



HORNDEAN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE GROUNDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT JUBILEE HALL ON MONDAY 04 JULY 2016 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs E Tickell (Chairman), Councillors D Alexander, M Burridge, Mrs D Denston, Mrs L Evans.

IN ATTENDANCE: Carla Baverstock-Jones, Executive Officer & Clerk to the Council, Matthew Madill, Grounds Manager, Sarah Guy, Senior Administrator (Minute Taker).

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE: There were no members of the public present.

G16/17 001 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Wren.

No apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sowden, who was absent. Cllr Sowden attended at 7.25pm after the meeting had closed and apologised for his absence.

G16/17 002 TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

G16/17 003 TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN TO THE GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The Chairman put forward Cllr Wren as Vice Chairman.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Wren be elected as Vice Chairman of the Grounds Committee. This was proposed by Cllr Mrs Denston and seconded by Cllr Alexander.

G16/17 004 TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE GROUNDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 07 MARCH 2016

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Grounds Committee Meeting held on 7th March 2016 be duly signed as a true record of the meeting.

This was proposed by Cllr Burridge and seconded by Cllr Mrs L Evans.

G16/17 005 TO OPEN THE MEETING TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were present.

G16/17 006 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE GROUNDS MANAGER IN RESPECT OF THE NEW TEAM MEMBERS AND THE CURRENT PLAN OF WORKS

The Grounds Manager gave a verbal update in respect of the new team members and the current plan of works. He explained that both new team members were settling in well and said the team dynamics appeared to be working well.

He spoke of upcoming works and recently completed works as below.

Upcoming works

- Tree Safety works at Downs Park and Jays Close.
- Bioblitz Nature Survey Event (dates 5th and 6th August 2016).
- Ragwort and Thistle pulling at Hazelton Common.
- Hedge cutting across the Parish.
- Grass cutting ongoing in the square and at St. Giles and strimming at all sites.
- Fixed point photography.
- Yeolls Copse/Catherington Lith works (Developers contribution fund) -- Agenda item for Council meeting on 25th July 2016.
- Catherington Lith hand rail repair.
- Christmas Tree lights on cedar in the square- currently awaiting 3 quotations.
- One staff member has been booked onto a pesticide spraying course.
- Local Nature Reserve application on Dell Piece West.

Recently completed works

- Jays Close hedge planting (funded by EHDC grant from Cllr D Evans). Still waiting on a picnic bench.
- Fencing repairs at Dell Piece West, due to arrival of cattle in the next month.
- Northfield Close- Installed dragon's teeth.
- Dealt with and tidied up- Large Ash Tree fell over in high winds at Yeolls Copse.

A discussion took place regarding the reintroduction of Facebook, to be used to inform the public of the activities of the Countryside Team, as well as other Parish Council matters and events. It was agreed that this would be an agenda item for a Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.25pm

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Chairman

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Dated

Proposed Terms of Reference of Grounds Committee (based on existing terms)

- (A). The provision, management and maintenance of countryside sites, other open spaces and amenity sites, recreation grounds, sports pitches and play areas and the closed Church Yard.
- (B). The annual making of recommendations to the Finance and General Purpose Committee and/ or Full Council in respect of budgetary requirements, rents and charges.
- (C). The making of recommendations as and when necessary to Full Council in respect of management agreements, lease terms and similar.
- (D). The making of recommendations to the Staff Committee regarding matters relating to the Council's staff engaged on the countryside, open spaces and amenities.
- (e). The provision and maintenance of street furniture and Council owned facilities including public seats, bus shelters, public notice boards and litter, salt, dog and grit bins.
- (F). The coordination and direction of the Council's environmental improvement programmes and related initiatives including the the initiation and coordination of plans to increase the awareness of conservation and environmental matters in the Parish.
- (G). The promotion of the Council's recreational facilities, access to Open Spaces, the use and improvement of public and permissive rights, the active involvement of volunteers including tree wardens and conservation volunteers in enhancing the Council's objectives of protecting and enhancing the Council's objectives of protecting and enhancing the natural environment and habitats of the Parish.



POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Subject to the foregoing, and to observance of decisions of the Council on matters of principle or policy, all the Council's powers and duties shall be delegated to the Standing Committees in accordance with the following terms of reference unless otherwise specified.

The acts and proceedings of a Committee shall:

- a) Where they are delegated to the Committee, so far as is legally permissible be deemed the acts and proceedings of the Council;
- b) Where expenditure has been agreed in the Budget for a specific item then such expenditure can be incurred and that fact will be reported to the next meeting of full Council for noting.
- c) As regards other matters, be subject to confirmation by the Council, and when confirmed shall be deemed the acts and proceedings of the Council;
- d) In all respects be subject to the provisions of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations except as otherwise determined by the Council.

The Council may at any time without prejudice to executive action already taken revoke any executive power delegated to a Committee.

GROUNDS COMMITTEE

- (a) Dealing with the provision, management and maintenance of Countryside sites, other open spaces and amenity sites, recreation grounds, sports pitches and play areas, and the closed churchyard, and the making of recommendations annually to the Policy and General Purposes Committee in respect of budgetary requirements, rents and charges, and/or management agreements/lease terms.
- (b) The making of recommendations to the Policy and General Purposes Committee regarding matters relating to the Council's staff engaged on countryside, open spaces and amenities.
- (c) Dealing with the provision and maintenance of street furniture and Town Council public owned facilities including Public Seats, Bus Shelters, Public Notice Boards, and Litter, Salt, Grit, Dog Bins;
- (d) The co-ordination and direction of the Council's environmental improvement programmes and related initiatives, including the initiation and co-ordination of plans to increase the awareness of conservation and environmental matters in the Parish;
- (e) To promote the Council's recreational facilities, the use and improvement of public and permissive Rights, and the active involvement of volunteers, including Tree Wardens and Conservation Volunteers in enhancing the Council's objectives of protecting and enhancing the natural environment and habitats of the parish.

DELEGATION TO CHAIRMEN GENERALLY

To cancel or postpone a meeting, owing to lack of business, or in the event of an emergency.

Subject: Notes: Workshop Open Spaces Meeting 11 April 2016

The key notes from the above meeting:

- To ascertain the expectations of all open spaces that HPC manage
- Clarify the obligations to our open spaces
- Countryside Team to for example choose soil/type of tree – Council decides policy eg., more trees to be planted etc., CT and EO to implement.
- The level of care of each area to be determined – over the top, middle and basic - Council policy decision being determined by the Management Plans and the resources required for that level of maintenance.
- SSSI sites are the only sites with rules to which we have to adhere. All other HPC land it is up to the Council as to how best to manage.
- Review of open spaces – people come first before wildlife.
- Formulate a framework policy on which to build Management Plans.
- Grounds Committee to recommend working party and to draw members from the whole Council to form WP to work on a framework policy.

HORNDEAN PARISH COUNCIL

GROUNDS

Date: 26th September 2016

AGENDA ITEM : 9

TITLE OF REPORT:

Repair and lower height of wooden fencing at Jubilee

BACKGROUND OF REPORT:

The wooden fence at Jubilee (by Jubilee Hall) has started to collapse and is in need of repair. This fence is an extension of the palisade (metal railing fence) that stops people from gaining access behind the houses along Avocet Way. As part of this repair, I am requesting that we also lower the height of this fence.

REASON OF REPORT:

People have been using this fenced off area as a hide away due to its seclusion. The high fence cannot be looked over easily providing an area for people to hang out unseen. By lowering the fence line height, it would deter people from using it as a hide away.

I have recently received reports of people gaining access into the area behind the houses and using very bad language. The woman who reported this was very concerned as she has young children who play in their garden. Upon investigation, we found a lot of litter (including clothes) and even discovered that one of the metal uprights from the palisade had been removed allowing easy access along the full length of the hedgerow (we have since repaired the palisade).

