

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS AND LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9TH JULY 2008 AT 7.45PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SIMPSON CENTRE, STOTFOLD

Committee Members present: Mrs M Cooper (Chairman)
Mrs S Bundock Mrs A Clarey
A Cooper S Hayes
Mrs J Hyde B Saunders
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Also present: The Clerk

5634. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Mrs Lewin and Collier.

5635. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Councillor Mrs Hyde declared an interest in the item pertaining to Stotfold Co-operative Smallholding Ltd's request regarding a chain link fence.

5636. TO DISCUSS ANY MATTERS RELATING TO THE MUGA

During the evening of Monday 20th June vandals smashed two of the floodlight glass panes, and also removed and smashed an infrared filter from one of the CCTV camera units. This was part of a vandalism spree at the Riverside Playing Field, as one of the benches was also pulled out of the ground (this will be re-fixed by Mr Summerfield), lots of broken glass around the skate park and bmx track, attempts at punching holes through the metal sheeting on the skate park ½ pipe (the metal pole used to do this has been found), bricks, branches and glass thrown into the MUGA itself (the caretaker has removed the debris). The incident and damages have been reported to the Police and they have removed the CCTV tape for that evening in the hope that they will be able to identify the perpetrators. Group 4 have been asked for a quote to replace the smashed infrared unit, and Century Street and Leisure for the damaged skate ramp, following which the insurance company will be advised in the hope that a claim can be made.

Resolved that the Clerk be authorised to proceed with an insurance claim for the infrared camera unit and the damaged ½ pipe skate ramp.

MATTERS ARISING

5637. To consider a request from the Stotfold Festival Committee to use The Green and the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground during this year's Stotfold Festival Week (see minute 5548)

The organisers of the Festival Week have thanked the Committee for allowing the use of the Recreation Ground for the Festival Fete. They raised over £1,000 for Keech Cottage Children's Hospice at the Fete, and together with contributions from School concerts and other organisations they have raised a total of over £1,500. A letter will be sent to Colin Phelps, organiser of Festival Week to congratulate them on a wonderful effort and that we are glad they used the recreation grounds for their Fete.

5638. General work to be carried out (see minute 5606)

Steve Dear has advised that there are no birds nesting in the shrubs on the corner of The Green, and has now carried out the work to reduce them in height.

5639. Discussion with representative of Teasel on access to Centenary Wood (see minute 5609)

Teasel are meeting with Cliff Andrews, Countryside Team Leader for BRCC, and Councillors Mrs Bundock and Mrs Hyde on site to discuss an alternative access into the wood, on Friday 11th July, 10am. The access to Centenary Wood must be via our land and not cross over neighbouring land. As has already been explained to Teasel it is our wish that they provide a wide access and use our spare wooden five bar gate, which is to be kept locked. A gap, rather than a kissing gate, should be allowed for pedestrian access, and be wide enough for mobility scooters and prams. In time, consideration should be given to the possibility of erecting an information board at the Wood.

5640. Open Space Bovis Homes – Heron Way/Waters End (see minute 5610)

Yet another chasing letter has been sent to Bovis Homes in regard to continuing with the adoption of the land. Mr Hammond had to be re-reminded of the case as he is now the only person dealing with these types of matters, and advises that he will re-look at the file. The recent District Council Site Allocations document shows that Mr Owens, who previously claimed that he had right of way over the triangular piece of land, has now submitted the area of land in his ownership to the rear of the triangle as a possible site for future development. This also includes the strip of land over which he claims he has right of way. The information has been passed to Bovis Homes.

5641. To receive a quotation from Terry Seymour re MUGA lights (see minute 5612)

Mr Seymour advises that the company who provided the new floodlights do not make grilles. We may have to look at having bespoke ones made. It was felt that a complaint should be made to the floodlight company as they were supposed to be vandal proof. Councillor Mrs Hyde will investigate who produced the grilles for the Church lights and provide the information to the Clerk.

5642. Teasel – update on path and ditch beside Mill View development (see minute 5614)

Plans held in our archives show that the developer's ownership and boundary line includes the footpath and most of the ditch area. Another letter has been sent to the developers to point this out. As no response has been received the Clerk will advise the developers that the offending Leylandii trees will be removed by this Council, as previously agreed, if we don't hear back from them with an objection to this action, within two weeks.

