

## MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT BANSONS ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2013

**PRESENT:** A. Kaye (vice chair) D. Gambadella C. Knights  
F. Knights J. Rushton B. Surtees

Officer: J. Cook (Deputy Clerk)

Public: One member of the public

### **31/13 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs A. Wingfield, R. Prosser and D. Roberts

### **32/13 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **33/13 Public participation**

The member of the public did not wish to address the committee.

### **34/13 To agree the minutes of the Open Spaces committee meeting held on 25 July 2013**

The minutes were reviewed and agreed and signed by the chairman.

### **35/13 Clerk's Report**

#### **Allotments**

Following receipt of a donation from Ongar Horticultural Society for notice boards at both allotment sites one had been erected at Moreton Rd allotments and a board had been purchased and would be erected at Castle St allotments in due course.

A map had been produced to allow the lease for Castle Street allotments to proceed with Castle Farm Trustees and this was ongoing with the Council's solicitor.

It had been established that rent increases require 12 months' notice to tenants. The recommended rise agreed at Environment and Open Spaces committee in April 2013 would now be considered at the next Finance committee meeting on 19 September.

#### **Ash trees**

The tree warden had not reported any instances of ash die back within the town.

#### **CCTV**

The cameras overlooking the QE II Jubilee Field (Love Lane) play area and Cerizay play area had been fitted and were working.

#### **Cemetery**

A copy of the original consecration certificate had been received with plans of the cemetery. The original consecration took place in December 1866 and the extension site in June 1940.

Notices appealing for owners not to allow their dogs to foul had been erected on all cemetery gates. A press release had been sent to local newspapers and to Ongar News for inclusion in the October edition.

The new IT software package would be installed in September and staff will then begin to input all cemetery records.

The draft revised Rules and Regulations would be added to the next Full Council agenda (10<sup>th</sup> October).

## **Open Spaces Committee minutes 12.09.13**

### **CPRE**

The Summer edition of Countryside Voice was available in the office should Councillors wish to view it.

### **Nature Reserve**

The replacement Perspex for the notice board had been fitted. The bank next to the entrance had been seeded and the grass was growing well. The gate at Turners Close had been removed.

### **Play areas**

Both Shelley Park and QE II Jubilee field (Love Lane) had been used for EFDC's Play in the Park sessions during the school holidays.

A funding bid to Sita Trust for the Rock Stakz project had been refused. Other avenues of funding would be explored.

The Council was liaising with EFDC Housing on a timescale to replace the garden fence on the resident's side of the hedge to prevent unauthorised access at Shelley Park.

### **Skate park**

As requested at the last Open Spaces meeting a sign for the park giving information on what to do in an emergency had been drafted and quotes were being obtained.

Signs had been ordered to place on the litter bins advising that they are multi use (dog waste allowed) free of charge from Keep Britain Tidy.

### **St Martin's church yard**

The draft Risk Assessment was considered by Human Resources committee and it was recommended to Full Council on 29 August to appoint a contractor for all Health and Safety requirements.

### **Committee budget**

Finance committee approved the recommendation to divide the skate park removal budget pending the signing of the lease.

### **36/13 Matters arising for report from the previous committee meeting**

There were no matters arising that were not on the Clerk's report or on the agenda.

### **37/13 Allotments**

To receive a report on the meeting with Ongar Allotment and Gardening Society (OAGS) on 16<sup>th</sup> August

Cllr Kaye, the Deputy Clerk and the Assistant to the Clerk met with representatives of OAGS. The notes of the meeting were reviewed.

### **Cllr B Surtees arrived at 7.50 pm.**

Members noted that OAGS were concerned that tenants on the neighbouring allotments were accessing water provided by the Council.

### **AGREED**

The Clerk to approach Castle Farm Trustees to ascertain if they would be willing to include the other allotment site into the existing lease.

To receive an update on improvements at the Moreton Road site

The Council had successfully sourced £1,913 towards the mains water supply at the site. A further grant application had been refused and further avenues of funding would be explored.

## **Open Spaces Committee minutes 12.09.13**

### **38/13 Cycle trail around Ongar**

To consider the feasibility of setting up a cycle trail around Ongar  
Councillors considered this suggestion and supported the idea in principal.

#### **AGREED**

Further information to be provided to the next meeting.

### **39/13 Litter and waste management**

To receive information on placing dog waste in general litter bins  
It had been confirmed that dog waste could now be placed in general litter bins. It was reported that the Council had provided specific dog bins on the understanding that dog waste had to be collected and disposed of separately.

#### **AGREED**

The Clerk to contact EFDC Waste and Recycling to see if they would take over the emptying of dog waste bins.

To note the arrangements for the litter picking event on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October  
The next litter picking event would be held in the Greensted ward. It was planned to meet at the entrance to the Nature Reserve.

#### **AGREED**

Advertising to be sent to local cubs, scouts and brownies.

### **40/13 Nature Reserve**

To note arrangements for the Open Day on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> September  
The Council had organised an Open Day at the Reserve in conjunction with EFDC's Countrycare where it was planned to announce the Council's receipt of Essex Wildlife Trust's "Living Landscapes Award" as well as the registration of the land under the Queen Elizabeth II Fields in Trust.

To receive a report on the clearance of vegetation near the river bank  
Vegetation had been cleared from the river bank between the High Street entrance and the footbridge to provide "viewing areas". Feedback from the public had been very positive with only one negative comment received. The Council had received requests to provide picnic benches in this area.

To consider a reduction in the limb of a White Poplar tree overhanging the site  
A tree located near the access steps had been highlighted as requiring work by the Council's tree surgeon as well as EFDC's tree officer Chris Neilan. Two branches were overhanging the access steps and ramp and should these break would fall directly into the path in the Nature Reserve, the pavement and the road. An estimate of £1000 had been received.

#### **AGREED**

To carry out the necessary work to the tree.

### **41/13 Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Field**

To consider replacing a damaged gate at the play area  
A wooden pedestrian gate nearest to the outdoor gym had been vandalised beyond repair. The gate had temporarily been locked shut to prevent access by animals.

Councillors felt that external funding would not be granted for replacement fencing.

## **Open Spaces Committee minutes 12.09.13**

### **AGREED**

To replace the existing gate with a metal gate compatible with new fencing  
Alternative designs and quotes for fencing to be obtained for the next committee meeting

To note that grant funding had been secured for the Double Cableway  
Councillors noted this information.

To note that the equipment had been ordered and agree the exact location  
The location was considered by the committee.

### **AGREED**

Cllrs D. Roberts, the committee chair, the Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk to hold a site visit with the contractor to determine the best location.

### **42/13 St Martin's Church Yard Working Party**

To confirm Cllr Keith Tait as a member of the working party  
Cllr Tait had requested that he join the working party. Cllr B. Surtees proposed that Cllr Tait join the working party and this was unanimously agreed.

### **AGREED**

To include Cllr K. Tait on the St Martin's church yard working party.

### **43/13 Open Spaces committee budget 2013/14**

To receive information on the committee budget  
Councillors noted the budget.

### **44/13 Unlisted items**

It was suggested that the Town Council requests that Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) clears the land to the rear of Pleasance car park to create a more useful area.

Essex County Council (ECC) would shortly be launching a public consultation on school transport. It was important that the Council responds to the consultation.

Transport for London would be launching a public consultation on removing bus fares for cash. It was important that the Council responds to the consultation.

The Clerk was asked to report highways defects to ECC Highways, namely repainting the pedestrian crossing outside the Budworth Hall and kerb defects in various locations.

The meeting closed at 8.59 pm.

Signed

Chairman

Date