

FORDINGBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Amenities Committee held on Wednesday 18th September 2013 at 8.40 p.m. in the Town Hall

PRESENT:

Cllr Anstey - Chairman
Cllrs. Lewendon & Fulford & Perkins

IN ATTENDANCE:

Miss D Vine, Asst. Town Clerk
Cllrs Buchanan and (G) Wilson

1. To receive any apologies for absence

Cllrs, Paton & Connolly

2. To receive any declarations of interest

None received

3. To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 15th May 2013 and report on any matters arising

It was proposed by Cllr Lewendon and seconded by Cllr Fulford that the minutes of the meeting held on the 17th July 2013 be signed as a true record. All in favour, Carried.

Matters Arising

Pitch Maintenance

Cllr Anstey advised that he and Derek Jones had met with Clive, the Groundsman at Ringwood TC to receive advice on line-marking. There was also agreement to block buy topsoil and fertilizer at the same time as Ringwood to save on cost.

Replacement Play Equipment

Cllr Anstey reported that a swing seat at Whitsbury Road Play area still required replacing.

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

No matters raised.

5. To review Paragraph 4 of Terms of Reference

Cllr Anstey advised that the review was in relation to Paragraph 5 on the Terms of Reference dated 17th April 2013.

The Committee's role is to take care and control of the following open spaces:- Recreation Ground, Flaxfields End, Queens Gardens & Whitsbury Road and the following buildings: Recreation Ground toilets, Pavilion & workshop.

Cllr Anstey reported that since his election to the Council 5 years ago, he had seen the use of the Recreation Ground sports areas increase and evolve with some 80 rugby matches and 50 football matches being held each season, training, Whippet racing and use by Moto Guzzi and the Fordingbridge Festival. This increase in use has meant increased cost to the Council for on-going maintenance and was now beyond cutting grass and painting lines. It now required care by a professional Groundsman with a detailed programme of maintenance requirements through the year. He asked the Committee to reflect on what "care and control" meant in relation to the Recreation Ground, how best this could now be fulfilled and what role they needed to play in it.

6. To report on matters relating to the Recreation Ground

Pitch Maintenance & Equipment

Cllr Anstey re-iterated the need to provide fit and safe playing surfaces. He believed that it would be possible to improve the pitches in the short term to accommodate the matches for the forthcoming season and had visited New Forest Machinery to make enquiries with regard to the type of machinery which would be required to achieve this. In view of cost, an alternative option would be to hire the equipment, which would be possible from the existing budget, and then monitor the results before deciding whether to purchase. The Committee would need to give careful consideration as to how much money they are prepared to commit to the future upkeep of the pitches.

Members discussed on-going issues surrounding cost and care of the pitches. Cllr Buchanan asked if a plan had ever been carried out concerning the management of amenities in Fordingbridge. Cllr Fulford advised that the Town Council, Hampshire CC and Burgate School had hosted a forum but no further details had been forthcoming. Cllr Fulford also raised the urgent need to develop a 3 or 5 year forward plan when budgeting.

Whippet Track

Cllr Anstey reported that there was still an issue with the re-seeding that had taken place on the Whippet Track and that he, the Clerk and the Club would be liaising with the Groundsman to discuss further action.

Review of Site Visit – July 2013

Cllr Anstey apologised for not giving Members a brief on what to look for in relation to the state of the pitches at the site visit.

Review of Water Report

The above report had recommended consideration be given to a fence along the riverbank and a sign on the water jetty indicating no authorised use. These were noted by Members but believed not to be required and the matter was therefore closed.

Fordingbridge Town Youth Football Club – Pitch Hire

Cllr Anstey to discuss with the Clerk and Finance Officer with a report to Committee at a later date.

Groundsman Role

Cllr Anstey re-iterated that the current Groundsman's role had changed considerably and he would refer the matter to the Staff & Remuneration Committee for discussion.

7. To report on any matter concerning Open Spaces

Cllr Anstey reported that the ROSPA reports relating to all the play areas had been received in May but it had sometimes proved difficult to tie in the issues raised to the next meeting which meant that they were still being looked at 4 months later. Cllr Perkins advised that historically each Member had been allocated a specific area to monitor and maybe further thought could be given to whether this was required again.

A request had been received from a local resident to purchase a small plot of open space at the rear of the property adjoining a footpath. Members discussed this but in view of the fact that it is designated Open Space were not prepared to consider purchase. Clerk to advise the resident concerned.

8. To report on Tree works

Members had received an alternative quotation from Avon Tree Care for the tree maintenance work required following the report prepared by NFDC. It was proposed by Cllr Lewendon and seconded by Cllr Perkins that the quotation from Avon Tree Care be accepted. All in favour, Carried. It was

AGREED to make a recommendation to Finance & Policy for monies to allow the urgent tree works identified to be carried out immediately. It would then be necessary to budget for the remaining and on-going maintenance for next year.

Standing Orders were suspended.

9. To note any items of correspondence

An email had been received from Mr Maltby requesting that consideration be given to building a tennis court. Members had now decided to request use of Developer Contributions to purchase new play equipment and build a MUGA, therefore it would not be possible to include a tennis court. The Clerk to advise Mr Maltby.

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

Nothing to report.

11. To note the date of the next meeting as Wednesday 16th October 2013

The meeting ended at 9.45pm