

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE LEISURE FACILITIES & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON TUESDAY 14th OCTOBER 2008
IN THE PARISH CENTRE AT 7.30 PM**

PRESENT: Cllr Magdalene Benson (Chairman) and Cllrs J Blackburn, S Butler,
L McLusky and John Roper

IN ATTENDANCE: Rebecca Findlay (Clerk) and Cllr. Dr. H. Ober

APOLOGIES: None.

2008/49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr. Dr. H. Ober declared a personal interest in Item 9 on the Agenda, Spindlebury Cottage. He is the tenant in the Property.

Resolved that this item be moved to be the last Agenda item to enable Cllr. Ober to sit through the rest of the proceedings.

2008/50 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH SEPTEMBER 2008

Resolved, these were an accurate and correct record then duly signed by the Chairman.

2008/51 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 9TH SEPTEMBER 2008

- Thames Water Grill. The Clerk reported no further response has been received and this was being chased up.
- Update on tree planting: The Clerk told members that the Grounds man had ordered the trees and they will be planted at the Cemetery at the end of October or first week in November if the conditions were agreeable.
- Signage to the playing field: The Clerk reported that she had been in touch with the Bowls Club to find out who it was that they contacted and will progress with the possibility of a sign being put up on London Road.
- Tree Survey at the Cemetery: The Clerk reported that the Tree Survey would be commencing tomorrow and quotes will be given for the work to be done on the two damaged Beech trees.
- Quote for maintenance of old graves in the Cemetery. The Clerk is waiting for a quote from the present contractors, FT Gearings.
- Organic waste at the Cemetery: Once the waste has been emptied into the skip the three sections of the waste disposal containers will be labelled: "Organic" "Plastics" and "Paper" for a trial period. It was suggested that small bins be put into the budget for the top and middle areas of the Cemetery and labelled the same as the disposal unit at the entrance to the Cemetery.

2008/52 ALLOTMENTS

Fencing: The Clerk reported that she had again written to the landlord of the White Horse public house with the concerns about the trees on his land damaging the Council's fence on at the allotments and asked the owner to contact her so they could arrange a meeting to discuss the matter. Again, there has been no response

Resolved that the Clerk contact the solicitor warning of the intent that the Council will take action for this long term matter to be resolved.

Vacant allotment plots: The Clerk reported that plots W8A and part of W9 had now been rotivated.

Resolved, the Clerk make arrangements for plots W8A and part of W9, to be split into approximately 3 individual plots. These could then be offered for hire to the next people on the waiting list. The Clerk would inform the Allotment Association.

Allotment Regulations. The Clerk had not had any responses from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman since the last inspection in respect of the Allotment Regulations.

Due to the timescale, the Clerk reported that all the invoices and regulations had now been sent out to all the plot holders as usual at the beginning of October. These had been sent together with the agreement which they must all sign up to and return with their fees.

It was noticed that some of the dates need amending on the Allotment regulations to show that the hire year now runs from January to December and not now April to March ((1), (5x) and (5y)). The Clerk is to notify all plot holders.

Resolved, that "Buildings" be changed to "Structures" (5L).

Resolved, that another review of the regulations would take place before the next invoices are sent out in 2009.

Allotment Inspection:

Resolved the next inspection is to be held on 5th April 2009 at 11am.

2008/53

WELWYN CEMETERY

The Clerk was thanked for producing the document recording the approximate number of plots left at the Cemetery.

It was reported that Cllr. Roper had produced a draft Management Plan for the Cemetery, It was agreed that due to the document not being ready when the agenda went out it, it was too complex and would not be discussed at this meeting.

Resolved the Chairman, Cllr, Roper and the Clerk discuss a future Cemetery Management plan to be placed before the Committee.

2008/54

BUDGET2009/2010

The Clerk reported that she had not received any budget wish list items prior to this meeting.

It was agreed that the Chairman look at the play areas at the playing field. It was agreed that the Clerk look into replacement of the two metal benches at the Cemetery.

Discussions took place looking at playgrounds, Handyperson/Grounds person and contractors and the possible maintenance of Digswell Playing field.

Resolved that an information Board and Finger Post (with three medium size fingers) for the Playing field be put into the budget.

Resolved that the Clerk look at the previous walkabouts reports of Welwyn, Digswell and Oaklands and extract possible budget items.

Resolved that possible Earmarked Reserves be placed into the budget for Playground maintenance and the upgrading of equipment.

