

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE LEISURE FACILITIES & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 6th DECEMBER 2010 AT
IN THE PARISH CENTRE LOCKLEYS DRIVE WELWYN
COMMENCING AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT: Councillor L McLusky (Chair) and Cllrs. M Benson,
J Blackburn, S Butler, I Colpitts and B McKay.

IN ATTENDANCE: A. Pack (Clerk to the Council)

APOLOGIES: No apologies were received.

2010/113 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.
There were no Declarations of Interest.

2010/114 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11th OCTOBER 2010.

RESOLVED “that the Minutes of the Leisure Facilities & Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 11th October 2010 be approved and signed”

Unanimously agreed.

2010/115 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11th OCTOBER 2010.

There were no matters arising.

2010/116 CIVIC CENTRE

1. Refurbishment programme

The stage lighting was replaced week commencing 22nd November 2010 and was completed 29th November 2010.

2. Official Opening Ceremony

A Civic Centre Open Day Working Party Meeting was held on the 2nd November 2010. Minutes are attached as **APPENDIX 1**

Grant Shapps MP is to open the ceremony at 10.30am along with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Councillor (WHBC) R Smith and the Chairman of the Council, Councillor J Blackburn. Displays are to be held in the main hall and the small hall and refreshments are to be served. St Mary’s School Choir is to sing at 10 – 10.30am and St John School Choir is to sing 11.30 – 12 noon. A detailed programme of events is attached as

APPENDIX 2

WHBC has in the past displayed posters of Welwyn Village as it was in the past and is now. Permission to be sought to borrow the posters for the opening ceremony.

3. Tree Work The large conifer tree on land adjacent to the Civic Centre building is to be removed on Tuesday 7th December 2010. An article has been placed on the web site advising the public.

4. Sound System. The sound system in the Civic Centre broke down on Monday 22nd November 2010 during a Zumba Fitness session. The booking fee has been reimbursed and a portable sound system is being used for Zumba sessions until this problem is resolved. One quotation to replace the sound system was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 1

Two further quotations are being sought, however a local company has quoted £ 886 to repair the existing system which has been accepted as this will give the Council more time to consider a replacement system in the future. A portable microphone will be available for the opening ceremony.

5. Steps and entrance pavings

A temporary repair is being undertaken to the front entrance steps which have loose pavings. Quotations are being sought to repair the steps and relay the front paving area which is very uneven.

2010/117 NOTICE BOARD AT OAKLANDS

The notice board has been erected and an official opening photo shoot took place on the 8th November 2010. The Clerk to provide a statement to Welwyn Hatfield Times

2010/118 ST MARY'S CHURCH WALL

A meeting was held on the 19th July 2010, with St. Mary's church representatives, Councillor McLusky, Councillor Blackburn, the Clerk and representatives from the Diocese, to agree the scope of the proposed works. The meeting took place in Church house, to enable site inspections if required. Minutes of a meeting held on the 19th July 2010 were circulated with the Agenda of the meeting held on the 9th August 2010.

St Mary's Parochial Church Council's Architect, following a visual inspection on the day of the meeting, did not agree with the report from the Parish Council's structural engineer, that sections of the wall require rebuilding. The Parochial Church Council also advised that Listed Building consent from Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) is also not required.

Following discussion, St Mary's Parochial Church Council agreed to fund investigation and report work by their own Architect to establish what work is required to the church walls. The Parochial Church Council also agreed to fund the submission to the Diocese of an application for permission to conduct the necessary work. The church's Architect has been given copies of all professional reports received to date by the Council. No further correspondence has been received. The Church to be requested to provide a progress report.

2010/119 ST MARY'S CLOSED CHURCH YARD

A tree survey was undertaken of trees in the closed churchyard, to update the original survey which was undertaken in 1998. Original survey was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 2.

A quotation to complete the tree work was obtained and circulated with the Agenda of the meeting held on the 11th October 2010.

The trees are in a conservation area and require planning permission prior to the commencement of any work. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) Tree Officer's report was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 3. Quotations are being sought for the revised works from three contractors. A report to be made at the next meeting.

2010/120

PARISH PLANTERS

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) is currently looking into the possibility of installing 3 planters in agreed locations within the parish of Welwyn. The Parish Council would then be responsible for filling with soil and planting them each year. Correspondence was circulated with the Agenda of the meeting held on the 11th October 2010.

WHBC advised the planters would be approximately 1500mm (width) x 550mm (height) in size and would be made of glass fibre composite in black and gold. Location of each planter to be decided between the Parish and the District to be agreed by HCC regarding any highway issues.

Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Benson, seconded by Councillor McKay and

RESOLVED "that the Council accept the three planters in locations to be agreed between Welwyn Parish Council (WPC) WHBC and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)".

Unanimously agreed.

2010/121

WELWYN & DISTRICT BOWLS CLUB RENT REVIEW

At the Leisure Facilities and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the 9th August 2010 the following resolution was agreed "that

1. an annual rental of £ 3,200 for the years 2010 – 2014, with a review every five years as stated in the lease agreement.
2. the Welwyn and District Bowls Club be invited to apply for a grant towards the annual rent".

A letter was received from Welwyn and District Bowls Club dated 1st September 2010 and a copy was delivered to all Councillors. This was included on the Agenda as Appendix 8.

A response was sent to Welwyn and District Bowls Club, following consultation with the Chairman, copy was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 9.

