

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS AND LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2008 AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SIMPSON CENTRE, STOTFOLD**

---

Committee Members present: Mrs M Cooper (Chairman)  
Mrs S Bundock Mrs A Clarey  
B Collier S Hayes  
B Saunders L Stoter

Also present: The Clerk

---

**5603. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Cooper, Mrs Lewin and Mrs Hyde.

**5604. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS**

There were no disclosures of Members interests.

**5605. TO DISCUSS ANY MATTERS RELATING TO THE MULTI USE GAMES AREA**

There were no matters relating to the Multi Use Games Area to report.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**5606. General work to be carried out (see minute 5566)**

Steve Dear has advised that prior to commencing the work to reduce the height of the shrubs on the corner of The Green he found that birds had started to nest. He will now not be able to commence work until 25<sup>th</sup> June, subject to there being no remaining nesting birds.

**5607. To consider the amended quotation from Century Street and Leisure Ltd to repair the skate ramps and purchase and fix a new grind rail (see minute 5572)**

The works to repair the skate ramps and purchase of a new grind rail have been carried out. Their quotation received was for £1,765 plus vat, however their invoice was at a lower cost of £1,704 plus vat.

**5608. To discuss any matters relating to the Multi Use Games Area (see minute 5603)**

Mr Summerfield is considering other options for securing the lighting box.

**5609. Discussion with representative of Teasel on access to Centenary Wood (see minute 5604)**

Teasel has not yet advised of a date for an on-site meeting at Centenary Wood to discuss an alternative access into the wood. It was thought that title deeds relating to Centenary Wood may be in the Council's archives, which might show the boundary line. A copy of the appropriate map will be forwarded to Teasel.

**5610. Open Space Bovis Homes – Heron Way/Waters End (see minute 5607)**

Another chasing letter has been sent to Bovis Homes in regard to continuing with the adoption of the land.

**5611. Lights on The Green – Confident Communities Fund (see minute 5610)**

Information from PC Ryan on problems with youths congregating in the darker areas of The Green has

been forwarded to County Highways, as has a copy of the map showing where the new lights should be situated, and a copy of a letter and petition supporting the provision of extra lighting in the area in regard to nuisance youths. Dave Rollings has provided appropriate information on problems with youths in the area, and this has also been passed on to County Highways.

**5612. To receive a quotation from Terry Seymour re MUGA lights (see minute 5612)**

Mr Seymour has again been chased for his quotation for security grills for the new floodlights.

**5613. Danfo service agreement and repairs on the public conveniences in Brook Street (see minute 5613)**

Danfo have carried out the required repairs and first service on the public conveniences in Brook Street. They are now up and running, a notice to this effect has been posted on our website and Mrs Stevens the cleaner has been advised and thanked for her patience.

**5614. Teasel – update on path and ditch beside Mill View development (see minute 5615)**

Investigations have found that the land where the Leylandii trees have been planted is not in the ownership of the developers Bryant Homes as their land stops at the footpath, which suggests that it belongs to the resident who planted the trees. We would therefore not be able to remove the trees from her property. The Clerk will obtain a copy of the plans for the Mill View development to ascertain the ownership and boundary line, and further investigate using documents kept in our archives.

A letter was sent to Teasel to explain that it would be inadvisable to take further action until we have established who owns the land on which the trees are planted. They have now been advised of the information from Bryant Homes.

The Bedfordshire and River Ivel Drainage Board have been asked what their intentions are with regard to the condition of the drainage ditch, and also about the general maintenance of the length of the River Ivel in regard to dredging. They advise that they plan to weed cut the River Ivel in the Stotfold area during 2008/9 and are in discussions with the Environment Agency regarding the use of their weed cutting boat. Once they have completed the weed cutting operation they will review the depths of silt and respective levels to make an informed judgement as to the need for dredging. This will be added to the future annual programme as necessary.

