

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE held on Monday, 14th December 2015 in the Parish Room, South Darent at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs I Blackamore (Chairman)
D Mitchell, C Page, J Stewart

M Mason, Cllr Rushbrook and D Barham (SDFC)

IN ATTENDANCE: H Rohard, Parish Clerk

48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr R House, T May and M Borroughs

49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Blackamore declared a pecuniary interest in Ground Maintenance Tenders item.

50 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the last meeting held on 26th October 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record.

51 MATTERS ARISING

Top Paddock investigate any restrictions of use for future: will be brought to a future meeting when details checked by Clerk.

Shrubbery Road fence panel quotes: action yet to be completed.

Franks Lane River Bank: planning consent to be sought – action yet to be completed.

List of assets and maintenance schedule to be drawn up: to be actioned

River volunteer days with NWKCP: these will be arranged for Spring and early summer in order to tackle the Himalayan Balsam and to improve the riverside for walkers to enjoy.

Other Actions had been completed

52 PLAY AREAS

Reports received from Lothlorien

Heathside: basket ball hoop is now beyond repair. This should be removed immediately. Once feedback has been received from youth survey plans can be made to incorporate ideas given by young people. The hoop will not be replaced until this consultation has been completed.

Shrubbery Road: No outstanding issues

School Play area: The school has asked for the Parish Council's proposals for the site. It is agreed that the play equipment is now approaching the end of its useful life. The school has said informally that they would like it to be removed and replaced.

It was queried whether the play area is used much outside of school hours. If it is not open for any reason the Clerk has received complaints, however the playground is not accessible during school hours when pre school children may want to use it.

The fence around the play area also needs replacing but this has not been raised as a matter of concern on the annual inspection report.

Other suitable locations for a playground accessible at any time were discussed.

Cllr Blackamore proposed that the lease not be renewed with the school and other locations be explored. Cllr Page seconded this and also asked that the lease be checked as to whether the land should be returned to how it was before the playground was installed.

Members voted in favour of this proposal: **ACTION: Clerk to check lease and liaise with school. St George's Day Questionnaire to include this item for residents to comment**

Saxon Place: The 4 quotes for the playground were Playdale £25120 (did not include taking old equipment away) HAGS £17,000 + £2K for surfacing + fitting + taking old equipment away, Wicksteed £29,000 did not include fitting or resurfacing. Playcubed £20,000 included removal of old equipment, supply and installation of new equipment and safety surfacing.

Self closing gate needs to be replaced and 2 other quotes are needed. Jackson fencing day rate for this work is £650 and would be approx. £1000

Bark under new play equipment will be 'play grade' but outside of that normal bark was included in Playcubed quote. Cllr Stead queried how the different bark would be kept separate. As the surrounding areas are currently grass it was suggested that this stay as grass and not have ordinary bark at all.

A site visit would be arranged as soon as possible to enable work to start. The Clerk would inform the ROS committee members of the date so that as many members could be present.
ACTION: Clerk

53 HEATHSIDE

The idea of providing lighting in Heathside was discussed. The proposal is to run power from the Village Hall to the Brick store, to provide lighting around the entrance area on a motion sensor within a set time in the evening.

The proposal had been put forward via the PCSO to provide lighting for young people to gather at Heathside rather than in the streets. D Barham asked how the area could be monitored. The SDFC under 12's do not play in the evenings but SDFC do not have any objections to the area being lit.

Other uses for the lighting apart from either attracting or deterring youths from congregating in Heathside could include the Firework event and other hirers of Heathside.

Switching the power off is an option if difficulties arise.

Other Parishes with Youth shelters would be asked for feedback. Letters to the homes opposite Heathside and to the Bridges Pub would be sent asking for their views.

Cllr Rushbrook agreed to prepare a specification for the Clerk to circulate to electricians to obtain quotes for the work. **ACTION.**

54 PAVILION LEASE RENEWAL & WESTMINSTER FIELD USE by SDFC

The contract was reviewed. Cllr Blackamore enquired whether the pitches were hired out to other clubs and Diane confirmed that they were however some regular clubs had decided to play elsewhere.

