

WELWYN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEISURE FACILITIES & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE HELD ON TUESDAY 12th SEPTEMBER 2006 IN THE PARISH CENTRE, COMMENCING 7.30pm

(COUNCILLOR, JOHN BLACKBURN VOLUNTEERED TO TAKE THE MINUTES IN THE ABSENCE OF THE CLERK).

PRESENT: Chairman, Councillor J Blackburn and Councillors A Burnapp, C Passmore, J Roper and M Rowland.

APOLOGIES: Rebecca Findlay (Clerk)(Illness). Councillor M Benson (Illness)

IN ATTENDANCE: John Quinton (Grounds man)

2006/63 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:
It was **Resolved** that the Vice-Chairman, Councillor J. Blackburn take the seat for the meeting as The Chairman, Councillor M. Benson was unable to attend the meeting.

2006/64 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8th AUGUST 2006:
It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting were an accurate and correct record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

2006/65 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 8th AUGUST 2006:

- q **Remedial works to the pavilion:** On the playing fields walkabout following the last meeting it was agreed that the guttering most vulnerable to vandalism i.e. that on the front and left hand side of the building needs to be replaced by metal guttering and that at the rear and right of the building could remain as plastic. In the absence of The Clerk John Quinton was asked to obtain a quotation for this work to include replacement of soffit boards where necessary.
- q **New scout headquarters lease at White Hill:** Councillor Benson expressed concern about the wording in the lease regarding possible future use of the land. In addition two other outstanding queries were still to be resolved. It was agreed that Councillors Benson and Roper should meet with The Clerk to clarify the issues prior to taking them up with the solicitors.
- q **Youth Shelter:** John Quinton reported that he understood that Monster Play Systems have been instructed to proceed as set out in the minutes of the last meeting. However clarification is needed as to who is to be responsible for producing the necessary warning notice regarding anti-vandal paint, and additional work to the roof was identified on the walk about i.e. replacement of rivets missing from the roof panels.

2006/66 CLEANER WELWYN WEEK:
It was agreed that the working party should be reconvened with the first meeting to be held during October to agree a chairman and the dates for next year's week. The working party should have representatives from all wards. J Blackburn agreed to arrange the first meeting. It was agreed that subsequent meetings would not be needed until the New Year.

2006/67 HERITAGE OPEN DAYS:
A letter from the Chairman of Welwyn Planning and Amenity Group has been received by the Chairman of the Parish Council on this subject. This letter says that the Group has

decided not to proceed with Heritage Open Days in Welwyn either this year or in future years. The reasons for the decision are set out in detail in the letter. The Committee agreed that it supported the decision of the Planning and Amenity Group and the Parish Council Chairman was requested to respond to the letter to this effect. In addition the Clerk should write to County Councillor Malcolm Cowan conveying the decision of the Parish Council and setting out the reasons as given in the letter from the Planning and Amenity Group.

2006/68

CIVIC CENTRE:

- q **Lease:** A letter has been received from The Welwyn Hatfield Council Estates Valuer, proposing a new annual rent for the Civic Centre of £15,000. It was agreed that no decision could be made on this matter until the lease for the Civic Centre has been reviewed and consideration given to negotiation of an appropriate rent in the light of the terms of the lease and the future costs of material upkeep to the building. It was agreed that Councillors Roper, Blackburn, Benson and Skidmore should meet with The Clerk to review the terms of the lease and consider possible rent negotiations. Councillor Roper will arrange this meeting.
- q **New alarm system:** John Quinton reported that the new alarm system has been fitted but has not yet been connected to the mains because an additional mains spur is needed. Action on this is currently in the hands of the Clerk.
- q **Automatic Doors:** The Library is considering improving disabled access by installing automatic doors at library entrance. They have written and asked if we are considering installing automatic doors at the main entrance to the building. This would be a very expensive item. The Clerk was asked to advise on whether we should be considering doing this to improve disabled access.

2006/69

WELWYN CHRISTMAS LIGHTS:

The Clerk is awaiting responses from some of the companies contacted regarding the supply of new lights. She is planning to arrange meetings with three of the companies on her return.

2006/70

PLAYING FIELDS WALKABOUT:

This took place on 16th August 2006, Councillors Roper, Passmore and Blackburn being present as well as John Quinton. Notes of the findings were included with the papers sent out for the meeting.

1. **Repairs to pavilion:** dealt with in 2006/64.
2. **Hedge at the top of field:** the compliments on the cutting were well received.
3. **White Hill Centre:** The grounds man has already cleared the path along the right hand side of the building to allow egress from the fire exit. It was decided on further consideration that a 'keep clear fire exit' sign was not necessary. It was also agreed that replacement of the outside rear lights was not necessary for the time being. Since the original decision to allow the hedge to over grow and to remove the lights was taken on advice from the police to inhibit drug use behind the building, John Quinton was advised to raise the matter with the PCSO. There is a need too budget for the repair of rotting window frames, the cracked window and possibly for redecoration.
4. **Top play area: repair of play equipment-** the committee thought that there should be an annual budget to allow ongoing maintenance of play equipment. There should also be a rolling program of equipment replacement. The Clerk is to be asked whether the annual safety inspection of the play equipment has been carried out this year and whether any recommendations were made regarding repair.
5. **Cracks in tarmac footpath leading to youth shelter:** The Clerk is requested to ask Monster Play Systems to inspect the footpath when they visit the Youth Shelter.
6. **Youth shelter roof:** see item 2006/64.

7. **Lower play area:** concern was expressed that the damaged aerial runway this had not yet been replaced/repaired.

The old roundabout area could be utilised for a small skateboard facility.

Councillor Roper reported that Playdale had such items in their catalogue.

8. **Consider action to renovate top end of car park:** agreed to hold decision on this item pending the review of the future use of the playing fields.

2006/71

BUDGET ITEMS FOR 2007:

The grounds man has submitted two lists for consideration. The first list contains four items of machinery in order of priority that he sees as necessary for his work. For items 1,2, and 4 second hand could be considered. As additional information John Quinton was asked to add the estimated life of the proposed equipment. It was proposed and agreed that an annual budget of approximately £3,000 to £5,000 should be set which could be used to purchase such equipment. The second list consisted of several general items for consideration.

It was agreed that both lists should go forward as part of the budget discussions. No final decision would be made at this time about the size of the equipment budget but this would be part of the budget discussion with the chair of Finance Committee. The Chairman will produce a wish list of budget items arising out of these discussions for progression through the budget process.

Cliff Hassall E-mailed the Chair of the Parish Council asking for suggestions of items that the CMS of Herts CC could pay for out of their P3 budget for next year. Two suggestions for consideration were a notice board for Danesbury Park nature reserve and new benches for various parts of the Parish.

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CLOSE OF MEETING:

The chairman closed the meeting at 10.00 p.m.

Signed.....Chairman of Leisure facilities and Open Spaces Committee.

Date: 14th November 2006