

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS & CEMETERY
COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SHOTTON HALL, PETERLEE

ON MONDAY 19th APRIL 2010

PRESENT: COUN. D LANGAN (CHAIR)

Mesdames: L Wood, J Black, S McDonnell
& J I Measor

Messrs: J Hardy, D Milsom, C J Metcalfe,
R Huitson, R Kyle, C Austin, J Alvey,
H Bennett MBE, G Cowie, R Jones
& E W Hall

MEMBERS WERE REMINDED OF THE NEED TO DISCLOSE ANY INTEREST, PREJUDICIAL OR PERSONAL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT.

107. TOWN CLERK

The Deputy Town Clerk advised Members that the Town Clerk had suffered a heart attack whilst on duty on Friday 16th April and had been admitted to hospital. He was awaiting an operation but was comfortable.

RECOMMENDED that a get well card be sent to Mr Arthur with the Council's best wishes for a speedy recovery.

108. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors;- T Jones (sore throat), M Milsom (recovering from operation), W M Jeffrey (recovery from operation) and C Robbins (not well).

RECOMMENDED that the apologies submitted, be accepted.

109. THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved.

MATTERS ARISING:-

a) Minute No. 97(b) – Replacement of Case 4210 – Agricultural Tractor

At the Council meeting it had been resolved that consideration of this matter be deferred to a future meeting.

b) Minute No. 97(c) Cemetery CCTV

At the Council meeting it had been resolved that the works relating to CCTV, as detailed in the previous report considered at the Parks & Cemetery meeting, be agreed.

c) Minute No. 103 – Window Cleaning Services – Shotton Hall

At the Council meeting it had been resolved a further report be awaited on this matter giving the details of the process that had been followed in obtaining prices for the services.

110. PARKS SUPERVISOR'S PROGRESS REPORT, a copy of which had been circulated to Members, was considered under the following headings:-

a) OVER VIEW OF WINTER MAINTENANCE

The information contained below was an overview of maintenance works on a per site basis either carried out or due to be carried out April/May 2010:-

b) SPORTS/FINE TURF

Bowling greens would be playable on 17th April, prior to first matches on 22nd April. Both greens had been aerated, scarified and treated with lawn sand. Early feedback from both chairpersons was positive. Additionally, at Eden Lane a hawthorn hedge had been replanted alongside the perimeter fencing.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

c) CRICKET

Wickets were being prepared (rolled etc), together with first cut of the season week commencing 12th April prior to first “practice match” on 18th April. Perimeter seating had been repaired and painted and was checked on a regular basis for sign of vandalism.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

d) RUGBY

Due to the volume of games on pitch three at Helford Road and also the number of rugby festivals being played, maintenance had consisted of spiking and rolling only. Seaham Town Council would be contacted to implement a regime of “softening” of the playing surface using the Weidenmann deep aerator. The Helford area was becoming problematic with regard to litter from sports teams and spectators alike and he proposed contacting the appropriate Team Managers.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

e) FOOTBALL

Due to Winter weather the football season would close at the back end of May, this would create a very short maintenance window for the Groundsman and would “clash” with other sports maintenance regimes, (bowls and cricket). He had increased the grounds team from three to four for the early part of the season. This would enable the team to achieve their usual high standards as opposed to prioritising which areas were not completed.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

f) LAWNED AREAS/FINE TURF

Due to a combination of salt damage from the Winter maintenance regime and also from mole damage, areas of Shotton Hall and the Remembrance Garden within Peterlee Cemetery would require re-turfing (Shotton Hall) and a combination of re-turfing/re-seeding (Cemetery).

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

g) DENE PARKS

Problem areas were continuing to be identified and actioned as problems occurred, e.g. removal of shopping trolleys, fallen tree limbs removed, problem litter areas identified. Needle finds (sharps) were now formally recorded across all areas via “incident sheets” with information conveyed to Durham Constabulary on a monthly basis.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

h) PETERLEE LEISURE GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

Members were advised of potential developments at the Lowhills Road and Thorntree Gill Leisure Garden sites. Several meetings had been held with the Leisure Gardens Committee with regards to the feasibility of projects aimed at reducing the current waiting list from both Leisure Garden sites. There was currently a surplus plot at Lowhills Road (Plot 9) which was suitable for raised beds. The Supervisor confirmed that full consideration had been given to the sewer running under this plot and previous soil contamination.

He had spoken to Groundwork Trust with regards to funding and confirmed that £1,500.00 had been secured by Peterlee Leisure Gardens Association, (see attached letter), and there may also be future funding for the Thorntree Gill site, particularly in relation to the road surfacing and refurbishment of the “rain shelter” within the site.