More recently (Monday 22nd August) I discovered that someone had been burning his or her school books in this area. Luckily, this was only a small fire but could have been much worse.

I hope that by lowering the height of the wooden fence by about 1 foot to a height of approximately 5 feet, would deter antisocial behaviours as the Grounds Team and any anyone else inclined to check (PCSO's etc.) could see over the top and into this area. I feel that reducing the height by 1 foot will still mean that the fence is high enough that it would take some effort to climb over.

Reducing the height would not only aid the team in keeping the area clear of anti-social behaviour, it would also assist us in doing visual inspections on the safety/maintenance of the trees.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The repair of this fence would be completed by the Grounds Team and be paid for out of the allocated budget for fencing.

The lowering of the height would not cost anymore but would take up more slightly more staff time. If we are to lower the height of the fence, we also may find that some extra posts may need replacing. If this is the case, the overall cost of repairing the fence line may rise slightly.

Report

I estimate that the cost of repairing the fence if we lower it will be:

35 wooden posts at 2.1 meter	£520.10
35 bags of Postcrete.	£159.95
Skillsaw Blade	£34.99
Total:	£715.04

If we keep the height as it currently is the cost of repairing this fence will be more. We will require longer posts and due to the weight of the fence could possibly need 2 bags of postcrete per post.

35 wooden posts at 2.4 meter	£577.15
70 bags of Postcrete	£319.90
Total:	£897.05

REPORT PREPARED BY: Matthew Madill, Grounds Manager

HORNDEAN PARISH COUNCIL

GROUNDS MEETING

Date: 26/09/16

AGENDA ITEM : 10

TITLE OF REPORT:

Reconsider the purchase of Heras fencing for woodland management

BACKGROUND OF REPORT:

It had been proposed and agreed that this financial year the Grounds Team be allowed to purchase 100 Heras fencing panels (with fittings) to be used across the sites Hazelton Common, Wagtail Copse, Catherington Down, Yoells Copse and Catherington Lith to protect cut hazel stools regrowth from deer grazing. This is to be reviewed with an option to extend this proposal for 2 further years allowing a total of 300 Heras fencing Panels to be purchased (Grounds Meeting: 28th September 2015).

REASON FOR REPORT:

While we need to look into protecting hazel coppice regrowth and the use of Heras fencing can be a successful option, I do not believe that it is suitable to role this out on our sites in the quantities that have been proposed.

Personal experience has found that Heras fencing is an option used more in private woodland management with large areas of hazel coppice and little to no public access (the hazel is more often than not being produced for commercial use). Heras fencing can be viewed as large, unsightly and very building site orientated. I honestly believe that this would lower the aesthetics of the sites that have been managed so well.

I would like to purpose that the Grounds Team do not purchase the Heras fencing at this time and be allowed to reassess all options taking into consideration the aesthetics of each site and our management requirements for the hazel coppice.

While I am not completely ruling out the use of Heras fencing or seeking to agree on an alternate option at this time I do feel three alternatives could be to cost up Chestnut Paling, build simple post and wire exclusions or to create woven coppice baskets around each stool. Chestnut Paling would look much better in the woodland environment however I fear this could be expensive while a simple post and wire netting exclusion around each small section of coppice stool would be equally as beneficial and cheaper. The cheapest/free option would be the creation of coppice baskets around stools. It is favoured by conservationists and could be a good volunteer task. Woven baskets only provides minimal protection to stools but this should not be a problem as we are not growing our Hazel for commercial use.

It was proposed that this year the Grounds Team be allocated £2025.00 to purchase the 1st year's supply of Heras fencing. I would request that this money stayed within the Grounds Teams budget until a decision is made on the best means of protecting the coppice stools.

Report prepared by: Matthew Madill, Grounds Manager