

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE HELD ON
THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2015
IN THE TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE AT 7 PM

Cllrs Present: Mr Richard Chandler (Chairman) Apologies: Mr John Robbins
Mr Tony Sneller
Mr Chris Kemp Attending: Town Clerk, Mrs Rebecca Knifton
Mrs Maggie South
Mr Roger Hanauer Members of the Public x 2

Prior to the start of the meeting, as a goodwill gesture, members of the public, Mr Tom Moore and Mr Gordon Allan were invited to sit at the table by the Chairman of the Committee in order to present their public representations.

OS/11/15 Representations by the public
Mr Tom Moore asked if he could address the Committee.

He wished to raise the following comments:

Mr Moore stated that he believed that the previous minutes did not represent what he had said at the meeting in January. He believed that the 3rd bullet point was meaningless, bullet 5 was incorrect as he alleged that all information had been on the computer and that he felt that an apology was still owed to the previous Clerk. Cllr Kemp stated that he wished to dispel the issues that Mr Moore had brought to this, and previous public meetings. He confirmed that whilst there had been a list of Plot Holders in Word on the computer, there had been no way of confirming that the list was correct due to much of the paperwork not being in order and documents having to be located.

Committee Chairman, Cllr Chandler stated that the Council should be man enough to admit that there may have been an error in the assumption that documents were missing. Council Chairman, Cllr Kemp stated that Cllr Chandler had not attended the office and had not seen the confusion that had been left by the previous Clerk. He went on to say that Cllr Chandler should not be apologising for something he knew nothing about. Cllr Kemp went on to confirm that Cllr Chandler had not offered to assist the new Clerk had not seen the disarray she had inherited, leaving this to other Cllrs.

Mr Moore wished it recorded that names and addresses had been available in the office but agreed that a third of the allotment contracts were missing as these were from the time of the previous Clerk, Mr Don Simpson. Cllr Kemp explained that Cllr Pawsey had assisted the Clerk by cross-referencing the list left in the office and that it was clear that there had been no conclusive record of who had paid and whether there were any rents outstanding. Cllr Kemp went on to say that the Council were trying to move forward and that he had heard Mr Moore's list of complaints for more than 10 hours.

Cllrs Sneller and Chandler stated that an apology to the previous Clerk should be decided by the Committee.

The Clerk informed the Chairman of the Committee that Mr Moore had given his public representation for almost 15 minutes and explained that he had exceeded the 3 minute rule.

** Cllr South arrived**

Cllr Sneller shouted at the Clerk and said to her 'how dare you try to hush a member of the public'.

The Clerk told Cllr Sneller that she had addressed the Chairman of the Committee and not him and that she would not be bullied by Cllr Sneller in this manner in the public domain.

She requested to take a 5 minute break.

Upon returning, Cllr Sneller continued to make undermining comments towards the Clerk along with the two members of public who had been allowed by the Chairman to consider themselves as members of the Committee. The Chairman of the Committee did not intervene.

The Clerk stated that she would not continue to suffer such a public display of abuse from Cllr Sneller for simply doing her job.

Cllr Sneller, along with the two members of the public attempted to reprimand the Clerk for carrying out her role. The Chairman of the Committee did not intervene. Both Cllrs Hanauer and Kemp attempted to bring order to the meeting and defended the Clerk.

The Clerk stated that there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct.

The Clerk requested that she leave the meeting as she would not put up with anymore abuse from Cllr Sneller.

** The Clerk left the meeting at 7.20pm – Cllr South was nominated to take notes **

There was a continued discussion in defence of the Clerk and Cllr Kemp from Cllr Hanauer which, upon request, will remain unminuted at this time.

Cllr Kemp agreed that the initial point raised by Mr Moore had not been presented.

AGREED that Cllrs Kemp and Chandler will discuss a draft letter to the previous Clerk after the meeting.

Cllr Sneller proposed that the amendments to the minutes made by member of the public and ex-Finance Committee Chairman of the Council, Mr Allan be accepted and recorded. There was no seconder and no resolution so the minutes stand.

Cllr Chandler acknowledged that there may be people who interpreted the fact that the records issue was in a mess which in reflection, he believed was hasty.

NOTED that neither Cllrs Sneller or Chandler, as acknowledged, had been in the office assisting the Clerk and other Cllrs when it had been agreed that due to incomplete information, the decision to place notices at each allotment asking for contact details had been agreed.

Mr Moore and Cllr Kemp examined the file lists.

Cllr Chandler stated that everyone in the room wanted the best outcome. He suggested that an amendment to the minutes should have stated ‘a list of all ploholders, plot numbers, rents, names and addresses existed’. Proposed by Cllr Sneller and seconded by Cllr South.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve this amendment.

Cllr Chandler thanked Mr Moore and Mr Allan for their help and concern.

