

PETERLEE TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARKS &
CEMETERY COMMITTEE

HELD ON MONDAY 10th SEPTEMBER 2012

PRESENT: COUN. J ALVEY (CHAIR)

Mesdames: L Wood, J Black, M Milsom
J I Measor

Messrs: D Milsom, C Austin, R Kyle,
C J Metcalfe, C Robbins, W M Jeffrey,
G Cowie, D Langan, C Watkins

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

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:- J Hardy (poorly), R Jones (poorly) and H Bennett MBE (holiday).

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

15. 2012 – MONITORING & EVALUATION SUPPORT DAY –
THE PAVILION, 25TH OCTOBER 2012

The Town Clerk advised a request from the County FA to hold the Support Day meeting at the funded site, on 25th October 2012 at 1.00pm. This would be a good opportunity for both the CFA Development Manager and the Football Foundation Investment Programme Manager to view The Pavilion.

RECOMMENDED that this request be agreed to.

16. FRIENDS OF WOODHOUSE PARK – NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31ST JULY 2012

A copy of the notes of the above meeting, had been circulated to all Members for their information.

A discussion ensued in relation to the cotoneaster hedge.

RECOMMENDED that the Horticultural Supervisor prepare a Report for the next Meeting.

17. NOTES OF THE SKATE PARK WORKING PARTY OF THE 24TH AUGUST 2012

A copy of the notes of the above meeting had been circulated to all Members for their information.

Councillors W M Jeffrey and J Alvey conveyed their apologies for their non-attendance at this meeting.

A copy of the first draft of a Service Level Agreement between the Town Council, Woodhouse Park and One Point Service Youth Workers, had been circulated to each Member, for their comments on this working document.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- i) **an inclusion be added to this document stating that the weather forecast must to be checked on a regular basis, so if there was any inclement weather at least 48 hours cancellation notice could be given for any events being held.**
- ii) **this document be updated with the above inclusion.**

18. REPORT OF THE PARKS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER – PROPOSED BMX PUMP TRACK, WOODHOUSE PARK

A copy of the Parks Development Officer's report detailing the estimated timescales and costings had been circulated to all Members, for their consideration.

Councillor Alvey asked if this project could be incorporated into a neighbourhood watch scheme, as there could be potential funding available at Durham County Council.

RECOMMENDED that further investigation be made by the Horticultural Supervisor and report back to the next meeting.

19. THE REPORT OF THE HORTICULTURAL SUPERVISOR, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member, was considered under the following headings:

a) Woodhouse Park

The Skate Park was now fully functional again and the equipment damage costs would be reimbursed via an insurance claim to Zurich Municipal.

Several telephone complaints had been received from local residents against the running of a trial period to leave the Park open on an evening. Residents said they would be keen to attend a public meeting to discuss opening times, provision of services and use of this facility.

Additionally Durham County Council Probation Service has forged links with Woodhouse Park by hiring the community building for the Galant Project. Due to the success of this project the Probation Service had requested the use of the areas of Woodhouse Park for Community Payback schemes and also storage of equipment within the temporary cabins currently allocated to the Shinwell Group. Full Risk Assessments would need to be completed together with Service Level Agreements before any project could go ahead, however it was agreed that any partnership working with the Probation Service could only be beneficial for the Town Council.

RECOMMENDED that the Horticultural Supervisor prepare a Report after further investigations on this matter.

b) Play Areas

The Supervisor advised that all play areas were now open and had been left open for 24 hour periods, with no significant damage being reported to fence lines.

Early feedback suggested a mixed reaction from members of the public apart from Woodhouse Park which had been locked at 9pm due to complaints from the residents nearby.

A Member advised that he had received complaints of drug use at the Hampshire Place play area. The Horticultural Supervisor advised that he had not received any complaints and no needles had been found at this play area. He kept an incident log, a copy of which would be provided at the next meeting.

RECOMMENDED that the Horticultural Supervisor make further investigations as to possible future options for play areas as part of a comprehensive play strategy for Peterlee, and report back to Members.

c) Shotton Hall

It was advised that earlier problems associated with the erection of the “Jubilee Bell” had now been resolved and it was planned the bell would be in place shortly. As reported previously two metal posts had also been included in the overall price to alleviate parking problems and issues. There was still scope to include further posts and additional external furniture for future years which would further enhance the overall effect of the scheme.

