

WESTERHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Allotments, Playing Fields and Open Spaces Committee
held on Monday 18th January 2016 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.	Apologies for Absence – None.	
2.	Declarations of Interest not previously declared – None.	
3.	<p>Reports from Advisory Representatives</p> <p>3.1 Bloomfield Allotments – Mr Edwards reported damage to the turning area alongside his allotment. A vehicle had clearly become stuck in the wet ground conditions and had caused deep ruts to the area. It was agreed that a post should be made on facebook and a notice placed at the site seeking information.</p> <p>3.2 Currant Hill Allotments – Mrs Tidy had advised the Deputy Clerk that she had moved out of the area and would no longer be able to act as representative for the Currant Hill site. The Deputy Clerk to place a notice at the site seeking a new representative.</p>	<p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>
4.	Minutes of the Meeting held on the 2 nd November '15 were approved at Full Council on the 7 th December 2015.	
5.	<p>Information items arising from the minutes of the previous meeting not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda</p> <p>(8.1) Fireworks at King George's Field –The Deputy Clerk had contacted the organiser advising that the clear up plan must be adequately implemented in future.</p> <p>(18.1) New Street to Croydon Road footpath – the Deputy Clerk established that this footpath was KCC public footpath SR347. The Deputy Clerk to contact Nicky Biddall to establish the remit of the KCC footpaths maintenance programme for 2016/17.</p>	DM

6.

Clerk's Report

Allotment Sites

6.1 Bloomfield – a skip had been hired and the rubbish cleared from the end plot. The vacant plot had been covered in weed control layer. The clearance of plots 1 and 2 had been undertaken and had revealed an enormous amount of rubbish dumped beneath the brambles, which was proving difficult to clear.

6.2 Currant Hill – a site meeting had been held at Currant Hill. Unfortunately no plot holders attended, but it was useful to undertake a site survey.

6.3 Farley – Cllrs Wesley and Bates met with Mr Essex on site before Christmas to discuss his complaint. Cllr Wesley was awaiting a response to questions put to Mr Essex before formally responding to his complaint.

6.4 Farley – Cllr Bates had undertaken some clearance work at Farley and had cleared the remaining tree trunks.

6.5 Mowing – all three sites had been mown.

6.6 Notice boards- for all three sites were due to be delivered w/c 18th January.

King George's Field

6.7 Vandalism - there had been further vandalism at King George's Field: graffiti in the Youth Shelter and the nearby bin had been raised to the ground by a fire being lit inside the bin. A replacement bin had been ordered and received. Bottles had been thrown against the side of the pavilion and an attempted break in had been made, trying to remove the door lock.

6.8 Glass – broken glass in the playground area and on the skate park had become an ongoing weekly problem.

6.9 Litter – a number of complaints had been received from the public regarding litter left on the field from the footballers at the weekends. This had been discussed in the meeting held with the football clubs.

6.10 Football Meeting – a meeting had been held with representatives from the Junior and Senior Football clubs. The two clubs were now working together. There was agreement regarding the remedial works necessary at the end of the season. The financial issues between the two clubs had been resolved. There was a commitment from all present to tackle the litter issue. All those present agreed that they did not wish to consider introducing cricket at this time.

6.11 Worm caste treatment - had been applied to the playground area and a second treatment to the field, due to a recurrence of moles.

6.12 Quadplaying – at the request of the footballers, quadplaying of the A and B pitches had been scheduled for the beginning of January at a cost of £240.

6.13 Groundsman's Hut – the steps to the Groundsman's Hut had been rebuilt as they were identified in the health and safety report.

6.14 Bike Rack – had been installed at KGF on the concreted area behind the youth shelter.

6.15 Hedge cutting – the annual cut of the inside hedge along the Darent was outstanding due to the very wet weather conditions and the ground being too boggy.

6.16 Darent Bridge – the bank subsidence had been checked weekly and there was no indication of any change to the integrity of the bridge following the bout of wet weather.

6.17 Outside Gym – Councillor Parry had been approached for funding for a piece of equipment for an outside gym. He was awaiting a Members' Fund Status Report before responding.