Resolved that the Clerk look at the possibility of an extra person which could be handy-person/grounds-person who would have several duties managed by the Clerk.

2008/55

CHURCHYARD

The Clerk had previously circulated a report on a meeting with the Chairman of the Council, Cllr. Blackburn and St. Mary's Church officials. Members thanked the Clerk for the report.

Quotes for repairs to the wall:

This item had been deferred from the last meeting. The Clerk reported that she had only received the two quotes. The Clerk to continue to look for more specialised builders to quote for the work and into funding streams.

Resolved due to the specialist work involved and the potential cost the Committee were not happy to make a decision at this time.

Japanese Knotweed:

The Clerk reported that "Japanese Knotweed" had been found in the Churchyard and it was the responsibility of the Council. The Clerk had made enquires with suitable contractors and "Complete Weed Control" (*who the Council use for the playing field weed maintenance*) have a three year program at a cost of £250 in total which would ensure that the Japanese Knotweed would be eradicated.

Resolved the Clerk instruct "Complete Weed Control" to commence with the Three year program as soon as possible.

Resolved the Clerk contact the Borough Council to let them know Japanese Knotweed has been identified in the High Street Car park and along the Link Road in Welwyn.

Main Gate Post:

The Clerk reported that she had asked for an estimate for the repair to the right hand side gate post as it had needed re-embedding. She reported that if the cost was not too great she would approve the work to be done, if it was going to be costly she would refer it to the Finance Committee for approval.

2008/56

REGISTERING OF PARISH COUNCIL LAND.

The Clerk had previously circulated a short report. And further reported that Cllr. Blackburn and Cllr. Roper had helped in identifying some of the Council's land from the maps sent from the Council's solicitor.

It was **Resolved** that Cllr. Butler meet with the Clerk to try to identify land to be registered by the Council.

2008/57

YOUTH WORKING PARTY REPORT.

Deferred from the last meeting.

It was reported that Cllr. Roper had produced a draft strategy plan and new name for a new Working Party. The document had only been emailed to the Chairman and the Clerk just before the meeting so they had not had time to study the document.

There was some confusion over the whether or not a "Youth" Working Party had been formed at the Annual meeting of the Council.

The Clerk reported that it was agreed that "a" Working Party be formed but it was argued by some members that that it needed to look at all members of the community not just the youths and to include looking at the Council's facilities at the playing field.

After the discussion, it was agreed that the previous members of the "Youth Working Party" meet to decide on a new name and produce a draft "Terms of Reference" to be presented to the Leisure Committee.

The Clerk reported that this had not been done, that some meetings had taken place and decisions made without consultation with the Clerk.

Resolved that the name of a new committee be revised and the draft strategy plan be presented at the next meeting.

2008/58

CIVIC CENTRE

External Decoration:

The Clerk reported that a full Risk Assessment had been completed by the Clerk and Caretaker for the external painting of the building. Costing had also been made for the paint and materials but the Clerk was still looking into the cost of ladders and/or a tower.

It was also reported that the Caretaker was qualified and had the necessary skills to complete the job in hand.

Draft Business plan 2014;

Members were reminded that the lease on the Civic Centre came to an end in 2014 and that the Council needed to determine whether or not to extend the lease.

Resolved, Cllr. Roper and the Clerk liaise and produce a draft business plan to be discussed at the next meeting

DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

At this juncture the Chairman thanked Dr. Ober for attending the meeting as he left to enable the Committee to discuss matters concerning Spindlebury Cottage.

2008/59

SPINDLEBURY COTTAGE

Correspondence had been received by the Clerk from Dr. Ober the tenant of Spindlebury Cottage owned by the Council.

Dr. Ober had asked that;

1. That he be allowed by the Council to update the Centre heating system with no cost to the Council
2. That the hedges at the property be cut.
3. That he is able to replace the Leylandii at the back of the property with English bushes and shrubs at no cost to the Council.

Resolved, unanimously agreed to allow the upgrading of the Central Heating System.

The Clerk reported that this was already in hand as it was cut every year when the hedges on the playing field were cut.

Resolved, unanimously agreed to allow the Leylandii to be removed and replaced with English shrubs and bushes as described in the correspondence.

The Committee also asked the Clerk to mention that Dr. Ober is applauded for being such a good reliable tenant.

2008/60

CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

Signed **Chairman, Leisure Facilities & Open Spaces Committee**

Dated2008