

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on Wednesday 16th October 2013 at 7.30 p.m. in the Town Hall

PRESENT:

Cllr Anstey - Chairman
Cllrs. Connolly, Lewendon, Fulford, Paton & Perkins

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms K Mason, Town Clerk
Mrs M Coatham, Finance Officer

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Cllr Price

2. To receive any declarations of interest

None received

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th September 2013 and report on any matters arising

It was proposed by Cllr Lewendon and seconded by Cllr Fulford and **RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 18th September 2013 be signed as a true record.

The Chairman thanked the Assistant Clerk, Debbie Vine, for the clarity of the minutes.

Matters Arising

Pitch Maintenance

The Clerk advised she had instructed the Groundsman to plug any rabbit holes on Brownsey's Field so there need only be minor repairs prior to a pre-match inspection every Saturday.

A fertiliser hopper had been borrowed from Cllr Price and was being serviced prior to use by the Groundsman to fertilise the football pitches and the whippet track. Slitting was continued to be carried out.

It was acknowledged that the condition of the Whippet track was not up to standard in some places and the Whippet Club had worked hard to try and keep it grassed over, which was appreciated by members.

Junior pitch fees – A request has been made by the Youth Football organisers to be given reduced fees for the use of pitches at the Recreation Ground. The teams are U18s and U16s. Currently the fee for Junior teams in 2013/14 is £23 per session.

Match fees are charged to offset the cost of managing and maintaining the Recreation Ground pitches and Pavilion. This includes maintenance, repair, staff costs and equipment. The revenue received from pitch fees does not cover all of these costs and the rest of the funding comes from the precept.

There is still wear and tear of the pitches taking place and pitch hire for junior teams is a reduced are compared to adult team hire. Like the adult teams Junior teams put up and take down the nets.

It was AGREED that the fee should remain at £23 per session.

4. To receive any matters raised by members of the public

No matters raised.

5. To discuss budget proposals for 2014/15 and make recommendations to be taken to Finance & Policy Committee on 27th November 2103.

The Finance Officer explained that NFDC had advised there was likely to be a 10% decrease in precept for 2014/15.

Pitch Maintenance - Members discussed the pitch maintenance and agreed that the Council had to provide pitches that were in good order and up to the standard necessary for football, rugby and whippet racing. It was agreed that Brownsey's field would be included with the overall pitch maintenance and not kept separate. The overall cost of pitch maintenance will need to rise because of the work required to keep the pitches in the correct condition for play, due in part to the current poor condition and lack of depth of the soil, particularly on the football pitches .

The money spent on Brownsey's field this year was double that of the budget and would not be available unless there was a contribution from the Rugby Club. Overall the budget allowed for grounds maintenance was approx. £3k per pitch. This was less than the amount quoted by Abbots for the maintenance of Brownseys Field which was better soil.

The wear and tear of the pitches is determined by activity and the Chairman advised members that usage was increasing as more junior teams were using the pitches.

Concern was expressed that the Groundsman needed further training, the Clerk to identify any training needs.

It was agreed by members that ways of maintaining the pitches on the Recreation Ground needed to be re-considered and all the options available discussed. Members agreed this should be an agenda item at the next meeting prior to making a budget recommendation to Finance and Policy Committee on the 27th November.

Pavilion – members acknowledged that the Pavilion was not in a good condition but that money should be spent only on items needed repair. Replacement should only occur if absolutely necessary as plans for the new Sports Pavilion had been submitted to NFDC and it was hoped that a new Pavilion could be built within the next 3-4 years. It was fit for purpose and the Groundsman worked hard to ensure that it was operational.

Tree Works – the Clerk advised that the tree works itemised following the tree inspections in July had been passed to the tree surgeon to be implemented. Members acknowledged that a budget would need to be set for any further works next year although this was likely to be far less than the £3k spent in the current financial year.

Concession Building – The Clerk advised that a bid had been sent to NFDC to release money from 1056 agreements to pay for the Concession Building.

Equipment replacement – although money had been set aside for equipment replacement the current equipment is still operational. The Clerk to ask if the Groundsmen if any equipment needed replacement in the next 12 months.

Skate Park – The skate park still had a problem with one of the ramps not adhering to the tarmac surface, despite a repair being made by a Skate Park company. The Chairman and Groundsman to further investigate.

There has been a request from the skate park users to have the roller bar replaced. Avonway have passed money set aside from grants for Youth Projects top the Town Council. Members AGREED to recommend to Finance & Policy Committee that money be released for the fund to pay for the cost and installation of a new roller bar.

6. To note any items of correspondence

Nothing to report

7. To receive a report from the Clerk or any other relevant business

Nothing to report.

8. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 20th November 2013

The meeting ended at 9.00pm