Cllr Stead commented that litter had been left after matches. Diane said the club had put in place a check list for visiting teams to adhere to and there had been an improvement.

An amendment was recommended to the Contract stating that the Football club is responsible for clearing litter from matches after the game.

The Clerk was asked to check that the £500 bond had been paid at the start of the contracts. Diane confirmed that the building was in a clean and tidy state.

The unsuitable alarm should be replaced so as not be an unnecessary disturbance to neighbours and quotes for this will be sought.

It was agreed that the contract would be reviewed at the same time as the Heathside contract expiring on 31st August 2017. A revised, backdated contract would be issued to Diane for the club to sign running from 1st Sept 2015 to 31st Aug 2017. **ACTION**

55 WESTMINSTER FIELD MAINTENANCE ITEMS

The Clerk showed photos of the broken barrier at the side of the footpath leading to 100 Year Wood and the dog bin nearby that was in a state of disrepair. Cllr Rushbrook reported that the dog bin by the car park was also badly corroded. These items would be actioned as part of planned/responsive General Outdoor maintenance expenditure.

Cllr Blackamore reported that the bin base had been installed ready for the new double bin to be installed in the Picnic area. The single bin will be moved to near the interpretation board in 100 Year Wood.

56 DARENT VALLEY LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Information had been received from Millen Court residents committee with regards the upkeep of the weir on their property.

The Clerk had liaised with Rick Bayne from the DVLP and it was hoped that this could be included in possible funding from the partnership.

The Clerk would continue to liaise with him and Cllr Stead and Rushbrook would be willing to meet up to discuss this further.

The riverside walk on the bank towards Franks Lane is already included in the scheme with NWKCP scheduled to work there and it is hoped that the River Maintenance work with volunteers being led by NWKCP on behalf of the Parish Council would count towards match funding.

Better access from Westminster Field to the footpaths behind Court Lodge were identified as an area to improve and the proposed clearing of viewing areas along the river were agreed as being priorities.

57 ALLOTMENTS

Cllr Stead and Page reported that they had visited the Allotments in November; majority of plots do not appear to be well kept but this was possibly due to the time of year. Another inspection would be completed in May/June and warning given when reminders for the Annual Rent was sent out that plots must be 50% cultivated in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement.

ACTION

As there is not a waiting list for Allotments should someone decide to give up their plot it would be left to get overgrown. At present only those who are resident of the Parish are permitted to have a plot. Cllr Mitchell asked that this be checked in case other willing plot holders in neighbouring parishes could be encouraged to take up any unwanted plots. **ACTION**

Martin Mason has been cutting the grass in the track.

58 BURIAL GROUND

'Burial is restricted to those with 25 or more years residency in the Parish' is impossible to prove or disprove in the cases of those who may have lived in the Parish many years ago. This is particularly difficult when dealing with bereaved families who are organising a burial within a short time.

Members voted to accept the word of relatives in such cases to avoid unnecessary distress at a difficult time.

Cllr Blackmore reported that small shrine objects were starting to collect along the Memorial wall. Vases will be provided by the Parish Council and a letter sent to relatives asking to refrain from leaving items there. Quotes for the permanent dedication stone and urns/vases to be obtained for the next meeting. **ACTION**

59 GROUND MAINTENANCE TENDERS

The wording of the contracts was checked and approved to be signed and issued to contractors.

60 2016/17 BUDGET SETTING

The Shrubbery Road MUGA Guarantee expiry was queried in case of further work needing to be done. Suggested that Play Inspections be brought forward if the expiry date necessitated. A report from NWKCP was requested to check whether 8 maintenance days were necessary. The attached budget was agreed.

61 DATE OF NEXT COMMITTEE

15th February 2016

Meeting ended at 10.10pm

Chairman
Date