

MARLBOROUGH TOWN COUNCIL

AMENITIES AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the **Amenities and Open Spaces Committee** held on the 23rd March, 2009 in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Marlborough at 7.55 pm**

PRESENT Councillor B. Castle Chairman
Councillor Mrs P. Dow Town Mayor
Councillor A. Spranger
Councillor S. Radnedge
Councillor G. Loosmore
Councillor R. Pitts

ALSO PRESENT Mrs Sue Fry Office Manager
Mr. N. Kerton Wiltshire Gazette and Herald
4 Members of ARK
Plus 3 members of the public

OBSERVING Councillors - A. Ross, Mrs E.M. Hannaford-Dobson, S.R. Dobson, Mrs M. Rose,
A. Kirk Wilson, G. Francis, A. Sycamore, R. Notton and N. Fogg.

NOTICE OF MEETING – Public Notice of the meeting has been given in accordance with Schedule 12, para 10(2) of the Local Government Act 1972

533/08 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs E. Fogg.

534/08 DECLARATION(S) OF INTEREST

There were no Declaration(s) of Interest.

535/08 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded Councillors that they should all have walked their allotted footpaths and submitted their written reports. If Councillors have mislaid their form there are some available at the offices. Please report any damaged trees or fallen branches, litter and general state of the footpath.

Councillor Fogg has been approached by some members of the public living in the vicinity of St. John's Close requesting a footpath to walk to Kingsbury Hill. Generations have of course walked on the grass of the Common for this purpose. Before this request can be addressed we need to establish the desired length, width and nature of the surface for the path. I have asked Councillor Fogg to provide some answers.

The triangular plot adjacent to High Walls has recently been tidied up and additional planting on the site will take place soon.

The field adjacent to Tin Pit has been cleared of considerable amounts of rubbish.

A chain harrow has now been purchased as authorised by the Council.

The office now holds a list of properties on which TPO's are registered, unfortunately the list does not indicate either where or what species the trees are.

Councillors will recall last year that St. John's School pupils conducted a questionnaire about the Common. The survey indicated that more seats would be appreciated on the Common, there is one available from the store at the Workshop, I am seeking suggestions as to where it should be sited.

536/08

PRESENTATION BY ARK TEAM

The Chairman welcomed members of the ARK Presentation Team.

Most Councillors and a large number of the public have seen the works that took place on Cooper's Meadow in January and February. Crucially the erosion of the banks of the meadow by the river has been contained, an action that has saved the Council and the town many thousands of pounds. The work took place over a very wet period and at the moment parts of the meadow look and are a muddy mess. On behalf of the Council and our partners we apologise; the adage 'omelettes' and 'eggs' come to mind.

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor R. Pitts and –

RESOLVED: unanimously that Standing Orders be suspended at 8.01 pm to allow members of the ARK team to give a presentation.

Members of the ARK team gave a presentation on the next stage of Cooper's Meadow Project (copy of presentation attached)

The Chairman invited members to asked questions on the information they had received.

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor R. Pitts and –

RESOLVED: unanimously that Standing Orders be reinstated at 8.35 pm

The Chairman thanked Ark for their excellent presentation.

After discussion it was –

Proposed by Councillor R. Pitts, seconded by Councillor G. Loosmore and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that Option 4 – Mixed Meadow Management: conservation grazing and sow, mow and cart is the preferred option and that this should be used in the first instance for a trial period of 1 year.

537/08

LAND AT TIN PIT

The Committee discussed the possible termination of the lease at Tin Pit.

A discussion took place that highlighted other possible uses for this land –

Social housing
A self build scheme
Allotments
Community wood.

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor R. Pitts and –

RECOMMENDED: by 5 votes for with 1 against that the legal implications of giving notice on the lease should be investigated and then the necessary steps be taken to terminate the lease.

538/08

UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ITEMS

a) Recreation Ground Play Equipment

The Committee received a report from Councillor R. Pitts.