The current Leisure Gardens Committee were already running a healthy eating co-operative in conjunction with Groundwork Trust at the Lowhills site.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- i) Develop Plot 9 using monies from Groundwork Trust/Peterlee Leisure Gardens Association in line with the Leisure Gardeners letter dated 25th March 2010.**
- ii) Further talks with Groundwork Trust regarding the possible future funding of Thorntree Gill site and the further development /training of the Peterlee Leisure Gardeners Association.**

i) ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT MANAGING ALLOTMENTS COURSE - 24TH MARCH 2010, COUNTY HALL, DURHAM

Members were requested to note the attendance of the Parks Supervisor and Councillor J Alvey on the above Course.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

j) REPLACEMENT GARDENER/TRACTOR DRIVER

Members were requested to approve the intention to replace the former scale 4 Gardener/Tractor Driver, Mr J Clish, who retired in October 2009. Due to the timing of Mr Clish's retirement and in attempt to maximize wage savings (£9,000.00), it was considered appropriate to re-appoint this post within the Spring season of 2010.

RECOMMENDED that permission be given for the post of Scale 4 Gardener be advertised.

k) PARKS DEPARTMENT VEHICLE INVENTORY 2010

Member's views were requested in respect of the 2010 vehicle and plant itinerary which had recently been updated to include the acquisition of the two Ford Ranger vehicles purchased in 2009.

Members were requested to note the age of some of the equipment in relation to future replacement indicators. At present, all machinery is purchased outright from the Parks budget, with any surplus/redundant machinery either being traded in or sold by sealed tender in line with audit protocols.

The budget for vehicles/plant would come from capital purchases with vehicles 1A to 9A coming under this heading, the present budget being £20,000.00.

The other vehicles from the itinerary generally would come under the second budget heading of small tools/equipment currently £9,000.00.

Procurement of vehicles/plant was currently undertaken by the Parks Supervisor and Town Clerk. Any specialist advice was previously available through Mr George Gray (formerly Easington District

Council) who had since retired. Maintenance of vehicles and equipment was currently provided by Durham County Council.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED further consideration of the replacement of the Case 4210 Tractor, be given at the Council Meeting.

l) MUGA Usage for March was 127.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

m) Trolleys

A local Member asked for progress with the invitation extended to the Manager of Asda to attend a future meeting to discuss the problem of abandoned shopping trolleys.

The Parks Supervisor advised on a retrieval scheme with a company called Trolleywise that he was in discussion with.

RECOMMENDED the Manager be contacted once again with an invite to attend a future meeting.

n) Eden Lane Cemetery

Burials for March 6 Ashes for March 2

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

111. SPORT RELIEF EVENT – SUNDAY 21ST MARCH 2010

A copy of a Report from the Sports Development Officer on this event had been circulated at the meeting.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

112. HORSE IMPOUNDING INCIDENT AT THE PONY FIELDS – 22ND MARCH 2010

The Supervisor advised Members of an incident at the locally known ‘pony fields’, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member for their information.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- a) a sign be erected in this field stating ‘ No Grazing Allowed’
- b) any horses/ponies tethered or left to graze on any Town Council owned land be impounded
- c) a press release be drafted informing the public of this enforcement.

113. FITNESS FACTORY SIGN

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that a letter of complaint had been received from a local resident with regard to the above sign, a copy of which was circulated to each Member.

RECOMMENDED that the sign be taken down and a letter be sent to Mr and Mrs Lown, advising the Council’s decision on this matter.

114. EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED, THE COMMITTEE PASSED THE FORMAL RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS & PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING, PURSUANT TO THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT 1961 & THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985.

115. FILMING – GREAT NORTH AIR AMBULANCE

A request from Mandrill Television for permission to land a helicopter on the Town Council playing fields at Helford Road and the footage be publicised, a copy of which had been circulated to Members was considered.

RECOMMENDED that this request be granted.

116. NEW NEDL ELECTRICAL SUPPLY TO EDEN LANE DEPOT - TENDERS

The Deputy Town Clerk advised Members of quotations for the above works.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- i) **the quotation in the sum of £4,660.00 from Gus Robinson, be accepted.**
- ii) **The new NEDL supply at an additional cost of £908.28, be agreed.**
- iii) **The additional trench works that may be necessary be carried out “in house”, if possible.**

117. SKATEPARK UPDATE FOLLOWING MEETING AT PETERLEE YOUTH CENTRE ON 15TH APRIL 2010

The Deputy Town Clerk showed Members a sketch of the proposed skate park prepared by Record Playground Equipment, which was a similar scheme to that of Seaham Town Council's, and gave Members details of discussions on the scheme.

The Town Clerk had met with the Youth Club to allow them the opportunity to agree the suitability of the Scheme and amendments had been made to accommodate their requests. The Planning Section had been consulted and in an effort to carry the Scheme forward, it was suggested the Skate park be positioned in the current Woodhouse Park site. The benefits of added value for the Seaham and Peterlee schemes was also reported.

RECOMMENDED that this item be deferred to Full Council.

118. ST. GEORGE'S DAY – FRIDAY 23RD APRIL 2010 – SHOTTON HALL

The Organiser of the Information Centre asked for Members' endorsement in booking entertainment for the above event, at a cost of £400.00.

RECOMMENDED that endorsement of this action, be agreed.

119. USE OF MUGA

The Deputy Town Clerk referred to the reduced rates (50%) for the Football and Rugby were coming to an end and it had been requested that consideration be given to this being extended to August 2010. This had been discussed at the recent meeting of the Helford Road Management Board.

RECOMMENDED that the 50% reduced rate for the MUGA be agreed until August 2010.