

DITTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OPEN SPACES & AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT DITTON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON MONDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2005

PRESENT: CLLRS R G W BAKER (CHAIRMAN), MRS J T THWAITES (VICE-CHAIR),
A R MULCUCK AND MRS M MULCUCK
MR NIGEL SAUNDERS (GROUNDS SUPERVISOR)
MRS NICOLA GREENAWAY (ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT)

266. **OPENING OF MEETING**

The Meeting was opened by the Chairman at 7.44pm.

267. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies previously notified, were **RECEIVED** and **ACCEPTED** from Cllrs DeSave, Thorpe and Mrs Throssell.

268. **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Cllrs Mulcuck, Mrs Mulcuck and Mrs Thwaites declared an interest in item 275 as they are members of Ditton Bowls Club.

269. **FINANCE**

(a) Financial Analysis

The Financial Analysis, which had previously been **CIRCULATED** was **READ** and **NOTED**.

270. **ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD FROM LAST MEETING**

(a) Ditton Court Quarry [Page 191, Item 175(a)]

A letter from Brian Thomas of FCS Vegetation Care and Control was **READ**. His advice for controlling Ragwort and Japanese Knotweed were **NOTED**.

RESOLVED to invite Mr Thomas to visit the site again and advise on a management plan for Ragwort and Japanese knotweed in the quarry and to give a quotation for providing this service.

(b) Compound Fence and Gate [Page 192, Item 175(c)]

A further quotation from Jacksons Fencing of £8,664.57 (plus VAT), to supply and install 41.2m of 2.5m high Barbican fencing together with a sliding gate was **READ**. It was **NOTED** that this was nearly double the amount of the previous quotation from Westsole Fencing.

RESOLVED to obtain an up-to-date quotation from Westsole Fencing for consideration when preparing next years budget and five year plan.

The Chairman asked if members would consider an additional item regarding security for the Compound. Members were happy to take this additional item.

The Grounds Supervisor REPORTED that the current alarm system for the compound stores and cedar room are not adequate. A quotation had been received from Initial Security to upgrade the existing control panel to allow for expansion of the system and to link the alarm to the main office and to install detectors in the Cedar Room of £1,077.61 plus additional yearly maintenance fee of £216.00. Members felt this figure seemed quite high and wondered if all the areas needed to be done now. The Grounds Supervisor advised that the main area of concern is to have the existing panel upgraded.

RESOLVED to obtain a revised quotation just to upgrade the existing panel.

(c) Fencing along top track [Page 192, Item 175(d)]

A quotation of £1,257.25 to purchase “Marmax diamond fencing” along the top track, to prevent unauthorized vehicles cutting across the recreation ground, was **READ**. A quotation of £625 to install a gate was also **NOTED**. It was further **NOTED** that the Grounds Staff would be able to install this fencing themselves.

RESOLVED as there were no spare funds currently available, to consider this fencing when preparing the budgets for next year.

(d) Request to install anti-vandal fencing to rear of Troutbeck House [Page 192, Item 175(e)]

It was **NOTED** that the Troutbeck Residents were happy to pay half the cost therefore the Administrative Assistant could proceed with placing the order for this fence.

(e) Play equipment post-installation inspection

It was **NOTED** that Park Leisure had returned to put right the poor paintwork and safety surfaces.

ADJOURNEMENT

Mr Trevor Walker, 190 Woodlands Road, Ditton said he had noticed that there seemed to be a lot of fouling of the footpaths and recreation grounds by dogs, in Ditton and the problem seems to be getting worse. Is there anything that the Parish Council can do to try to prevent this. Members agreed that this was a very unpleasant problem and they would look into preventative measures. It was suggested that the dog warden could be contacted for advise and that maybe the problem could be highlighted to the media.

Mr Walker also raised the matter of the cricket pitch. He had been in touch with someone hoping to raise a local team to use the pitch and he would keep the Council informed.

Mr Walker was thanked for his attendance and for bringing the above matters to the Parish Council's attention

271. **CRICKET SQUARE**

The Grounds Supervisor advised that he needed to know whether the Council wished him to carry out any maintenance work on the pitch for the coming season. Discussion took place and although members felt it was not worth spending money on the pitch if it was not going to be used, if there was a chance of a local team using the pitch next year, then it should be prepared in the hope that it will be used.

RESOLVED the Grounds Staff carry out basic maintenance to the cricket square so that it could be used for next year and if the local team do not wish to hire it, to advertise it again.

272. **FOOTPATH CLEARANCE**

(a) Work to possibly be undertaken by Grounds Staff

Following the pre-meeting with Graham Rusling, KCC PROW Officer, it was **NOTED** that he will meet with Nigel Saunders to visit the PROWs in Ditton to ascertain how many "cuts" they currently receive and how many they need to have. Following this he will submit a revised figure of how much KCC could pay to DPC to maintain the footpaths. Also the Grounds Supervisor will look at the work schedules to see if the Grounds Staff could accommodate this additional work.

RESOLVED on receipt of Mr Rusling's revised offer to refer this matter back to the Full Council to consider if it will be viable for the Grounds Staff to undertake this work.