5643. To consider a report by Miss P Aldridge regarding the bridleway from Hitchin Road to Arlesey (see minute 5615)

A representative of the Local Development Framework Team has responded to our letter pointing out that the maps being used for the site allocations consultations are not up to date. She advises that the maps used by the District Council do not have the copyright licence to show Rights of Way on published maps. This is held by the County Council.

The maps used by the District Council are provided by Ordnance Survey and are the most up to date maps available of this type. The maps used for the Site Allocations consultation are for indicative purposes only and were chosen for the reason that they needed to be easy to read, and the location of the proposed sites needed to be easily identifiable. This was achieved by using a map which clearly showed street names and labelled other recognisable features such as recreation grounds, allotments, schools, etc. The base map layer that was used highlights existing features on the ground and this includes all tracks and paths regardless of their status. Showing all of the planning constraints in Stotfold would have resulted in the map being overloaded with information

and very complicated for members of the public to read. With parish documents, more detailed maps have been used and Rights of Way have been highlighted in the text where they pose a potential constraint on a proposed site.

With regard to the comment concerning Bridleway 12, they will pass this is to the County Council's Rights of Way Officer.

5644. General work to be carried out (see minute 5617)

County Highways have been chased regarding cutting back the hedge on Hitchin Road towards Fairfield estate, but advise that they won't be cutting any hedging until the end of July due to the nesting period. The Clerk will chase Highways again as we are now in the middle of July and will query whether this work will also include the adjacent grass verge and nettles.

5645. To consider purchasing a replacement notice board for The Green (see minute 5620)

Mr Summerfield has constructed and erected the new notice board for The Green, and it is now being used. He has also trimmed back the low hedging beneath the notice board for easier access. Final costs for the materials and construction of the notice board were £143.69, this is slightly over the agreed cost as a sign writing company had to be used for the Stotfold Town Council wording rather than paint stenciling.

5646. To receive a report from Councillor Mrs Bundock on her meeting with John Shortland from County Highways (see minute 5621)

In response to our letter suggesting that part time traffic lights be installed on the three roundabouts surrounding Stotfold, County Highways have advised that in November 2007 they carried out a review of safety and congestion issues on the A507. Of the ten roundabouts, eight have at least one entry that is operating close to capacity at some time during the day. As for the three roundabouts serving Stotfold, Hitchin Road (pm peak from A1) and Norton Road (am and pm peak, most entries) were identified as being close to capacity.

County Highways will be delivering a package of measures over the next few years to address safety and congestion issues along the A507, with safety issues (which mainly affect the A507 west of Ampthill) taking priority.

The introduction of traffic lights (part time or full time) to roundabouts is only of value on large roundabouts. The A507 roundabouts are well below the size where traffic lights would be permitted or effective.

When Councillor Mrs Bundock next meets with a Highways representative she will again put forward the suggestion of traffic lights on the three roundabouts.

5647. To receive a report from Councillor Mrs Cooper on her meeting with Cliff Andrews, Countrywide Leader of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity regarding the history of the Kingfisher Way and what their long term maintenance plans are for it (see minute 5623)

Cliff Andrews has enquired of Andrew Gwillam, County Community Paths Officer, the situation with regard to the footpath number 5 – between the old Baldock Road and Mill Lane, and received the following response:

1. What is the legal width of this footpath?

This section of the path does not have a recorded width in the Definitive Map Statement. This means that any width used for a length of time becomes the width. If the building site had been a

wide track for years (before the development) then the width accepted would be the width of the used track e.g. 3 – 4 metres. As the development was previously an arable field it would have had a field edge path width of 1.5 metres max – take this as the width in the top section now.

2. Where is this width measured from? The new fence on the development side or bank top of the ditch; or is it the width that the developer has surfaced (approx 1.5 metres – 1.8 metres)?

The width is measured from the centre of the Definitive Line, i.e. 75cm from the centre of the line to each side.

