

**Minutes of the meeting of the  
PARKS, OPEN SPACES, CONSERVATION & FOOTPATHS COMMITTEE  
held on Monday, 29th September 2008  
at the Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford, Essex**

**Councillors present:** Chairman K Holmes, Mrs J Barney, Mrs E Chippette, Mrs J Fern, Mrs A Heath, V Leach, R Patient, D Weir and Mrs M Weir.

**Also Present:** Cllr Mrs H Glynn.

**1) Apologies for non-attendance at the meeting:**

Cllrs Mrs C Cunningham (unwell), Mrs M Dorrell (other appointment) and A James (holiday). Members noted and accepted the apologies tendered.

**2) Declarations of Interest:**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3) Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2008 and to approve the destruction of the manuscript notes in respect of that meeting:**

Members approved the minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> September 2008 as a true record and agreed to the destruction of the manuscript notes.

**4) Parks – Action List Update:**

The Clerk went through the action list.

- **Ponds:** Contact made with contractor recommended by RDC (Thurlows Countryside). Contractor has visited and completed assessment, report awaited and the Clerk to chase. Cllr Mrs Glynn referred to Magnolia, where south of Duck Island the pond was overgrown with pennywort. She asked if D. Abrams could gouge it out. The Clerk responded that he had tried to remove it on a number of occasions but it comes back. He suggested spraying it. The Chairman, Cllr Homes expressed concern about spraying with chemicals due to contamination. Cllr Holmes noted Cllr Mrs Glynn's comment. Await report from Thurlows.
- **Footpath Signs:** Ongoing.
- **Allotments:** The value of an acre of agricultural land had been established as £3K per acre but land was not currently available pending RDC's report on housing proposals. Ongoing
- **ROSPA:** Ongoing.
- **P3:** There were no volunteers, the Clerk asked Members for other ideas. Cllr Mrs Weir suggested asking the payback team to work on footpaths. Cllr Holmes asked if Members had completed footpath surveys and Cllr Mrs Weir replied they were complete and a meeting was awaited. Cllr Holmes called Members to a meeting in the Parish Office at 2pm on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2008 to review footpath survey reports and establish which footpaths required attention. Cllrs Mrs Barney, Mrs Chippette, Mrs Fern, Mrs Heath and Mrs Weir volunteered.
- **Open Space, Rectory Road:** The Clerk reported the team had done an excellent job. Members felt it necessary to receive a letter of confirmation from RDC that works had been carried out satisfactorily by the required deadline. The Clerk confirmed he had requested a response and would chase it up.

- **Memorial Plaques:** Awaiting report from tree expert re thinning before more trees identified for plaques. Cllr Mrs Heath reported remembrance flowers (vases and plastic flowers) were being placed around the bases of trees with memorial plaques. Cllr Leach felt plastic flowers should be removed but there was a need to be sensitive, he felt that where there was knowledge of where they had been placed it was not unreasonable to remove them after 5 days. Cllr Weir agreed this was a reasonable period. Cllr Holmes said he felt that when people buy a plaque HPC should make it clear that the policy did not allow remembrance items to be placed in the park. Cllr Patient referred to South East Essex Crematorium signage. Cllr Mrs Weir asked if there was a database of addresses available for the Council to write to people having purchased a plaque, the Clerk replied the database may not be up to date due to people moving etc. Cllr Holmes stated a general notice could be put up advising that these would be removed and that for new plaque purchases HPC would advise that flowers and tributes around the tree were not allowed.
- **Tree Thinning in Spencers Park:** Awaiting report from Essex Arboricultural, Ongoing.
- **Spencers Bridle path:** Keep on action list for review.
- **Sponsoring a tree in Cherry Orchard Country Park:** Item to be closed.
- **Clear rubbish in unofficial cycle track:** Item to be closed.
- **Use of Magnolia Recreation Field by Hawkwell Hornet Football Team:** Cllr Mrs Glynn felt football was taking over the park for the whole morning of play. The Chairman confirmed that Members voted and the Council had agreed the team could use the facility. Cllr Weir asked the Clerk to ensure they produced proof of their insurance. The Clerk replied it was in hand and Cllr Holmes declared, subject to insurance, the item was closed.
- **Find out from contractor which days the litter/dog bins are collected:** Ongoing.

#### 5) **Financial Report:**

The Clerk went through the Financial Report. He advised item 301 4037 would be transferred across to 308 4941 and the criminal damage to dog bins at Glencroft would be included in the appropriate cost centre/account. There were no questions and Members accepted the Financial Report.

#### 6) **Wildflower Bed – Spencers:**

The Chairman reported the wild flower bed had been cultivated, it would be left over winter and seed sowed in the spring. Cllr Mrs Heath informed Members that Patrick McKenna had advised of a method to rid the area of weeds by mixing the seed with grass seed and cutting 12 times in the first year. Cllr Holmes replied the weeds had been destroyed as the area had been ploughed, if that failed this method could be considered.

#### 7) **Financial Planning for 2009/10:**

The Clerk had indicated outturns in a number of accounts, these were a first cut and would be further refined. The Chairman asked Members to bear in mind, that HPC was looking 2 years ahead at machinery and the replacement timetable. The Clerk had discussed the replacement of the Ransome with Dave Abrams, they had concluded that with some spending on maintenance/repair there was no need to change the machine as originally planned. Bearing this in mind and the timetable for replacement of the Kubota there was value in keeping the current tractor and to add

another rather than realise second hand value. This would enable improved efficiency in that Dave Abrams would not need to spend as many hours changing over the equipment. Cllr Holmes thanked the Clerk for the good work in determining what monies needed to be spent.

**8) Summary of actions agreed:**

- The Clerk to chase report from Thurlows Countryside re ponds.
- Meeting in the Parish Office at 2pm on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2008 to review footpath survey reports. Cllrs Mrs Barney, Mrs Chippette, Mrs Fern, Mrs Heath and Mrs Weir volunteered to attend.
- The Clerk to chase up letter of confirmation from RDC that works had been carried out satisfactorily by the required deadline re. open space.
- Signage to be put up by memorial plaques and adopt new policy for non acceptance of remembrance tributes.

Chairman