



Minutes of the meeting of the **PARKS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE** held at 7.30pm on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011, in The Radlett Centre, Radlett.

Present: Councillors C. Wilkins (Chairman), J Howley, D Lambert & G Walton

Officers: P Evans (Clerk).  
F Hills (Head of Grounds Maintenance)  
Mrs C Fletcher (Open Spaces officer)

**1. Apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received and accepted by the committee from Cllrs T Butwick and Mrs G Balen.

**2. Election of Vice Chairman.**

Cllr C Wilkins proposed Cllr D Lambert and this was seconded by Cllr J Howley.

**3. Declarations of Interest – none.**

**4. To adjourn the meeting for members of the public to address the Committee (in accordance with Standing Order 1d).**

No members of public were present.

**5. To review the Terms of Reference.**

Some amendments were suggested and the revised Terms of Reference are attached for reference.

**6. Chairman's Announcements**

Cllr C Wilkins welcomed Cllr G Walton to the committee. He updated members on the work that the ground staff have recently carried out to erect a fence along the northern edge of Cobden Hill Dell, and referred to issues raised by some parishioners. Cllr C Wilkins asked members if there were any issues or points that they would like him to raise at the Footpaths sub-committee meeting that he was attending the following day, and several queries were noted. Cllr C Wilkins updated the committee on the situation with a piece of land at The Rose Field that the Council has leased to First Place Nurseries.

**7. Clerk's Report**

This report had been previously circulated. Regarding Radlett Bowls Club, the Clerk explained that a new lease would not now be entered into but a contract covering the ground staff's obligations would be completed.

The Clerk asked for guidance regarding planters for Tykeside Gardens, as part of the "Green Plan" strategy. The Clerk circulated a brochure and, after some discussion, the Clerk was asked to purchase two planters from

Amenity Land Solutions Ltd (model RRM240 2.4m), each costing £1142 excluding VAT. It was agreed that these planters should be placed at Tykeside before the Lautertal visit.

The Clerk was asked to ensure that County Cllr Mrs C Clapper was credited in the next edition of *Around Radlett* for her help in funding two benches for Phillimore Recreation Ground. The Clerk was also asked to notify Cllr C Wilkins when the benches are installed so that he can convey the committee's thanks to County Cllr Mrs C Clapper.

Cllr D Lambert reported back to the committee his findings on how Letchmore Heath residents regard the children's play area. The play area is used regularly, though not by any great numbers, and it was thought that this could be partly owing to the signage from Back Lane. After some discussion on how the signage could be improved it was agreed that the Clerk contact Peter Harding at Herts County Council, who is currently running signage improvement projects, for his input. Also it was resolved that the Clerk write to management of The Three Horseshoes public house, to see whether the hedge around their property could be cut back.

**8. Head of Grounds Maintenance report.**

F Hills updated members on the works that would be carried out by grounds staff during the coming weeks. He reported some recent incidents of vandalism at the depot, including evidence of people having broken the fencing around the depot, and having climbed on the depot roof. There followed a discussion about what additional measures might deter would-be vandals and intruders and F Hills was asked to put some anti-vandalism paint on the roof.

Members were concerned about a perceived increase of beehives on the allotments. F Hills confirmed that only one allotment tenant has beehives, for which the tenant had previously obtained the committee's permission. After a short discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would write to the tenant instructing him to remove the recently added beehives.

**9. To consider the latest Financial Statements.**

The statements had previously been circulated and were noted. A few clarifications were sought by Cllr C Wilkins and were given by the Clerk.