3. Who owns the land on which the footpath runs – presumably the developer?

The developer or the household or even in some cases the parish depending on title deeds.

4. Is this path on the SVC programme? (near the southern end, as well as nettles, etc, overhanging hawthorn means you have to duck to walk the path)

Yes the entire length is on. Nick Angell is on the job as I write so it should be done by now.

Any further questions regarding the legal line/width of the route are to be directed to Andrew Gwillam.

5648. 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 (see minute 5624)

Malthouse Lane, Mill Lane, Taylor's Road and Astwick Road have been put forward as suggested Quiet Lanes. No feedback has been received. It was pointed out that County Councillor Saunders has recently attempted to have the hedging cut back in Mill Lane as in that particular area it is a health and safety issue for pedestrians and cyclists using the Lane. Hedging does need regular cutting back to keep it in a good condition.

5649. To receive an updated quotation for painting the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground Changing Rooms (see minute 5625)

Mr Summerfield has painted the changing rooms; however, Mr Cave is yet to submit a quotation to replace the two broken shower units, and a separate one for replacing all four shower units, in the changing rooms. He will be chased again.

5650. To consider purchasing a replacement tennis net winder for the MUGA at a cost of £78.65 plus delivery and vat (see minute 5626)

A replacement tennis net winder for the MUGA has been purchased.

5651. To consider a request from Circus Ricardo to use The Green for a circus show (see minute 5627)

Circus Ricardo have been advised of the suggested dates during August, but no confirmation of their booking has been received to date.

5652. To receive two quotations from Group 4 Technology to upgrade the CCTV recording equipment, and to replace a faulty camera and improve the recording quality of the existing cameras at the MUGA (see minute 5629)

Group 4 will shortly be asked to improve the quality of the existing cameras and replace one camera in the sum of £605 plus vat. Replacement VHS tapes will also be ordered.

5653. To consider the frequency of grass cutting for Oliver's Lane (see minute 5630)

Mr Golder is to provide a quotation for cutting back the scrub to the boundary of Oliver's Lane.

Councillor Mrs Cooper has established which areas of the Lane require cutting back. Owners of properties with hedging overhanging into Oliver's Lane will be respectfully requested to put the matter in hand and have the hedging cut back. Mr Summerfield will remove the overhanging brambles as a matter of urgency for health and safety reasons.

5654. Works advised in minutes 5631 and 5632

Faulty street lighting and works for Mr Summerfield and County Highways as per the above minutes have been reported/carried out.

CORRESPONDENCE

5655. The following items of correspondence can be obtained from the Clerk

- International Tree Foundation – Trees are News Summer 2008
- Countryside Voice – Summer 2008

5656. Play Rangers – use of The Green

The District Council's new Play Rangers have requested use of The Green for 30th July and 20th August to provide free play provision for children and young people in Stotfold. Their aim is to help children and young people to overcome their fears about playing in the public domain and to encourage them to gradually become more independent and experience free play within their own neighbourhoods. Due to the timescales involved the Clerk has taken executive action and confirmed that it is acceptable for the Play Rangers to use The Green on the requested dates. The Clerk has checked their health and safety procedures and that the events will be properly supervised and marshalled.

Resolved that the executive action taken by the Clerk in authorising the use of The Green by Play Rangers be so approved.

5657. Football Pitch Request – Baldock Cannon FC

A request has been made by Baldock Cannon FC to use the football pitch on the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground on Wednesday 30th July 6pm kick off, Saturday 2nd August 2pm or 3pm kick off and Wednesday 13th August 6pm kick off. A discussion ensued regarding the fact that the white pitch lines will not have been marked out by the requested dates.

Resolved that Baldock Cannon FC be permitted to use the football pitch on the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground on the above dates, but to be advised that there will be no pitch markings and therefore they will be charged half the usual hiring rates.

