

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RECREATION GROUNDS, PUBLIC LANDS & LIGHTING COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11TH FEBRUARY 2015, 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SIMPSON CENTRE, STOTFOLD

Committee Members present: Mrs M Cooper (Chairman)

Mrs S Bundock	Mrs A Clarey
B Collier	A Cooper
S Hayes	L Stoter
J Talbot	

Also present: The Town Clerk

10/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs J Hyde and B Saunders.

11/15 DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

Councillor S Hayes declared an interest in the agenda item regarding the allotments report as he is a Trustee of the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field which owns the Common Road allotments, as did Councillor J Talbot who is a plot holder at the Common Road allotments. Members were reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

12/15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & RESPONSES

There were none present.

13/15 CLERK’S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED & MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION

Correspondence

Copy of Allotment & Leisure Gardner Issue 1: 2015 is available from the Clerk

Matters Arising

Minute 113/14 – our Street Lighting Contractor has not yet completed the inspection of the 26 lighting columns, as approved at the September meeting.

Minute 125/14 – following a complaint by the Stotfold Junior Football Club regarding the condition of the grass surface at the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, investigations have been made into the condition. The hole in the worn grass surface will need digging out, levelling, new soil put in and seeded – this will need to be done once the football playing/training season is over. Discussions have taken place with the pub football team who also use the pitch and they confirm that their season ends at the end of April and they are happy to use the pitch as it is for now.

Minute 126/14 – Regiment Fitness are now using the The Green not Riverside Playing Field for their fitness sessions, as approved at the December Committee meeting.

Minute 4/15 – a rescheduled site meeting has been arranged with the River Ivel Drainage Board representative on 12th February, 10am, to discuss Pix Brook adjacent channel and weir levels.

Minute 4/15 – Councillor Saunders has chased highways regarding the money set aside for High Street drainage works, and has been advised that the money allocated to resolve drainage issues was incorporated into the town enhancement scheme. The funds were specifically focused on resolving the drainage issues associated with the project. Councillor Mrs Bundock advised that she would take this up with our Highways Area Steward as drainage issues have not been resolved.

14/15 USE OF THE GREEN – JAMES DEAN FAIR

Members considered a request by James Dean Fair to visit The Green from Sunday 26th April to Sunday 3rd May 2015. Open days will be Thursday 30th April, Friday 1st May and Saturday 2nd May.

Resolved that James Dean Fair are permitted to use The Green from Sunday 26th April to Sunday 3rd May 2015, subject to the usual hiring conditions, particularly regarding damage to surface by heavy vehicles and ensuring general public use of The Green is available.

15/15 USE OF THE GREEN – CIRCUS TIANA

Members considered a request by Circus Tiana to visit The Green from Sunday 24th to Sunday 31st May 2015.

Resolved that Circus Tiana are permitted to use The Green from Sunday 24th to Sunday 31st May 2015, subject to the usual hiring conditions, particularly regarding damage to surface by heavy vehicles and ensuring general public use of The Green is available.

16/15 USE OF THE GREEN – STOTFOLD FOOTBALL CLUB

Members considered a request by Stotfold Football Club to use The Green for parking from Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th July 2015 for their Summer Tournament parking.

Resolved that Stotfold Football Club are permitted to use The Green for parking from Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th July 2015, subject to the usual hiring conditions, particularly regarding damage to surface by vehicles and ensuring general public use of The Green is available.

17/15 ALLOTMENTS UPDATE

Members were previously provided with a copy of a report from the Allotments Administrator on both the Common Road and Norton Road allotments.

The report (available on file) detailed the turnover of plot holders, particularly on the Common Road allotments, and outlined work at the Common Road allotments to replace unusable plots with a grassed area, willow planting at the car park edge and the creation of new drainage ditches. The drainage work and clearance of the unusable plots is now complete. These works are being funded by the allotment site owners, the Eleemosynary Charity of William Field.

A utility contractor has recently been using a section of the car park as a site compound and negotiations will hopefully result in them providing a new vehicle and pedestrian access gate and reinstatement of that part of the car park.

The Charity has agreed to the installation of a bench in memory of a long standing plot holder, at the request of Councillor Talbot.

Councillor Hayes forwarded the thanks of the Charity to Suzanne Cowie, Allotment Administrator, for her hard work in the current green space project and her negotiations with the utility contractor.

Councillor Talbot also personally thanked the Charity, through Councillor Hayes, for permitting the installation of the memorial bench.

18/15 HITCHIN ROAD UNDERPASS

Members considered increasing the number of cuts for the Hitchin Road underpass (Stotfold side) and to approve funds to clear the existing brambles prior to start of the grass cutting schedule. Following this Committee's decision (min 129/14) to take on grass cutting of the underpass at x4 cuts per year (£392/yr), with a financial contribution from Central Beds Highways (£127.69/yr), the grass cutting contractor advises that x4 cuts is not workable and suggests a minimum number of cuts for hand-trimming such a steep incline would be x8 per year (£784/yr).

Recommended that the grass cutting schedule for the Hitchin Road underpass (Stotfold side) is increased from x4 cuts per year (£392/yr) to x8 cuts (£784/yr), starting from the

forthcoming new financial year. Towards the end of that financial year, a review will be undertaken to assess the number of cuts required.

Before any grass cutting/strimming can take place, clearance of the existing large amount of brambles is required. Central Beds Highways and Environmental team are being chased to undertake this work, with no positive response to date. Our grass cutting contractor advises that he would charge £192 to clear the brambles.

Resolved that the brambles are cleared at the Hitchin Road underpass prior to starting the new grass cutting schedule, at £192 from this year's Open Spaces – Maintenance & Repairs budget.

19/15 HERON WAY OPEN SPACE

There are three broken posts (low post and rail fencing surrounding the grassed area) which require replacement to prevent unauthorised vehicular access. Cost maximum of £80.

Resolved that the handyman is authorised to spend £80 on replacing the three broken posts and rail fencing at Heron Way. Funds from Open Spaces – Maintenance & Repairs budget.

20/15 GENERAL WORK

Resolved that the following is actioned as appropriate:

Highways

- At the January meeting sinkage in the road surface in the area of Regent Street/The Green was reported, this has been filled but is still sinking – please fully investigate.
- Despite recent drain cleansing around the town, numerous drain slots are still blocked preventing water from entering the drain.
- Road hole in Malthouse Lane near entrance to Riverside Playing Field – 3” deep.
- Regent Street in the Regent Court area (The Green) side, there is a category one road defect
- Request to re-mark the lanes at the Hitchin Road roundabout on the C131 as it goes against the general guidance of the Highway Code and road users are now unsure which lane they are to use.

21/15 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY

A request was made for the next meeting to consider what we could do to further enhance the High Street area following recent improvement works – shrub beds, flower containers. A query was made as to where the original stone containers have gone. The improvements team project manager has advised that some of them were damaged and so were removed. Councillor Mrs Bundock, as Highways representative, will chase for their replacement.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 7.26pm

CHAIRMAN

DATED