**** The public left****

Cllr Kemp reiterated that the information on the computer conflicted with all other information held and therefore the process of classification had been essential.

AGREED that Cllr's Chandler and Hanauer will draft a letter to the previous Clerk explaining that there was no intention of causing embarrassment or hurt. The draft will be emailed to the full Council on Monday the 16th of February. Cllr Kemp to speak with the Clerk regarding due process for discussing and agreeing the letter.

OS/12/15 Apologies for absence
Not noted.

OS/13/15 Declarations of interest
There were no declarations of Pecuniary and non-Pecuniary interests in relation to any items included on the agenda for this meeting in accordance with **THE LOCALISM ACT 2011** and the **Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012** Noted.

OS/14/15 Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 15 January 2015.
Not resolved due to public participation.

OS/15/15 Matters arising that are not already included in this agenda
(a) Skatepark - Cllr Kemp asked for the word 'park' not to be used since the implications of this are open to interpretation. A 'facility for skating' might be better. Cllr Hanauer reported that he is in contact with 2 young people from the centre who are willing to open discussion on designs and get comments. Cllr Sneller asked for it to be noted that the concerns about the facility comes from the Trustees.

Cllr Kemp explained that as a result of the vandalism in the toilets, the police and a representative from CDC are prepared to work with the young people and perhaps alleviate some of the concerns of the Sylvia Beaufoy staff and Trustees. Cllr Hanauer asked for a different approach in terms of 'ownership' and to work with the young people involved. Cllr Sneller agreed.

Cllr Chandler said there is no alternative site currently available so PTC needs to try to progress the discussion.

Cllr Sneller said that Hampers Green should still be in the offer. Cllr Chandler emphasised the concerns of the Hampers Green residents.

Cllr Hanauer circulated the drawings of what could be possible for £60k.

The matter is ongoing.

(b) De-fib – the cabinets have arrived. The positioning at the Hampers Green Centre had been decided and an electrician has been sourced. Cllr Sneller is dealing with obtaining a quote. As the works have already been agreed so it will not have to go back to the F&GP Committee.

BT have confirmed that there is still electricity to the phone box on Grove Lane so this option can be progressed.

The planning application for the Leconfield Hall has been submitted. The Petworth Society are donating £500 towards the box.

(c) Footpath around the hills – no progress to date due to bad weather. Cllr Robbins to experiment with wild flower meadow poppies.

(d) An opportunity for Cllrs to discuss any other matters arising not already included on the agenda – Anne Bradley had asked Cllr Sneller's permission to plant snowdrops around the boy's grave at Horsham Road Cemetery.
AGREED

OS/16/15 Play Areas

(a) Rosemary Gardens – a proposal from Greenspan had been received which has been specifically designed for Petworth. The quote is £33k. Cllr Kemp has put a call out for grants.

PTC should still consider the quote from Nick Sneller.

A tender will be drafted by the Clerk. The matter is ongoing.

(b) Hampers Common:

- Bus shelter – Cllr Kemp is writing a brief on what repairs needs doing. The Clerk will then obtain quotes. Naldrett to be instructed to clean up.
- Play park quote – due to be received.
- Phone box – letter to be sent to Hampers Green representatives to ask if they would like to take responsibility for it. Cllr Sneller will draft the letter. Responses will be brought back to the next meeting on the 12th of March.
- Litter bins – **ACTION:** The Clerk to speak to CDC to request installing new ones. The Clerk has spoken to CDC regarding the bin emptying on ‘round the hills’ and Hampers Common. Unfortunately, due to the breach of the code of conduct by Cllr Sneller, the Clerk had left the meeting and could not report.

OS/17/15 Allotments

- To discuss Grove Lane Plot 3A – **AGREED** that the tenant has breached the rules. Cllr Chandler proposed to take the case to full Council.
- To discuss and make recommendations to the proposed allotment contracts – **AGREED** that the contract approved by the committee in November is now void. PTC has a copy of the old contract which will now be sent out to all ploholders. Cllr Kemp proposed that should there be any profits from the rents, these will be ringfenced for allotment expenditure only.
- Health & Safety – the amended rules refer to a Health & Safety Policy. Cllr Sneller circulated the policy which had been agreed by PTC in 1999. Appendix 1 was out of date. The Policy will be reviewed. Cllr Sneller explained how the policy should work with a hazard assessment. Cllr Kemp confirmed that there is now a hazard assessment on the new Asset Register. The Policy and the Asset Register need to be tied together. **ACTION:** a review process will be started by the next meeting. Cllr Sneller will report.

OS/18/15 To consider other items at the Chairman’s discretion

Cllr Kemp asked Cllr Chandler as to the progress of the seat at Rosemary Gardens which had been taken away for repair in summer 2014. **ACTION:** Cllr Chandler to deal.

Meeting closed – 9.35pm

Signed.....
Chairman

Dated.....