5658. TO CONSIDER PURCHASING ANTI-CLIMB PAINT AND APPROPRIATE SIGNAGE TO BE USED ON THE MUGA FENCING, CCTV AND FLOODLIGHTING POSTS

Following recent vandalism we have been advised by the Police to fit some sort of anti climb equipment to the poles and MUGA fencing. Brief investigations have found that this may turn out to be quite expensive as anti climb spikes may need to be custom made and we would require a large number of them. An alternative cheaper method is to use anti climb paint. To ensure we are legally covered under insurance and to ensure we comply with the Occupiers Liability Act 1984 we must only use the correct anti climb paint and NOT grease. We are also required to erect signs notifying that the paint is being used.

Costs obtained:

1 tin of 5L black anti climb paint	£24.95
1 tin of 5L grey anti climb paint	£34.60
Rigid plastic anti climb sign	£3.50 each (suggest for MUGA fencing)
Self-adhesive anti climb sign	£4 - £5 each (suggest for poles)

If painting the anti climb material on the fencing we are required to place the rigid signs at 3 metre intervals with the paint being at a height of above 2.5 metres to prevent accidental contamination. The same height requirement applies for the poles. All anti climb paint is non toxic and lasts approximately two years before requiring a re-coat. The grease currently on the fence and poles can be painted over with the anti climb paint.

If we were to apply the paint on the fencing we would require 22 rigid signs (£77). If we were to apply the paint on the floodlight and CCTV poles we would require 6 self-adhesive signs (these would be preferable to rigid signs on poles as they are less likely to be removed) (approx £30)

Recommended that

- The required number of rigid anti climb paint signs and self adhesive signs, as detailed above, be purchased in the sum of £107, and that the amount of anti climb paint required to coat the top area of fencing adjacent to and above the MUGA entrance gate, the floodlight poles and the CCTV poles be established and the appropriate number of tins of 5L black anti climb paint at £24.95 per tin be purchased.
- Mr Summerfield is to be asked to apply the paint and position the signage, both at the specified legal height, as soon as possible to ensure that we have legally applied anti climb material in place of the grease.
- Funds to come from the MUGA maintenance and repairs budget.

5659. TO CONSIDER PURCHASING THE BOOK ‘GROWING IN THE COMMUNITY’ AT A COST OF £25

This book is a useful guide for allotment officers, providing an update on the current policy framework, legislation and good practice affecting allotments.

Recommended that the book ‘Growing in the Community’ be purchased at a cost of £25.

5660. TO APPROVE THE RENEWAL OF THE MOLE CONTROL CONTRACT AT THE RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD IN THE SUM OF £485 FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR

Mr Miles confirms that he has kept the rate the same as last year. £470 has been budgeted for this year, therefore later in the year funds will need to be vired to this budget line to cover the £485. Mr Miles is to be asked to confirm that the contract does not include the Football Club pitch.

Resolved that the mole control contract for the Riverside Playing Field in the sum of £485 be accepted.

5661. TO CONSIDER TWO QUOTATIONS RECEIVED FROM SECURITY DOOR COMPANIES WHO CAN MANUFACTURE A SUITABLE SECURITY DOOR FOR THE TRACTOR SHED AT THE HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND

Design & Supply Ltd
Steel door set £411.10 plus vat (supply only)

Fitzpatrick Doors Ltd

Securicel Level 2 security steel door set £1,337 plus vat. This includes £580 for survey and installation.

Recommended that

- Mr Drewett be asked to look through the Design & Supply Ltd specification and if he feels it would be suitable for use, the Clerk is given executive powers to order the Design & Supply Ltd steel door set at £411.10 plus vat, and to ask Mr Drewett to fit the door at the earliest opportunity.
- Funds to come from the Open Spaces maintenance and repairs budget.

5662. TO CONSIDER THE REQUEST FROM STOTFOLD CO-OPERATIVE SMALLHOLDING LTD TO TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO REPAIR THE 6FT CHAIN LINK FENCE BETWEEN THE RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD AND THE LAND TENANTED BY THE CO-OPERATIVE

Councillor Mrs Hyde left the room at this point.

There is a clearly defined pathway where the young people are entering their land from the Riverside Playing Field and as they have recently suffered three fires in the barns, they would like this point of entry stopped up as soon as possible. The fencing is in the ownership and responsibility of this Council running to the rear of the Manor Farm site and the Riverside Playing Field, and was erected approximately fourteen years ago.