Councillor Pitts reported that we are waiting from feedback from St. Peter's School, when this has been received things will be in place to proceed with obtaining quotes for this project.

b) The Tennis Club Project

Councillor Pitts reported that a meeting is due to take place at the Golf Club on Friday 27th March but he would like to try and re-arrange this. There is to be considerable landfill taking place, it is important that we investigate the full environmental impact of this and an assessment is carried out for the whole area. In the future any meetings that take place will be minuted.

c) Churchill Court – River Walk.

Last Year, following this Council's approved policy to establish a River Walk at the back of Churchill Court, the Town Clerk instructed our solicitor to request that the owners of the property fence off their land from ours. No acknowledgment or action was taken on this request

Our solicitor wrote to them again on the 7th January, to which no acknowledgement was received. On March 13th he wrote to Fairford Homes, whom we believe are the new owners of the land. The solicitors set out options for the Council to consider, one being the erection of a boundary fence to separate our lawful strip of river bank from the portion of the garden that belongs to Churchill Court.

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor Mrs P. Dow and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that we obtain quotations for the erection of a fence, when the quotations have been received we then discuss under Part 2 the financial and legal implications of our future decisions on this matter.

d) Plume of Feathers Garden/Old Cemetery Improvements

The Committee received a copy of a letter from Daniel O'Donoghue, Outreach Services Manager for the Richmond Fellowship updating the Council on the above items. He is very keen for the Plume of Feathers garden to be open to the public and has been talking to the local Takeaway who are more than happy to open and close the gardens and also pick-up any litter, there would be no liability on the Town Council. Councillor R. Pitts suggested that we could promote these gardens by placing an article in the Greyhound entitled "Hidden Garden in Marlborough".

e) Allotments including update on Elcot Lane Allotments.

Councillor R. Pitts reported that letters are to be sent to all allotment holders offering them the opportunity to have their allotment tractor rotavated for a small fee. Progress is being made on the five new compact allotments and letters will be sent to people on the waiting list offering them one. This will not affect their position on the waiting list should a full allotment become available.

539/08

COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

The Committee discussed the proposal from the Chamber of Commerce for a Community Notice Board. Councillor Pitts reported that the Chamber would like to situate a planter in the High Street which incorporated a Community Notice Board. The Committee agreed that they supported this proposal in principle but would like more information on it before any decision is made. It was agreed that this item be brought back to the next meeting of the A & OS.

540/08

LIAISON MEETINGS

- a) Rugby Club
- b) Leisure Centre
- c) Bowls Club

The office manager informed the meeting that we are still waiting for all three of the above to come back with possible dates for these meetings. The Committee decided that the Golf Club should also be added to this list.

541/08

CLERK'S REPORT

With the agreement of the Committee the Chairman stated that he would take Agenda Item 9 (c) first.

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor G. Loosmore and –

RESOLVED: unanimously that Standing Orders be suspended at 9.00 pm to allow Mrs Clarkson-Cowles to speak on this item.

The Committee received information regarding this agenda item from Mrs Clarkson-Cowles.

Proposed by Councillor B. Castle, seconded by Councillor G. Loosmore and –

RESOLVED: unanimously that Standing Orders be re-instated at 9.11 pm

Proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Dow, seconded by Councillor G. Loosmore and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that permission be given to the Marlborough Carnival Committee to use the Common on the four dates requested, but that no precedence should be set for future years.

a) Repairs to Priory Wall at Figgins Lane.

The office manager reported that spot repairs had been carried out on this wall but that it may be necessary to have the wall surveyed by a structural engineer. This was noted by the Committee.

b) Use of Common for Circus

The office manager informed members that a request had been received by the Jay Miller Circus to use the Common week commencing the 11th May, 2009.

The Chairman stated that the positioning of the circus on the Common should be such that it does not disturb the Skylarks who are nesting in the longer grass on the Common.

Proposed by Councillor Mrs P. Dow, seconded by Councillor B. Castle and –

RECOMMENDED: unanimously that Jay Miller Circus be granted use of the Common subject to the usual conditions.

542/08

CEMETERY – for information only (copy attached)

- a) Exclusive Right of Burial/Notice of Internment
- b) Memorial Inscriptions/additional.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm