain how this might affect the current layout. Councillors agreed that there would be no upper limit to the number of plots held by one plot holder whilst there were so many vacant plots. Reports had been received of a plot holder bringing garden waste onto the site to burn – the Deputy Clerk was asked to write to the plot holder concerned to ensure this did not continue. Councillors agreed that unworked plots at Bloomfield, that had received two warning letters, would not be renewed.</p> <p>7.2 Criminal damage at Farley – a letter of complaint had been received from the perpetrator. The Council Chairman, Cllr Wesley, had agreed to a site meeting. Cllr Bates offered to attend.</p> <p>7.3 Allotment site meetings – had been held with plot holders at Bloomfield and Farley sites. The priority at both sites was to strim vacate allotments and cover over with weed control layer. Other issues raised included: regular grass cutting, manure deliveries, fencing and deer. A similar meeting to be arranged at Currant Hill site.</p> <p>7.4 Land transferred from KCC to the then Westerham Parish Council – right of way. The Committee reviewed the Purchasers covenants contained in para 3 of the Deed of Transfer dated 17 June 1994. The following were confirmed:</p> <p>a) An unclimbable fence of approx 1.8m in height (see photo 1) is in place between points D and E on the map, and from a visual inspection is in good condition.</p> <p>b) There is a multi species hedge planted within the boundary of the property (see photo 2). This appears to have been added to by self seeded shrubs and trees from the undeveloped land retained by KCC.</p> <p>c) There is a 3 foot wide pedestrian gate at point E (see photo 3). It has apparently seen little use in recent years.</p> <p>d) WTC has maintained the boundaries of the property marked T – the eastern boundary. Most recently it has removed an unauthorised gate from an adjoining</p>	<p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>

	<p>property on to WTC land.</p> <p>e) As the property is currently leased to Churchill School, its use is restricted to the purposes set out in the Transfer Deed.</p> <p>f) For the same reason, it has been maintained in the same state as that of KCC's retained school</p> <p>g) It should be noted that as we have not had access to the conveyance of 1952, we have not ascertained whether or not the covenants contained therein have been observed.</p> <p>h) On Tuesday 3rd November Tom Buckley strimmed the path, to keep the access clear for allotment holders.</p>	
8.	<p><u>King George's Field</u></p> <p>8.1 Change of Bowling Club boundary – it was noted that the agreed change to the boundary had been made as an addition to the lease, signed by both parties.</p> <p>8.2 Bike racks – it had been agreed that the single bike rack removed from the Green could be installed behind the youth shelter. However, this had been cut down and no longer had its fixings. The Deputy Clerk had research alternative products, which varied considerably in price. Cllr Proudfoot advised that the cheap, short term option suggested may not be popular with cyclists. The Deputy Clerk was asked to seek advice from Mark Brewer at Westerham Cyclery.</p> <p>8.3 Football meeting – the scheduled meeting with the junior and senior footballers had not taken place as both parties had sent their apologies. Deputy Clerk to re-arrange.</p>	<p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>
9.	<p><u>Open Spaces</u></p> <p>9.1 Tree survey – councillors considered the three quotations for the six month work schedule produced by the tree survey. The contract was awarded to Down To Earth.</p> <p>9.2 Carols on the Green – the committee approved an application to use the Green for this event.</p> <p>9.3 Late Night Shopping – the committee approved an application to use the Green for this event.</p> <p>9.4 Grange Island – the committee decided to delay the completion of the final stage of the Grange Island refurbishment works to September/October 2016. The article submitted to the Gazette, informing the public of the need to replace the full size trees with a miniature variety, was not published. It was felt that the planting window had been missed for this year as the committee was reluctant to proceed with the works without informing the public.</p> <p>9.5 Churchill planters – councillors agreed to vire the unspent hanging basket budget to fund planters for around Churchill and the Jubilee notice board. The Deputy Clerk to source planters (for agreement via email).</p> <p>9.6 Crockham Hill Garden – investigation has shown that the paved area in the centre of the garden is laid on sand. In order to accommodate the proposed memorial it will be necessary to relay the paving, which will increase the cost.</p> <p>9.7 Garden Maintenance Contract – this contract is due for re-tendering and it was agreed that the contract may be split and given to different contractors. Hence areas would be individually identified, so that contractors can quote for individual jobs and</p>	<p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>

	<p>do not need to quote for the whole contract.</p> <p>9.8 Notice board – councillors considered the need for a notice board to the north of town and agreed that the ideal location would be on the end wall of the bus shelter in London Road. £1,000 was added to the 2016/17 budget for this purpose.</p> <p>9.9 Maintenance Schedule – the Deputy Clerk had created a schedule of works needed to comply with the findings of the health and safety inspection. Some of the jobs could be undertaken by Tom Buckley and some would need to be costed by outside contractors. The Deputy Clerk to action.</p>	DM
10.	<p><u>Councillors' Away Day</u> – Cllr Ogden was forming an away day action plan, which would be distributed within the next few days.</p>	HO
11.	<p><u>Crockham Hill and King George Pavilions</u></p> <p>11.1 Pavilion/MUGA redevelopment project – councillors considered amended plans for refurbishing the pavilion and were happy that these met the agreed criteria. The plans would now be presented to Full Council. The plans included the retention of the structural pillars and it was agreed that the available space could be better utilised if they were able to be removed. The Deputy Clerk was asked to investigate seeking advice from a structural engineer.</p>	DM
12.	<p><u>Public Rights of Way</u></p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>13.1 Committee Accounts to 30th September '15 – were received.</p> <p>13.2 Budget 2016/17 – the committee considered the proposed budget presented by Cllr Ogden and made small amendments in light of new projects considered during the meeting. The budget for 2016/17 was approved.</p>	
14.	<p><u>Correspondence</u></p> <p>14.1 Sevenoaks Greensand Commons consultation – Cllr Proudfoot confirmed that he had completed the consultation on the committee's behalf.</p> <p>14.2 Goldservice Contract Cleaning – councillors noted the monthly contract cost for cleaning King George's Pavilion would increase marginally due to an increase in staffing costs.</p>	
15.	<p><u>Reports from Councillors</u></p> <p>15.1 Cllr Bates advised that the majority of the work to clear around the Round Pond had now been completed.</p>	
16.	<p><u>Newsletter and web-site</u></p> <p>16.1 The Westerham and Brasted Gazette no longer appears to be in publication. The</p>	

	Clerk is investigating alternative publication to advertise the Council's activities to the public. A package from TN16 is being considered.	
17.	<u>Matters for District and County Councillors</u> 17.1 Follow up the request for funding from Cllr Parry for funding for the outside gym.	DM
18.	<u>Further Matters for Consideration at the next meeting</u> 18.1 New Street to Croydon Road footpath. 18.2 Pavilion/MUGA redevelopment update. 18.3 Review gardening contract. 18.4 Feedback from Currant Hill allotment site meeting.	
19.	<u>Date of next meeting</u> Monday 18 th January 2016.	

The meeting was concluded at 10.04pm

Minutes confirmed as a correct record:

Chairman