With regard to the drainage ditch on the edge of the Mill View development, the accumulation of rubbish and litter are the responsibility of the landowner. If there are any large items in the watercourse which are significantly restricting flow, then they can assist in their removal from the watercourse and place them on the bank for the landowner to remove.

A letter has been sent to Teasel to advise that this Committee does not intend on taking any action at this time regarding cyclists using the footpath at the rear of the Mill View development.

**5615. To consider a report by Miss P Aldridge regarding the bridleway from Hitchin Road to Arlesey (see minute 5617)**

A letter has been sent to Trevor Saunders of the Local Development Framework Team at the District Council to advise that the maps being used for the site allocations consultation are not up to date. Miss Aldridge has been advised as such. It appears that the maps being used by the County Council are also not up to date.

**5616. To consider purchasing a replacement notice board for The Green (see minute 5620)**

Mr Summerfield has been asked to construct and put in place a replacement notice board for The Green.

**5617. General work to be carried out (see minute 5622)**

Mr Summerfield, Mr Golder, County Highways and the District Council have been asked to carry out work as per the above minute. County Highways are to be chased on carrying out hedge cutting works on Hitchin Road towards the Fairfield estate.

A letter has been sent to the Mill Preservation Trust to thank them for their hard work on a successful Mill Weekend.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**5618. Amey – Footway surfacing patching works**

Correspondence has been received to advise that Amey will be carrying out patching works on the footway outside the car sales showroom on Arlesey Road during August. They will be closing the traffic lights and using their own four way system. Works should take no more than two days. The Clerk will advise on the exact dates for the works in due course.

**5619. Bedfordshire County Council – Proposed Traffic Regulation Order – Brook Street & High Street**

Correspondence has been received to advise that the County Council have published notice of its intention to make a Traffic Regulation Order to maintain access into Brook Street Service Road by introducing No Waiting At Any Time on part of Brook Street and High Street, Stotfold. This is as a result of the ‘yellow-line audit’ carried out by Councillor Cooper and the Clerk.

**5620. The following items of correspondence can be obtained from the Clerk**

- Open Space Summer 2008 – Volume 29, No 2
- Open Spaces Society Annual Report & Accounts 2007
- CPRE – Fieldwork – June 2008
- Bedfordshire Matters, Issue no. 42 Spring/Summer 2008
- Commentree – Summer 2008

**5621. TO RECEIVE A REPORT AT THE MEETING FROM COUNCILLOR MRS BUNDOCK ON HER MEETING WITH JOHN SHORTLAND FROM COUNTY HIGHWAYS REGARDING THE WAY THEY PRIORITISE ROAD SURFACING**

The meeting with Mr Shortland was attended by Councillors Mrs Bundock and Mrs Cooper. He was given a copy of the survey of Stotfold’s roads and footways carried out by Councillor Mrs Bundock. With regard to the way they prioritise road surfacing works, there are rules set by Government which they have to follow, and if these rules aren’t followed, they won’t receive extra funding for road works. This shortfall would have to come out of the Council Tax and is approximately £4million. Roads are resurfaced on their classification, i.e. A, B or C roads. Smaller estate roads take priority. Regent Street is currently a class C road, and was completely resurfaced approximately 8 to 10 years ago, however the County Council is looking into the possibility of declassifying it so that resurfacing might be able to take place in the next year or so. County Highways will continue to carry out patching works on the road in the meanwhile. There was a concern that declassifying the road would prevent it being salted in the winter, but it will remain on the salting programme as it is on a bus route.

In response to a question put to Mr Shortland on how much input Highways have when developers don’t carry out the works as per Highways’ plans, they advised that they don’t much have influence as this is down to the planning department.

Councillors Mrs Bundock and Mrs Cooper also asked Mr Shortland for an explanation on why some roundabouts are four arm and others are five arm. Apparently this depends on how much room there is

to expand the roundabout, and whether there would be sufficient room for traffic to weave through the roundabout system. For example, Norton Road roundabout has sufficient space around it to expand to five arms; the Hitchin Road roundabout does not.