	<p><u>Open Spaces</u></p> <p>6.18 Footpath SR347 – Nicky Biddall from KCC was unable to tackle the vegetation along this footpath due to budget restrictions, as the footpath was not obstructed.</p> <p>6.19 Weed Killing – Weed Management had applied a weed killing treatment around the centre of town in the middle of December. It can take several weeks to take effect during the winter months, so success would be monitored.</p> <p>6.20 Tree works – the health and safety tree works identified in the tree survey were undertaken by Down to Earth trees w/c 4th and 11th January. The ground at Crockham Hill had been too wet to get the equipment onto the field to remove the debris – this would be removed as soon as the ground conditions are dry enough. The deadwood in the neighbouring tree overhanging the playground had been removed at the same time, which the neighbour had agreed to pay for.</p> <p>6.21 Open Spaces – there has been a considerable amount of damage caused by vehicles parking over the winter on several of our open spaces. I have received complaints from residents and requests for posts to be installed to prevent parking on the green areas.</p> <p>6.22 Hanging Baskets – the Council's £850 donation had been refunded and would be spent installing additional planters around Churchill and the Jubilee notice board.</p> <p>6.23 Nativity on the Green – the event planned for Christmas Eve was cancelled, following the sad accident in Westerham earlier that day.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Allotment Sites</u></p> <p>7.1 Allotment occupancy – councillors considered the maps provided by the Deputy Clerk, identifying the vacant allotments on each site. It was agreed that as many of the vacant allotments as possible should be covered at the Bloomfield and Farley sites. A meeting to be arranged between the Chair of APFOS, Chair of Planning and Chair of Council to discuss the future of the Currant Hill site before the maintenance plans are finalised.</p> <p>7.2 Damage at Farley – Cllr Wesley and Cllr Bates had met Mr Essex on site and the Chairman had prepared a letter in response. Subsequently Cllr Bates had removed the trees.</p> <p>7.3 Allotment maintenance schedule – the Deputy Clerk had produced a schedule outlining the works that had already taken place: mowing of all three sites, removal of rubbish at Bloomfield and plot clearance at Bloomfield, provision of plot markers for Farley and Bloomfield and notice boards for all three sites had been ordered. It also outlined the priorities identified for each site. Councillors asked for clarification of what had already been purchased and costings for outstanding items. A site meeting had been held at Currant Hill, but no plot holders had attended. The clearance of plots 1 and 2 at Bloomfield was ongoing as it was time consuming and costly due to the enormous amount of rubbish on the plots. Councillors agreed that a combination lock should be installed at Farley Allotment site, in line with the other two sites and to prevent the public from entering the site.</p> <p>7.4 Allotment fencing – Councillors approved allotment boundary fencing at Bloomfield and Farley up to £2,500 in total.</p>	<p>DM HO</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p>
8.	<p><u>King George's Field</u></p> <p>8.1 Football meeting – Cllr Ogden and the Deputy Clerk met with representatives from the junior and senior football clubs. The meeting was very positive. The debt to the junior football club and the WSA had been repaid by the seniors. The two clubs were</p>	

	<p>now working together much more effectively. The maintenance schedule and remedial works for 2016 were discussed and agreed. The Deputy Clerk agreed to arrange quad playing of the A and B pitches in January. Both clubs agreed that the introduction of cricket would not be practical or desirable at present.</p> <p>8.2 Health and Safety maintenance schedule – Councillors considered the works identified in the annual risk assessment.</p> <p>8.3 Fair – Shaws Fun Fair had asked to visit KGF during June. Councillors upheld the previous decision not to hold a fun fair on the field due to the damage the heavy vehicles cause.</p> <p>8.4 Defibrillator – Councillors agreed that it would be beneficial to install a defibrillator at KGF. KALC would be placing a bulk order for local councils at the end of January at competitive prices. The Deputy Clerk to contact the WSA to agree 50/50 funding.</p> <p>8.5 Vandalism/Anti-social behavior - we have been experiencing high levels of vandalism and anti-social behavior at KGF, including: daily broken glass, fires within the youth shelter and the burning of a bin, graffiti, attempted break in to the pavilion and a break in to the bowls club pavilion. Cllr Bates had been present at the youth club when youths attempted to barricade staff and younger members in the pavilion. Councillors agreed that there had been an escalation of the situation and that the committee should write to the CSU, District Councillors and Chief Inspector Walford. An article should also be placed on the Council's facebook page.</p> <p>Cllr Bates had been communicating with some of the offenders and let them know that if they continued to abuse the youth shelter they would lose it. He has already removed two of the side panels. Cllr Moore suggested that Council may have to consider removing the youth shelter for a period, perhaps 3 months. It was agreed to refer the matter to Youth and Community.</p> <p>It was agreed that the replacement bin should not be installed until the situation had improved.</p>	<p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>HO/DM</p> <p>DM</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>Open Spaces</u></p> <p>9.1 Dog bins – Cllr Wilkie had requested additional dog bins in Crockham Hill, as there are only bins around the playing field. Councillors agreed that 2/3 dog bins could be ordered and placed in stock, budget allowing. Residents from Crockham Hill to advise on the preferred locations.</p> <p>9.2 Weed Control – Weed Management had quoted £395 per weed killing treatment around the centre of the town, from Croydon Road to Quebec Square, and recommended a minimum of three treatments per year. This was approved.</p> <p>9.3 Open spaces – we had received complaints from residents that the amenity spaces at Ash Road and Hartley Road are being used for parking. They are extremely muddy, rutted and unsightly. The residents had requested posts be installed along the roadside to protect the grass. Councillors discussed the parking issues around Madan, Ash and Hartley roads and the lack of parking provision. It was agreed that this area should be referred to H&L committee for inclusion in the remit of the Parking Working Group. It was agreed that local residents should be consulted about the issue and the proposed solution, and invited to offer alternative ideas, before a decision was made.</p> <p>9.4 Planters – Councillors delegated the decision as to which planters should be ordered for the paved area around Churchill to Cllr Ogden and the Deputy Clerk.</p> <p>9.5 Crockham Hill Garden - the paving had been jet washed in readiness for some relaying and repairs. The funds had now been raised for the memorial and the order would be placed imminently.</p>	<p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>DM</p> <p>HO/DM</p>