A further letter was received from Welwyn and District Bowls Club, a copy of which was delivered to all Councillors and was attached to the Agenda as Appendix 10. In accordance with the lease agreement the Council sought independent advice on the level of rent to be charged. The Council agreed to consider offering the Bowls Club grant aid towards this sum. The Bowls Club however do not accept this valuation as detailed above.

As a mutually acceptable agreement of the rent to be charged cannot be agreed, then in compliance with the lease, the Committee agreed a further independent valuation be sought.

A letter was sent to the Bowls Club suggesting two local firms recommended by RICS. Welwyn and District Bowls Club advised an arbitrator would be required. RICS were contacted and a fee paid to appoint an arbitrator. The Bowls Club was advised this process had been put in place. On the 1st November an email was received from the Chairman of the Welwyn and District Bowls Club which read ***“ You will of course have noted that this cannot proceed without our consent which we have not given”.***

Following consultation with the Chairman Councillor Blackburn and the Chairman of Leisure Facilities and Open Spaces Committee Councillor McLusky, the Council’s solicitors were requested to review the lease. Their response was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 4

Following advice from the solicitors, a letter was sent to the Welwyn and District Bowls Club. A copy was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 5. A further letter was received from the Welwyn and District Bowls Club on the 15th November 2010. Copy circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 6 The Council’s response to the letter received on the 15th November 2010 was tabled and is attached as

APPENDIX 3

Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Benson, seconded by Councillor Colpitts and

RESOLVED “ that the response letter, detailed in Appendix 3 of the Minutes, be sent to the Welwyn and District Bowls Club”.

Unanimously agreed.

2010/122

SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB RENT REVIEW

The Sports and Social Club rent review for the period 1st April 2010 – 31st March 2015, in accordance with the lease, is increased by inflation . A copy of the retail price index attached was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 8

Using the inflation figures for April 2005 – 2010 the rent to be increased to £ 1,259 per annum for the period 1st April 2010 – 31st March 2015

Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor McLusky and

RESOLVED “that the rent for the Sports and Social Club for the period 1st April 2010 – 31st March 2015 be increased to £ 1,259 per annum”.

Unanimously agreed.

2010/123

WELWYN ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION (WAA)

1. Welwyn Allotments Association request a sign be erected at the entrance to the allotment site from half way down Lockleys Drive to read **‘Allotment Plot Holders Only’**. A sign 450 x 600mm would cost £ 100.30 Report from Councillor Colpitts to be made at the next meeting.

2. The WAA requested larger skips be provided. Current skip cost approximately £180. A larger skip capable of fitting through the allotment gate would cost approximately £ 275.
Following discussion it was agreed to continue to supply the same size skips during 2011 and to monitor skip usage during the period skips are provided in 2011

2010/124

PROPOSED RE-SURFACING OF THE OTTWAY WALK CAR PARK

St Mary's School Governing Body has requested the Council consider resurfacing the overflow car park in Ottway Walk to the same width as the existing car park and also to consider surfacing the basket ball area for use during school drop off and pick up times.

The School is undertaking remedial works within the school site to provide further parking for staff and for parents to drop children off in the morning however this will not solve the problems being experienced at each end of the school day.

Parents are also parking vehicles adjacent to the school in Ottway Walk from opposite the Sports and Social Club to the emergency entrance of the school. This is on Council owned land and the school request the Council consider installing double yellow lines to prevent any parking in this area. The School is also holding talks with WHBC to request yellow lines are installed on the public highway section of Ottway Walk.

Following discussion it was agreed to obtain separate quotations to surface all three areas detailed above for discussion at a future meeting. Also to investigate installing double yellow lines from the emergency exit of the school to the boundary of the Sport and Social Club.

2010/125

KICKWALL AREA- OTTWAY WALK PLAYING FIELDS

The Head Groundsman has reported surfacing problems in a semi circle area in front of the kick wall and request the Committee consider installing safety surfacing in this area at a cost of £ 1,842.50

A quotation was circulated with the Agenda as Appendix 9

Following discussion it was proposed by Councillor Blackburn, seconded by Councillor Benson and

RESOLVED "that safety surfacing be installed in front of the Kickwall as detailed in the quotation at a cost of £ 1,842.50".

Unanimously agreed.

It was agreed that £ 1,000 for this project be funded from the Youth Budget

2010/126

DANESBURY PARK

Unsafe access from Danesbury Park Road onto the nature reserve.
Councillor McLusky advised that Countryside Management Services (CMS) following a request from the owners of the land, had closed the existing entrance onto the Nature Reserve and moved the entrance 200 yards away

from the bungalow, next to an Oak tree, which was very difficult to access and inaccessible for pushchairs and the disabled.

Following discussion it was agreed to invite a senior representative from WHBC to a meeting to discuss this issue.

2010/127

VILLAGE GREEN APPLICATION – DIGSWELL

Council's approval is sought for the draft questionnaire to bear the Council's name, reflecting that the Village Green application is a Council initiative (Resolution 2010/119). Attached as **APPENDIX 4**

Following discussion it was agreed that the Digswell Residents Association provide further information regarding ownership of the land .for discussion at a future meeting of the Council.

2010/128

CLOSE OF MEETING.

The Chairman thanked all present and declared the meeting closed at 8.55pm

Signed:.....

Chair, Leisure Facilities & Open Spaces Committee.

Dated: 14th February 2010.