Resolved that

- Three quotations are obtained to replace the damaged fencing, and Councillor Cooper is to accompany the contractors to make sure the correct area of fencing is replaced.
- The Stotfold Co-operative Smallholdings Ltd be advised that quotations are being sought, and the matter will be considered further when funding is available and quotations have been received.

Councillor Mrs Hyde returned to the meeting.

5663. TO RECEIVE THE ROSPA PLAY AREA SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT FOLLOWING THEIR INSPECTION CARRIED OUT DURING MAY

Copies of the report were circulated to Members. There are no high risks identified by ROSPA, but some medium risks. General risks identified are areas of exposed concrete and worn soil, and the chains on the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground swings need replacing. The swings at the Riverside Playing Field weren't inspected as the chains were wound over the top bar.

Resolved that Mr Summerfield be provided with a copy of the ROSPA inspection report and that he be instructed to work through the medium risks identified.

5664. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM THE STOTFOLD JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB TO CONTINUE USING THE GREEN, RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD AND HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND FOR THEIR MATCHES

Members were previously provided with a copy of the letter from the Junior Football Club. The agenda issued for this meeting recommended that the Committee consider the number of matches on each pitch, in terms of charging, as they appeared to have increased since September 2007,

however Members were advised that this was in fact incorrect and the Junior Football Club have been playing within their allotted number of games per season.

Members were advised that only two complaints had been received with regard to parking problems on match days at The Green, but that the Football Club had dealt with the matter swiftly.

Resolved that the Stotfold Junior Football Club be advised that they may use the pitches as per their letter, and thank them for dealing with the parking issues and ensuring the matches are properly marshaled. Wish them every success for the next football season.

5665. TO DISCUSS MATTERS RELATING TO ANY LIGHTING ISSUES AROUND THE TOWN

Resolved that County Highways be chased regarding the Confident Communities Fund and in particular the lighting requests, as the Fund is to be spent by December of this year.

It was:

Further resolved that the County Highways Engineer, Piyush Pagoria, be chased regarding other lighting matters reported to him by Councillor Mrs Cooper, as detailed in previous minutes.

5666. GENERAL WORK TO BE CARRIED OUT AS ADVISED BY MEMBERS AT THIS MEETING

Resolved that the following works be carried out:

County Highways

- Chase John Shortland regarding his decision on the resurfacing of Trinity Road, and the date for repairs to the dangerous areas of Regent Street.
- There is a road hole adjacent to the drain grid on Brook Street, outside Days Bakery – category 1 defect.
- The grass in front of Grange House on High Street is very long and needs cutting, it is also full of rubbish. Also advise the developers George Wimpey of the problem as it is attracting undesirables once again to the area.
- The verge abutting the Brook Street allotments is very overgrown. Advise County Highways, and also the developers George Wimpey.
- Write and advise on the very bad state of weeds on roads and footways around the town. The situation was much better when Mr Golder and Mr Summerfield carried out the work, suggest that they consider contracting the town's weed spraying back to this Council.

Mr Summerfield

- The footpath at the end of Coppice Mead to Roe Close needs weed spraying.
- Chase to fill the pothole at the entrance of the Brook Street car park.

Resolved that a letter be sent to the owner of the property along the Highbush Road to Hitchin Road footpath to respectfully request that they cut back their overhanging beech hedge.

5667. ANY OTHER ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

Further to our complaint concerning the lack of cutting and maintenance on Millennium Green, Highways have now cut all the footpaths in that area, and Mr Golder has also done his cut. Both have done a superb job, and regular walkers in the area are very impressed.

With regard to a recent article in the Stotfold News concerning the lack of play equipment in the town, and the very good facilities at Fairfield Park, monies are due to be received from the Section 106 agreement for the land to the side of Roker Park on The Green so it could be used towards improving play equipment in the town.

Previous information regarding the County Highways 5 year plan indicated that they would be carrying out bridge strengthening works on the old Baldock Road bridge; an area adjacent to the bridge has subsequently been put forward in the District Council's site allocations for future development.

There being no further relevant business the meeting was declared closed at 9.26pm

CHAIRMAN

DATED