

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE HELD ON
THURSDAY 15 JANUARY 2015
IN THE TOWN COUNCILOFFICE AT 7 PM
(Noted that the meeting started at 7.23pm)

Cllrs Present: Mr Richard Chandler (Chairman)
Mr Tony Sneller
Mr Chris Kemp
Mrs Maggie South
Mr John Robbins

Attending: Town Clerk, Mrs Rebecca Knifton
Members of the Public x 2

OS/1/15 Co-option of Committee Members

AGREED that formal co-option of Cllrs South and Devine will be decided at Council in February.

OS/2/15 Representations by the public

Member of the public, Mr Tom Moore, addressed the Committee as an allotment plot holder at Grove Lane. He wished to raise the following comments:

- Why were new contracts needed – Cllr Kemp explained that many allotment holders did not have a contract and that it was a legal requirement.
- The new contract contradicted the lease with the Leconfield Estate – The Committee **AGREED** that there had been an oversight when the Committee had approved the new contract and **AGREED** to consider a new draft.
- The Open Spaces Committee had used delegated authority to approve the new contract. Cllr Kemp stated that the need to approve the Committee's terms of reference was paramount.
- He wanted to know where the minutes were from the meeting in May 2014 as they were not on the website. The Clerk stated that she had not officially taken on the role until July 2014 and that any previous minutes should have been uploaded prior to this. The Clerk will ensure that any missing minutes are located and uploaded.
- The allotment audit review. Mr Moore asked why it had been deemed necessary. Cllr Robbins explained that the plans had been found to be out of date as there had been some splitting of plots and changes of plot holders. It was also agreed that due to some missing paperwork, PTC had not been able to ascertain who had paid and what they should have paid. The Council had **AGREED** that due to other administrative anomalies found within the Council's files, it would be advisable for PTC to start from a clean slate.
- Mr Moore wished it noted that he found the notices placed on the allotments asking for plot holders to contact the Clerk with their information was offensive. Cllr Kemp stated that the notices had had to be displayed as the allotment information was scattered and incomplete. The list of addresses had no allotment numbers next to them, or contact numbers/email addresses so putting up notices on each site meant that all current allotment holders would be able to inform the Clerk of which plot they were on.
- Allotment rents. Mr Moore asked how the rents were determined. Cllr Robbins explained that the plot sizes varried so much and that increases had been made previously leaving some plots paying sums such as £10.25 or £19.75 and it had been decided for clarity to round up or down figures such as these to the closest whole number. Cllr Chandler explained that the allotment rents were determined by the rental from the estate.

Cllr South proposed that a letter be sent to all plot holders explaining that the new contract would be withdrawn and also proposed that a working group be put together to reconsider the allotment contract. Seconded by Cllr Sneller. **RECOMMENDED** that the working group, to included members of the Committee and Mr Tom Moore and Mr Gordon Allen, convene at a mutually convenient time and date as soon as possible.

AGREED.

OS/3/15 Apologies

Apologies received from Cllrs Copus and Devine.

OS/4/15 Declarations of interest

None

OS/5/15 Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 23 October 2014

Proposed by Cllr Robbins and seconded by Cllr Kemp that the minutes of the previous meeting were a true record.

RECOMMENDED that the minutes are approved by Council.

OS/6/15 Matters Arising

(a) Skatepark – Cllr Sneller informed members that he is due to meet with Lord Egremont on February. The key issue to be discussed is finding the right site.

(b) Watershed Grant – The Clerk confirmed that the Grant has been received by WSCC and signed off by the County Cllr. A guideline of early February has been given for the release of the funds.

(c) An opportunity for Cllrs to discuss any other matters arising not already included on the agenda. Cllr Sneller informed members that he has sourced the defibrillator cabinets and that he will send through the information to the Clerk for her to place the order. He further mentioned that he had received a quote from Elizabeth Hodgkins for fixing the cabinet and the tap to the Leconfield Hall at a cost of £1,500 which members considered expensive. **NOTED** that the Cllr Kemp had received some paperwork in this regard which he will make available for the next meeting. Cllr Sneller reminded members that the cost for maintenance must be considered.

Cllr South stated that she is investigating the grass cutting at the Horsham Road Cemetery. The current contract with CDC is for 6 cuts per year but it is only being cut 4 times a year. For further discussion.

Cllr South raised the issue of the footpath around the hills. She requested permission to get a working party together to cut the path back and widen it. Proposed by Cllr Sneller and seconded by Cllr Chandler.

AGREED.

OS/7/15 Play Areas

(a) Rosemary Gardens – **NOTED** that the Clerk and Cllr Kemp had met with Greenspan to get the first quote. Greenspan are putting together their paperwork and the quote will be brought back to the next Committee meeting. **NOTED** that Cllr Sneller is making further enquiries with the totem pole.

(b) Hampers Common – **NOTED** that the Clerk and Cllr Kemp are due to undertake a further site visit to discuss quotations for replacement of the play equipment. This matter is ongoing.

OS/8/15 Allotments

Plot 9 as previously minuted in OS/1/15.

Plot 3a to be brought back to the next meeting.

OS/9/15 Hampers Common

A written report from Cllr Devine was read by Cllr Robbins as below:

The following items some of which have already been reported by John's annual inspection (carried out 14/4/2013) need attention.

The redundant and derelict phone box at the entrance of the housing estate needs to be removed

The bus shelter on the Plaistow Road urgently needs roof repairs to prevent further deterioration as the roof is leaking badly.

The bus shelter on the London Road (A283) needs some tiles replacing on the roof which have been dislodged by branches of a tree that are overhanging the roof and therefore should probably be cut back.

The recreational equipment (in addition to the slide that has been damaged by the fallen tree) is in a disgraceful state and needs replacing altogether. It comes in as a very poor second to Rosemary Gardens equipment.

Litter bins are needed adjacent to the bus shelters, seats and play area with proper arrangements put in place for regular emptying

Some of the benches are in poor condition

Horsham Road Cemetery - whilst the boy's grave appears reasonably well maintained the monument is in a pretty shabby state and would be much enhanced by a thorough clean.

ACTION: Quotes to be sought.

OS/10/15 To consider other items at the Chairman's discretion
None.

Meeting closed – 8.47pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Dated.....