	<p>9.6 Garden Maintenance Contract – this was due to go out to tender for the period 2016-18. The Deputy Clerk had prepared a first draft tender document which had been circulated to Councillors. Comments/amendments should be sent into the office by the end of w/c 18th January.</p> <p>9.7 Notice board – the Deputy Clerk had contacted the Wolfe Garage and they suggested positioning a new notice board on their garage/Spar outside wall, as this would be more visible to the public. SDC Planning Department had advised that this would need planning permission, whereas a notice board positioned on the bus shelter would not. However, it was agreed that the garage would be the preferred location. The Deputy Clerk to meet with the Wolfe Garage to progress.</p> <p>9.8 Talking Statues – had become part of a much wider Talking Town Heritage Trail. The details had been presented to the Planning Committee, who had supported the initiative in principle. Final costings were awaited. APFOS committee were also supportive of the initiative and looked forward to seeing the final details. It was agreed that the prototype should not be repositioned in Wolfe flowerbed. Once any necessary planning permission had been granted, the new post could be installed.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>DM</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><u>Councillors' Away Day</u></p> <p>10.1 Cllr Ogden advised the committee that consultation cards had been widely distributed around the town, seeking the views and priorities of the public. The consultation had been publicised in TN16 and on the Council website/facebook page. It would also be distributed to all houses in Crockham Hill. Councillors were encouraged to distribute as many postcards as possible. The deadline for response is the 12th February.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p><u>Crockham Hill and King George Pavilions</u></p> <p>11.1 Pavilion/MUGA redevelopment project – Full Council had considered and approved the amended plans for refurbishing the pavilion. The plans included the retention of the structural pillars, which it would be preferable to remove. The archives had not contained any documents suggesting that the feasibility of their removal had been investigated previously. Hence the Deputy Clerk had contacted a structural engineer and awaited a quotation for their advice on this matter.</p> <p>11.2 Outside Gym – Cllr Parry had agreed to provide some funding for the provision of an outside gym. SDC had provided funding for one piece of equipment, but this had to be spent before the end of March 2016. The Deputy Clerk suggested trying to fund three of the proposed six items, in order to install the first phase. WTP had suggested that WTC and WTP could fund the third item jointly. The Deputy Clerk was asked to complete the paperwork to secure the KCC funding, to order the equipment funded by SDC, and to pursue joint funding of the third piece with WTP.</p>	<p>DM</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p><u>Public Rights of Way</u></p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>	
<p>13.</p>	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>13.1 Committee Accounts to 31st December '15 – were received.</p> <p>13.2 Budget 2016/17 – the budget for 2016/17 had been approved by F&GP, to be put forward to Full Council. An additional £1,000 had been added to the new budget line</p>	

	for weed control around the town.	
14.	<u>Correspondence</u> 14.1 Beating the Bounds – Councillors approved this annual event in principle – the application is awaited.	
15.	<u>Reports from Councillors</u> 15.1 Cllr Bates reported a leak from the water tank in KG Pavilion roof, causing mould and fungus to grow on the ceiling. A rivet was missing from one of the skate park ramps, causing the metal to lift.	DM
16.	<u>TN16 and web-site</u> 16.1 Allotment Vacancies – advertise vacant allotments in the next edition of TN16. 16.2 KGF anti-social behaviour – appeal to the public to be vigilant on facebook.	
17.	<u>Matters for District and County Councillors</u> 17.1 Vandalism and anti-social behaviour at KGF. 17.2 Parking along Madan Road/Ash Road/Hartley Road.	
18.	<u>Further Matters for Consideration at the next meeting</u> 18.1 Pavilion/MUGA redevelopment update. 18.2 Review gardening contract. 18.3 Update on allotment maintenance. 18.4 Update on health and safety maintenance schedule. 18.5 Provision of a notice board in London Road.	
19.	<u>Date of next meeting</u> Monday 14 th March 2016.	

The meeting was concluded at 10.02pm

Minutes confirmed as a correct record:

Chairman