A Member referred to the outstanding matter relating to the provision of a commemorative plaque for the late Town Clerk, Mr Tom Hunt which had been agreed some months ago. Members agreed that a memorial plaque be erected on the Jubilee Bell structure.

RECOMMENDED a plaque in memory of the late Town Clerk, Mr Tom Hunt, be erected on the Jubilee Bell structure, and this to be actioned as a matter of urgency.

d) Helford Road - Sports Pitches

Although there had been problems with field damage after the Peterlee Show, the Parks Department were confident that the damage could be rectified “in house” although it could be some weeks before the fields were fit to play on. The main problem being localised areas of oil spillage on the Show field Area. Additionally extra herras fencing had to be hired for security purposes and to preserve the area. The Horticultural Supervisor stated that he had

carried out risk assessments prior, during and after the event. He envisaged that within five weeks the pitches would be ready for use.

RECOMMENDED that:-

- i) The Town Clerk send a letter to Durham County Council (Education Department) asking permission to use the redundant football fields in Shotton Hall School, Peterlee,**
- ii) Members be kept updated on progress with this matter.**

e) Tree Problems/Disease

The suspected bacterial disease which had thought to be “Fire blight” present at Shotton Hall, Eden Lane Cemetery and Woodhouse Park had actually been identified as “bacterial canker” (*Pseudomonas Spp*) which was still a problem for the ornamental Cherry collection within Peterlee. Although a problem, the disease was not reportable to D.E.F.R.A. and it could be treated. He added that he would be implementing “in house” a cultural programme such as feeding and spraying where appropriate.

RECOMMENDED that the information given be noted.

f) “Tasty Plots” Lowhills Leisure Gardens,(Stonham Project)

A request for assistance had been received by the Parks Department for providing soil and wood chippings to enhance the successful “Tasty Plots” raised beds scheme. Peterlee Town Council had a small amount of surplus soil/leaf mould which would benefit the planting for next year. The Stonham project was aimed at Adults with emotional/learning difficulties and was to be co-ordinated by the Team based at Eden Lane.

A Member advised that he had recently visited this allotment and there were vegetables ready for picking, it looked as though it had not been tended to for a while.

RECOMMENDED that the soil and wood chippings be provided for the Tasty Plot scheme.

g) Car Park Lowhills Road

i) Gate

The Horticultural Supervisor advised that this gate was now in situ, and it would be opened by the Parks Staff 08.30 – 08.45am, and closed by the Attendants at 8.30pm daily.

Members discussed the situation with the bottle banks top be re-sited.

RECOMMENDED that the Horticultural Supervisor make investigations as to the re-siting of the bottle banks and report back to Members.

ii) Drainage

Following the severe rain several weeks ago there was a problem with the drainage in the adjacent car park reported by the residents of Olaman Walk. The drains were cleaned by the Parks Department and the problem was resolved.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

h) Summer Parks Inspections

The Summers Inspections had been carried out on 7th and 14th July 2012. The following sites had been visited and a list had been compiled with issues identified, which were to be actioned.

Saturday 7th July Inspection

Play Areas

Hearts of Oak

Woodhouse Park

Heath Close

Hampshire Place

Saturday 14th July Inspection

Hampshire Place Play Area - Fence line

Buildings

Hill Rigg House

Snowdrop Avenue – Horden

Eden Lane

Bowling Green and building

Community Building

The Pavilion

RECOMMENDED that the Horticultural Supervisor prioritise these items to be actioned.

20. EAST DURHAM CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – WEDNESDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2012, 2PM – BUREAU, PETERLEE

An invitation to attend the above Annual General Meeting had been received for any Member wishing to attend.

RECOMMENDED that the information given, be noted.

21. CASUAL VACANCY

The Town Clerk advised Members that notice would be advertised in the Town Council buildings from Wednesday 12th September to 2nd October 2012, in relation to the casual vacancy that existed in the Acre Rigg Ward. An election would be held if ten electors requested that the vacancy be filled by election.

RECOMMENDED the Town Clerk make the necessary arrangements with Durham County Council to put out the appropriate notice.

22. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC
IN VIEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM TO BE DISCUSSED, THE COMMITTEE WERE ASKED TO PASS THE FORMAL RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING, PERSUANT TO THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSIONS TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1961 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985.

23. SECURITY SERVICES

The Town Clerk advised that a letter had been received from the Solicitor of the Council's former security provider.

RECOMMENDED that the Town Clerk seek legal advice on the issue and report back on actions to be taken with regard to this letter, and other matters relating to former contracts and service provision.