**10. To receive the report regarding Letchmore Heath.**

A report had previously been circulated by the Clerk updating members on progress with repairing any defects highlighted in the recent play inspection report. There followed a discussion about the options for dealing with the multi play which had been rated as a moderate risk in the play inspection report. The discussion examined the options of either renovating the equipment to bring it up to standard, or to remove the equipment entirely. The Clerk told members about an initial quotation

that has been received for carrying out renovation, and it was agreed that more information should be gathered before a decision can be made, and therefore it was

***Resolved that Mrs C Fletcher go back to the company who have provided a quotation for renovation and ask for a revised quotation based on removing (not replacing) the wooden roof panel. Also that some additional quotations are obtained from other companies for refurbishing the multi play and presented to the committee at the July meeting.***

**11. To agree the schedule for tree works in 2011, and the contents of the tender.**

The Clerk had previously circulated a report on tree work, including a list of proposed tree work this year. After a short discussion it was

***Resolved that the list of tree work required in Letchmore Heath, Aldenham Green and The Radlett Centre be put out to tender and the tenders will be presented to the committee in July.***

**12. To receive an update of the plans for Salters Field.**

Cllr C Wilkins told members that he and the Clerk would be meeting with a possible developer on 20<sup>th</sup> May. The Clerk and Cllr C Wilkins would report on the outcome of this meeting at the next Full Council meeting.

**13. To consider a request from the tenant of allotment plot 76 to erect a shed.**

A letter from the tenant showing a plan of the proposed shed had previously been circulated. F Hills and Mrs C Fletcher showed members a photograph of plot 76 which they had taken that morning. Having considered the plan and looked at the photograph, the members agreed that the shed was too large within the context of the site, and that decking would not be appropriate. It was agreed that as a general guideline 7ft x 5ft was the maximum size for any shed on the allotments, and that this should be formalised in a general policy. Therefore it was

***Resolved that***

***(a) the Clerk writes to the tenant to advise him that permission had been denied for decking, but that he did have permission to erect a smaller shed of a maximum size of 7ft x 5ft.***

***(b) a guideline is drafted by the Clerk on the committee's policy on the erection of sheds on the allotments.***

**14. To decide the route for the Council's annual walkabout in June.**

The date of the walkabout had been set for Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June with a start time of 5pm. After some discussion it was

***Resolved that the walkabout will start at the depot, and then proceed to the King George V Playing Fields, and the dell, finishing up at the War Memorial. Mrs C Fletcher is to notify all councillors of the walkabout date and route.***

**15. To devise a plan for The Rose Field.**

Cllr C Wilkins recounted what work had been done to date to clear encroaching shrub and open up the area. He outlined that the ultimate goal is to create an accessible, informal open area suitable for picnicking. F Hills told members that the next steps were to take out the hawthorns from the centre of the field, clear out more shrub at the top and open it out at the bottom. It was agreed that members could review progress during their annual walkabout in June. At the same time they could look for any work which would be an appropriate project for volunteers from local faiths groups to undertake at the next Mitzvah Day event. F Hills advised that once the clearance work has been done, the next step would be to plant saplings to create a tree nursery at the top of the field. On the subject of the tree nursery, Cllr J Howley asked that the Clerk contact a local landowner who planted two large woods twenty years or so ago. These woods are due for thinning out and the landowner might be willing to donate some saplings. In order to keep a track of progress in The Rose Field, including the aim of creating a tree nursery, it was

***Resolved that***

***(a) F Hills gives an update on progress with The Rose Field at the July meeting.***

***(b) the Clerk writes to the local landowner, advising him that Aldenhams Parish Council are thinking of replanting over the next few years, and asking him whether he would be willing to donate any trees from his woods which need thinning out.***

**16. To receive a proposal from Hertsmere Borough Council to purchase part of Radlett Gardens in order to convert the former public toilets into a café.**

A letter from the Valuer at Hertsmere Borough Council had previously been circulated. The Clerk told members that he had responded by asking the Valuer to clarify the size of the land. After discussion about the pros and cons of the proposal it was acknowledged that this matter would have to be put to the Full Council, but agreed that in the meantime a response should be sent to Hertsmere BC. Therefore it was

***Resolved that the Clerk writes to Hertsmere Borough Council acknowledging that whilst councillors have severe reservations about the proposal, particularly the long-term viability of a café, the Council would not rule out selling the land subject to an independent valuation paid for by Hertsmere BC, and Hertsmere BC undertaking to move the electricity supply.***

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.46pm.

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Chairman

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Dated

Date of next meeting 13<sup>th</sup> July 2011.