

**Minutes of the meeting of the
PARKS, OPEN SPACES, CONSERVATION & FOOTPATHS COMMITTEE
held on Monday, 17th January 2011
at the Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford, Essex**

Councillors present: Chairman Mrs M Weir, Vice Chairman Mrs A Heath, Mrs E Chippette, J Dickson, Mrs H Glynn, R Patient, D Weir and Mrs P Young.
Also Present: Member of the Public, Mr R Keene.

The Chairman welcomed the Member of the Public present and invited him to speak. He raised issue relating to a narrow footpath connecting Spencers Park to Briar Close. He commented that the footpath was dangerous for a person on foot due to the narrow width as it was being used as a bridle way, horses were fouling the footpath and there was no lighting. The Chairman advised that the footway was an alleyway or unmade walk; the Clerk didn't know the legal status of it but concurred it was a footway that connected Spencers to Briar Close. Mr Keene gave some background information that Bovis Homes (the builders of the houses) were supposed to have installed a light in the footway 25 years ago. The Chairman said complaints had been received before; she explained the bridle path loop had now been completed which should eradicate the need for horse riders to use the alleyway. Members discussed the possibility to look next year at installing an inhibitor to allow passage for people, buggies and wheelchairs and prevent horses and motorcycles but budgets were tight and committees had been asked to exert care. The Clerk said he could speak to horse riders that he new to advise them to use the bridle path. Cllr Mrs Young asked if the committee could explore the lighting issue and the Clerk advised the cost of installing lighting would be very expensive. Members sought the advice of the Clerk on the cost of installing barriers. The Clerk informed he would need to contact RDC to ascertain if the alleyway belonged to them primarily but the cost of 2 barriers would be approximately £450 plus installation. Mr Keene said he would investigate fund raising in the local community and asked if Council would match the funds. The Clerk advised him that if he came forward with funds the subject would be reviewed and it would be up to the Members of Council if they would consider matching it. The Chairman thanked Mr Keene and he advised he wished to remain during the meeting.

39. Apologies for non-attendance at meeting:

Cllrs Mrs J Barney (holiday), Mrs C Cunningham (unwell), Mrs M Dorrell (unwell) and V Leach (another meeting). Members noted and accepted the apologies tendered.

40. Declarations of Interest:

None.

41. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 1st November 2010 and to approve the destruction of the manuscript notes in respect of that meeting:

Members approved the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st November 2010 as a true record and agreed to the destruction of the manuscript notes.

42. Parks – Action List Update:

The Clerk went through the action list.

- **Arrange for clearance of ponds on a timely basis:** The Clerk asked for permission to address Magnolia & Spencers under this heading and Members agreed. He reported the water levels were high in Magnolia and the pennywort would probably reassert itself in the spring time. The huge root ball in Spencers remained in place and that would require a digger to remove it at a cost of £375. Members discussed that the recreational grounds were flooded with surface water and felt conditions were too dangerous to work with and it was decided to review at the next meeting.
- **Footpath signs – complete artwork and arrange siting:** Ongoing.
- **Tree Thinning in Spencers Park:** Cllr Mrs Heath informed the committee that Keith Holmes had volunteered to give assistance if help was needed. Members gratefully made a note and the Clerk added he had made him aware also.
- **Adult Gym:** The Clerk reported that the Grounds man had gathered pieces of gym equipment on Friday broken by vandalism and the Clerk was to report to the matter to the Police. Members noted.
- **Disabled access, Spencers:** See Agenda item 45.
- **Spencers Pond:** Discussed above.
- **Approval to build a mezzanine floor in Store:** Storage racking installation postponed to next week.
- **Request donation from equestriennes re signage:** The Clerk questioned as to whom he should contact and Cllr Mrs Glynn suggested he contact Sue Gunn – the Clerk to action.
- **Chairman to speak to Grounds man re. painting cautionary instruction on roadway at entrance to Magnolia Park:** The Clerk advised it wasn't feasible to do whilst the ground was wet but the matter was in hand.
- Cllr Mrs Weir expressed her concern of proposals to lay the hedge on the boundary between the cemetery and the recently taken over land. Members were advised that the hedge belonged to the Church and it was for the PCC to decide how they wished to manage it.

43. **Financial Report:**

The Clerk went through the document and reported that, technically, Parks were over spent, but it had a grant of £9,976 that was unexpected thus extending the budget. Therefore Parks were still on target, however, he warned the budget was very tight. There were no questions and Members accepted the Financial Report.

44. **Letter from Big Lottery Fund re. Grant report:**

The Clerk advised part of the process was that Council had to send a closure report and the letter from the Big Lottery Fund confirmed acceptance and closure of the report. Cllr Mrs Chippette queried whether money would be spent to repair the broken piece of gym equipment reported above. The Clerk advised Wicksteed had recently replaced a part without charge; the equipment was guaranteed for wear and tear but the recent damage was due to vandalism; he guessed that up to 25 or so youths had jumped up and down on the piece of equipment until it sheered. The Clerk informed he would report the incident to the Police and make contact with Wicksteed regarding a replacement part.

45. **Disabled Access – Spencers Park:**

The Clerk went through his report items 1-4 in detail. He advised he would be seeking consultation with the representative for the disabled with regard to item 3,

identification of locations for the barriers. Members approved the Clerk's recommendations, subject to consultation with the representative for the disabled and approved the expenditure as outlined in the report.

46. Email from Groundwork South Essex re. Woodland Trust Tree Planting Scheme:

Members discussed the planting of whips, many had died as they needed a lot of water through the Summer. The possibility of getting some Whips via the scheme was discussed and agreed and the Clerk was asked to contact Groundwork South Essex to seek getting Whips under the Woodland Trust's tree planting scheme. The Clerk to action.

47. Email from East Essex Triathlon Club re. Hockley Aquathlon 3.4.11

Members viewed the route as outlined in the information from the East Essex Triathlon Club and gave their approval for the event to take place.

48. Letter from Resident re. Spencers Park:

Members discussed the letter; the Clerk advised Council were not extending the number of plaques but one was added to recently because it was an additional name put on from the same family. Members instructed the Clerk to acknowledge the letter advising the content had been noted.

49. Summary of decisions:

- The Clerk to contact Sue Gunn regarding donation request from equestriennes re signage.
- The Clerk to report incident of vandalism to Gym equipment to the Police and contact Wicksteed to seek replacement part.
- Members approved the locations for the barriers in Spencers Park subject to the Clerk's consultation with the representative for the disabled and approved the expenditure as outlined in the report.
- The Clerk to contact Groundwork South Essex to seek supply of Whips under the Woodland Trust's tree planting scheme.
- East Essex Triathlon Club – Hockley Aquathlon approved.
- Letter from resident re Spencer's Park - the Clerk to acknowledge the letter and inform the content had been noted.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Chairman