(b) Community Paths Project

A letter from the Community Paths Project was **READ** and it was **NOTED** that grants are available for improvements to public rights of way. It was suggested that some of the paths in Ditton could benefit from such a grant. Members felt it would be good if

all the paths could be walked to check on their condition and then report back before deciding on whether to apply for a grant. It was suggested that Members could have a rota for checking the paths. The Administrative Assistant will draw up a list of all the paths and circulate to members to decide who would like to walk which path.

273. **LOCKING OF PLAY AREA AT WEEKENDS**

The Office had received reports from residents that the play area is not always locked up on a Saturday night or if it is, it is quite often not re-opened early on Sunday mornings. One resident had offered to assist with locking and unlocking the playarea, when a caretaker was unavailable, for a nominal amount.

RESOLVED to contact the resident to see if they would still be willing to provide this service.

274. **BEST KEPT GARDEN COMPETITION**

(a) Balance Sheet

The balance sheet was **READ** and it was **NOTED** that the budget was underspent this year.

(b) Format for next year

It was **NOTED** that the judges had retired and therefore would not be able to judge the gardens next year. It was suggested that the format may need changing slightly and there could be some gardens that are just "recommended" rather than prize winners.

RESOLVED to contact the local gardening club to see if they could recommend a contact for a new judge and to keep the format under review.

275. **CORRESPONDENCE FOR DECISION**

Ditton Bowls Club

- Request to purchase equipment
Equipment Insurance

A LETTER FROM THE BOWLS CLUB WAS READ AND IT WAS NOTED THAT THEY WOULD LIKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE ANY BOWLS GREEN MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL MAY NO LONGER NEED. AN E-MAIL HAD ALSO BEEN RECEIVED TO SAY THAT THE REQUEST RE INSURANCE WAS AN ERROR BUT THEY WOULD LIKE

PERMISSION TO BRING A STORAGE CONTAINER IN THROUGH THE QUARRY.

RESOLVED TO WRITE TO THE BOWLS CLUB TO ADVISE THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL WILL NEED

THE USE OF ALL ITS EQUIPMENT BUT HAVE NO OBJECTIONS TO THE CONTAINER BEING TRANSPORTED THROUGH THE QUARRY PROVIDED PRECAUTIONS ARE TAKEN BY THE DRIVER AND THAT ANY DAMAGE INCURRED IS PUT RIGHT.

- Bowls Club Boundary Fence

AN ADDITIONAL LETTER FROM THE BOWLS CLUB WAS **READ** AND IT WAS **NOTED** THAT THEY WOULD LIKE REPAIRS UNDERTAKEN TO THE CHAINLINK BOUNDARY FENCE. THE CHAIRMAN **READ** A PARAGRAPH FROM THE LEASE AGREEMENT WHICH STATED THAT THE BOWLS CLUB ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THIS FENCE.

RESOLVED TO WRITE TO THE BOWLS CLUB TO ADVISE THAT THE MAINTENANCE OF THE FENCE IS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY.

Kent County Playing Fields Association
Field'

- Request for comments on 'The Playing

RESOLVED TO REPLY TO THE PLAY FIELDS ASSOCIATION TO ADVISE THAT ALTHOUGH SOME OF THE INFORMATION SUPPLIED FROM ROSPA IS USEFUL THIS PARISH COUNCIL WOULD BE HAPPY TO RECEIVE THE PUBLICATION ANNUALLY RATHER THAN QUARTERLY.

Christopher Abbott
37 Ragstone Court

- Request for access via quarry gates to remove felled timber on 12th October

RESOLVED TO WRITE TO MR ABBOTT ADVISING THAT THE PARISH COUNCIL IS HAPPY TO ACCEDE TO THIS REQUEST PROVIDED NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS ARE TAKEN AND ANY DAMAGE IS RECTIFIED. ALSO TO ADVISE THEY WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE THE SITE BY 4PM AT THE LATEST.

Mrs S J Nye
78 New Road

- Request to replace fence at rear of property bordering NRRG

RESOLVED TO OBTAIN QUOTATIONS FOR REPLACING THIS FENCE (INCLUDING TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION WHERE THERE ARE

GATES) ALSO TO ASK DITTON CLUB IF THEY WOULD LIKE TO PAY FOR A GATE TO BE INSTALLED IN THE FENCE IF IT IS REPLACED.

The Chairman asked if an additional item of correspondence could be considered and members were happy to do so:

TMBC Leisure Services

- Playing Pitch Strategy – Formal Consultation
THIS WAS **READ** AND NOTED.

RESOLVED ONLY TO COMMENT THAT THIS COUNCIL HOPED TMBC WOULD NOT AGREE TO ANY PROPOSALS TO RELINQUISH SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS FOR DEVELOPMENT.

276. **CORRESPONDENCE FOR NOTING**

The Playing Field
READ and **NOTED**.

- Newsletter – Summer 2005

BTCV

- The Tree Warden Scheme

KMOTT

- Autumn 2005

Cllr Mulcuck will **READ** the above two items and report back any items of interest.

Forestry Commission

- Notice of Compliance Inspection in respect of Bradbourne Lane

READ and **NOTED**.

NSALG

- Allotment and Leisure Gardener - Issue 3 2005

The Chairman will **READ** this item and report back any items of interest.

277. **CLOSURE**

The meeting was closed at 9.05pm.

Chairman
3rd October 2005