A discussion ensued regarding the flow of traffic on the roundabouts into Stotfold, as there are large queues during busy periods, and it was:

**Resolved** that a letter be sent to County Highways to suggest that part time traffic lights be installed on the Norton Road, Hitchin Road and Arlesey Road roundabouts. Investigations should be made by County Highways as to the busiest times, however it is suggested that the lights are operational from between 7am and 9am, and 5pm and 6.30pm.

**5622. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MRS COOPER ON HER MEETING WITH A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LIGHTING DEPARTMENT OF COUNTY HIGHWAYS REGARDING THEIR PLANS FOR UPDATING LAMPS IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS**

Councillor Mrs Cooper reported that she had met with Piyush Pagariya, Graduate Engineer from County Highways and a member of Highways Lighting Maintenance team on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May. She reminded the representatives of our submission for the Confident Communities Fund, and asked them to liaise with Dave Rollings, Community Safety Officer at the District Council, regarding the statement that the County Council will fund extra lamps at The Green between the crossroads junction of Regent Street and Common Road, as per Councillor Mrs Cooper's drawing submitted with the Confident Communities Fund application.

The representatives were reminded of our request for a new street lamp in the footway running parallel to the main roadway section of Mowbray Crescent and Regent Street (minute 5551). They were asked to carry out safety checks on all leaning lamp posts within the town, e.g. B53 Regent Street, and on Hitchin Road opposite Brainch Stores.

A request was made to number the lamp posts in the Hitchin Road underpass to help with reporting non working lamps, also to give attention to a lamp which is not working on the cycleway/footpath in the same underpass.

Mr Pagariya advised that a bulk lamp change where all bulbs and tubes will be replaced is to be carried out on County Council maintained street lamps during the 2009/10 financial year. There is no planned replacement of old lamps in the work programme, only if one is hit by a car, or if it would not be cost effective to repair one. They will also investigate the condition of the lamps on the Highbush estate as they are the very old mercury type lanterns.

**5623. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MRS COOPER ON HER MEETING WITH CLIFF ANDREWS, COUNTRYSIDE LEADER OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITIES CHARITY'S IVEL VALLEY LINEAR COUNTRY PARK REGARDING THE HISTORY OF THE KINGFISHER WAY AND WHAT THEIR LONG TERM MAINTENANCE PLANS ARE FOR IT**

The meeting with Mr Andrews on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June was attended by Councillors Mrs Cooper and Mrs Hyde, as she is well versed in footpaths around the town and has carried out previous footpath exercises.

Councillors Mrs Cooper and Mrs Hyde began by outlining the problems with planted shrubs and trees adjacent to the Kingfisher Way where it goes behind the Mill View development in Queen Street, and undertook a site visit along the section of the Kingfisher Way between Mill Lane and Baldock Road.

Cliff Andrews has little definitive paperwork in his office regarding the boundary, width or maintenance of the Kingfisher Way. He shared our concerns regarding the planted conifers, and will contact the County Council to find out more information dating back to 1998 when the Kingfisher Way was set up. He believes the land would probably be the responsibility of the developers until they finish building on the site. He would then expect them to offer back the footpath and area beside the drainage ditch to the District Council, who would then probably want to pass it on to the Town Council, or the County Council as they are responsible for rights of way. He will also contact the Ivel Internal Drainage Board as the drainage ditch could well be their responsibility.

**5624. TO CONSIDER THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S POLICY NOTE ON QUIET LANES IN BEDFORDSHIRE, WITH A VIEW TO PUTTING FORWARD SUGGESTIONS FOR QUIET LANES IN STOTFOLD**

A copy of the Policy Note was circulated to Members and explained the County Council's desired outcomes of Quiet Lanes, together with how to identify potential Quiet Lanes:

- Routes with less than 400 vehicular movements per day
- Routes where traffic speeds are already relatively low compared to the maximum speed limit
- Routes that are connected to one or more routes of a similar nature
- Routes that are connected to one or more public rights of way
- Routes that are distinctively 'rural' in character

The County Council advise that there is no funding for this scheme, but approach they would like to follow would be

- To allow verges to grow out as a way of calming traffic speeds
- Replace larger road signs with smaller, wooden road signs
- Install false cattle grids
- Carry out surface treatment using alternative road surfacing to asphalt and concrete

Members gave the matter due consideration and it was:

**Recommended** that Malthouse Lane, Mill Lane, Taylor's Road and Astwick Road be put forward as suggested Quiet Lanes to County Highways.

**5625. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATED QUOTATION FOR PAINTING THE HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND CHANGING ROOMS FROM MR SUMMERFIELD AT £450 LABOUR. MATERIALS ARE ESTIMATED TO BE IN THE REGION OF £150**

**Resolved** that the quotation for painting the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground Changing Rooms from Mr Summerfield in the sum of £450 labour, and estimated £150 materials be accepted, with work commencing before the start of the football season.

Mr Summerfield has reported that two of the four showers in the changing room are broken, and Mr Cave the plumber has recommended that they be replaced.

**Resolved** that a quotation for purchasing and installing the two showers which require replacing be obtained, together with a separate quote for replacing all four shower units, these quotes will be presented at the next meeting of this Committee.

**5626. TO CONSIDER PURCHASING A REPLACEMENT TENNIS NET WINDER FOR THE MUGA AT A COST OF £78.65 PLUS DELIVERY AND VAT**

**Resolved** that a replacement tennis net winder for the MUGA at a cost of £78.65 plus delivery and vat be purchased from the MUGA maintenance and repairs budget.

**5627. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM CIRCUS RICARDO TO USE THE GREEN FOR A CIRCUS SHOW WITH DOMESTIC ANIMALS FOR FOUR NIGHTS (FIVE DAYS)**

To allow maximum time between events on The Green it is suggested that they either straddle the weekend of the 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> August or use the week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> August.

**Resolved** that

- i) Circus Ricardo be permitted to use The Green for a circus show, but advise that the only available dates are either to straddle the weekend of the 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> August or to use the week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> August.
- ii) The Junior Football Club are to be made aware of all fair/circus booking dates throughout the year.

**5628. TO CONSIDER CONTINUING TO HAVE CCTV AT THE MUGA FACILITY, IN VIEW OF THE HIGH COSTS INVOLVED IN MAINTENANCE AND REPLACEMENTS**

Members were provided with Police arrest numbers in areas covered by CCTV. Extracts from a newspaper report on CCTV was read to Members and included ‘...Police also say that while CCTV is a valuable tool for investigating crime, footage rarely secures a conviction on its own..... Image quality can be a problem..... When it comes to bringing a case to court, prosecutors, as a general rule, prefer eye witnesses’.

It was also pointed out that on the benefits side, as well as helping to secure convictions, in the case of the MUGA, CCTV is also very useful to show what happened in case of an accident at the facility. The CCTV cameras themselves are also a visible deterrent to crime and vandalism.

After lengthy and careful consideration it was:

**Recommended** that the provision of CCTV at the MUGA is continued.

**5629. IF IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CCTV BE CONTINUED AT THE MUGA FACILITY, TO RECEIVE TWO QUOTATIONS FROM GROUP 4 TECHNOLOGY TO UPGRADE THE CCTV RECORDING EQUIPMENT (£1,979 PLUS VAT), AND TO REPLACE A FAULTY CAMERA AND IMPROVE THE RECORDING QUALITY OF THE EXISTING CAMERAS AT THE MUGA (£605 PLUS VAT)**

Group 4 advise that to keep the costs down and to try and improve the recording quality, we need to replace the existing VHS recorder with a digital recording system, replace one very poor quality black and white camera and reposition and refocus the other cameras, adjusting the angle they point at to get a better picture. It is hoped that some of the repositioned/refocused cameras will view people vandalising the lighting box and fencing to the side of the gate.

The reason youths continue to target the MUGA is that they know that although we have CCTV, we have generally been unable to assist the Police by providing good quality footage to catch the perpetrators. By improving the quality of the recording equipment and cameras this may now change.

After careful consideration it was:

**Recommended** that the quotation to upgrade the CCTV recording equipment not be accepted at this time, but that quotation to improve the quality of the existing cameras and replacement of one camera in the sum of £605 plus vat be accepted, and replacement VHS tapes be purchased to help improve recording quality, funds for both are to come from the MUGA maintenance and repairs budget.

**5630. TO CONSIDER THE FREQUENCY OF GRASS CUTTING FOR OLIVER'S LANE, NOW THAT IT HAS BEEN SEEDED**

Mr Golder has carried out the first cut with no problems with stones or rubble, at a cost of £19, and has now asked how often the new grass should be cut. He has recommended that it be cut on a monthly basis to keep the grass and weed levels in check.

**Resolved** that the newly seeded grass in Oliver's Lane is cut by Mr Golder on a monthly basis, funds to come from the Open Spaces maintenance and repairs budget.

A discussion ensued regarding various overgrown hedging at the Church Road end of Oliver's Lane which impedes pedestrian access. It appears that some of this overhang is from a property in Home Close.

**Resolved** that

- i) Mr Golder be asked to provide a quotation for cutting back the scrub to the boundary of Oliver's Lane, and to use any substantial cuttings to strengthen the boundary line. Councillor Mrs Cooper is to meet with Mr Golder on site to establish exactly which areas of the Lane require cutting back.
- ii) Once ownership has been established, residents of properties with hedging overhanging into Oliver's Lane are to be respectfully asked to cut it back.

**5631. TO DISCUSS MATTERS RELATING TO ANY LIGHTING ISSUES AROUND THE TOWN**

**Resolved** that the following be reported to County Highways:

- Number 6 in Roe Close is not working.
- A replacement lamp (no number) has been sited next to its older counterpart. It appears that the lamp has not yet been connected, but neighbouring residents advise that they were told it would take 10 weeks to completely install the lamp, this was 13 weeks ago.
- Lamp numbers 2, 4 and 6 in Pix Road are not working.
- Number 1 in Highbush Road, nearest to Pix Road is not working.
- The lighting around Roe Close/Pix Road in general is not good. There are concerns about lack of lighting in the link footpath from Roe Close to Coppice Mead.

**5632. GENERAL WORK TO BE CARRIED OUT AS ADVISED BY MEMBERS AT THIS MEETING**

**Resolved** that the following works be carried out:

**Mr Summerfield**

- Fill the pothole forming at the entrance to the Brook Street car park.
- Patches in the grass on The Green have recently appeared, investigate and re-seed if necessary.

### **County Highways**

- A pothole is forming at the Hitchin Road end of Hallworth Drive.
- The road surface close to 165 and 167 Hitchin Road, between the main drive and roundabout at the most southern end of Fairfield Park, is breaking up. This section of road was not resurfaced when the road was re-aligned by the developers. The water builds up at the drain considerably when it rains. The surface adjacent to the drain cover is also broken away.

It was reported that the hedge running along the footpath between the top end of Coppice Mead where it leads into the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground is seriously overhanging the footpath. It is thought this belongs to the resident at number 44 Coppice Mead.

**Resolved** that the resident at number 44 Coppice Mead respectfully be requested to cut back the overhanging hedge along the footpath between Coppice Mead and the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground.

### **5633. ANY OTHER ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY**

Members were advised that the Tractor Shed at the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground had recently been broken into again. Quotations have been received from security door companies who can manufacture a suitable door to fit. These quotations will be presented at the next meeting of this Committee.

A book entitled 'Growing in the Community' is available to purchase at £15 for Local Government Association members. It is a useful guide for allotment officers providing an update on the current policy framework, legislation and good practice affecting allotment gardening. Consideration of the purchase of this book will be on the agenda for the next meeting of this Committee.

There being no further relevant business the meeting was declared closed at 8.25pm

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATED**