

## STORRINGTON & SULLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Recreation and Property Committee held in The Chanctonbury Room, The Parish Hall, Thakeham Road, Storrington, on Wednesday, 14th July 2010, commencing at 7.00 p.m.**

**Present:** Mrs. L. Wheatley in the Chair, Mr. R. Carter, Mr. A. Head, Mr. C. Mason, Mr. D. Roper, and Mrs. A. Worthington-Leese.

**In Attendance:** 2 members of the public.

17. **Apologies for Absence.** Were received from Mr. R. Dawe (Holiday). The reason for absence was duly accepted.
18. **To Receive Declarations of Interest from Members.** Mrs. Wheatley expressed an interest in item 9 – Storrington Recreation Ground, Condition of Cricket Field.
19. **To Approve and Sign the Minutes of the Last Meeting held on the 2nd June 2010.** It had been noted at the Parish Council meeting on 23rd June, that there was no minute referring to Terms of Reference of Committees. It was reported that the responsibility for Pond Matters lay within the Terms of Reference for this committee but had historically been dealt with by the Infrastructure, Communications and Environment (ICE) Committee. It had been agreed to formally transfer responsibility to ICE. With this amendment the minutes were duly **APPROVED** as being a correct record of the proceedings thereat and were signed by the Chairman.
20. **Matters Arising :-**
  - (a) **Minute No. 10 – Football Pavilion Painting.** Members were advised that works would commence on 21st July 2010. R Burgess and Sons would be working around the hirers who had been advised of the potential issues with wet paint.
  - (b) **Minute No. 13 – Hall Hire – Unpaid Booking Fees – Update.** Proposals for repayment at £10 per month had been agreed and it was reported that the first instalment had been received.
21. **To consider the Inspection of Play Equipment Reports.** One report had been received and repairs had been made to two pieces of equipment at Storrington Recreation Ground. Other defects reported would be investigated.
22. **Ravenscroft Football Wall – To discuss Anti-Climb / Anti-Vandal Solutions.** Members were advised that the roof netting had been vandalised and the matter had been investigated by the police. Notices had been erected on the equipment stating that further incidents of vandalism would result in the closure of the facility. Members were encouraged to hear that repairs to the netting had been carried out by the local children, along with their parents and although there had been further attempts to destroy the net, repairs had once again been attempted. Members were advised of the difficulties involved in applying anti-climb paint or similar to the existing netting structure but the costs of replacing the structure with more robust materials would fall well outside of existing budgets. It was therefore **DECIDED.**

*That no further action could be taken at this stage.*

23. **W.C.R.A. Lease – Update.** Mrs Wheatley and Mr Head had attended a meeting with Mr Davies, representing the WCRA on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2010, where outstanding issues were discussed. Members had been provided with notes from this meeting but Mrs Wheatley addressed the main issues:

The matter of insurance cover was still in question as although public liability of £10 million, had now been arranged via two different insurance policies, the Parish Council had only been named on one. Mrs Worthington-Leese would continue to pursue this matter. WCRA had expressed a requirement for a survey to be carried out on the building before signing the lease but Mrs Wheatley and Mr Head explained that as they had been existing tenants since the construction of the building and held a repairing lease, this was an unreasonable request to which the Parish Council would not contribute. It had been reported that a deposit account held jointly between WCRA and the Parish Council had been closed some time ago and the Parish Council had requested that this be re-established with a balance of £2,000. WCRA had asked that this figure be reconsidered and members discussed this. It was **AGREED.**

*That WCRA arrange for the account to be opened with the sum of £1,000.*

The matter of a Sinking Fund was discussed and Mr Davies explained that with current reserves of less than £20,000, there was no scope for WCRA to invest thousands of pounds into a sinking fund. Members discussed this issue and whilst it was agreed that in ideal circumstances, a sinking fund would be appropriate it was recognised that WCRA was a registered charity, run by volunteer trustees and to insist upon such a fund would not be practical. It was therefore **DECIDED.**

*Not to proceed with the requirement of a Sinking Fund.*

Mrs Wheatley further reported that WCRA had agreed to pay nominal rent of £30, covering a period of 6 years. The Parish Council would be given details of all activities planned for the outside recreation areas and would be informed of any defects or repairs required to the building and surrounds. Mr Davies had asked that the Parish Council explore the possibility of adding the upkeep of the pathway up to the main doors of the leisure centre, to its existing Ground Maintenance Contract and passing the costs onto WCRA. It was **AGREED.**

*That Garden Care (Southern) be contacted for costings.*

24. **Friends of Meadowside – Update following meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> July.** Mrs Wheatley reported that she had attended a meeting with members of the Friends of Meadowside (FOM). Representatives from Horsham District Council had also attended this meeting and discussions took place regarding hopes for the future of the play area and the meadow. FOM had also had meetings with Saxon Weald who had provided details of funding sources and applications for grants were being made.

Mr. Mason took the Chair for the following item.

25. **Storrington Recreation Ground – Condition of Cricket Field.** Mr Mason explained that a great deal of work had been undertaken over recent years, to improve the drainage and condition of the Cricket Outfield / Recreation Ground. However, these works had not completely resolved all of the issues and a further site meeting had taken place on 4th June with the Agronomist. Recommendations for further drainage works along the car park end of the field had been made along with suggestions of seeding and spiking in the areas that were currently bare. Members discussed whether further spending could be justified considering the field was open to all for recreational purposes and could not be kept solely for the use of the cricket club. It was suggested that people should be encouraged to use other recreation areas for their activities, such as the Football pitches and Horemare field but this would be difficult to monitor. It was **DECIDED.**

*That significant funds had been spent in an effort to improve this area and the Parish Council would endeavour to do its best to keep the condition of the field to the highest possible standard. However, the cost of further works could not be justified at this time. The Leisure Centre would be contacted to ascertain whether any planned activities could take place on the other recreation fields in an effort to reduce the amount of usage of this particular area.*

Mrs Wheatley retook the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

26. **Sullington Recreation Ground – Safety Surfacing.** Eco-Scape had been contacted regarding the resurfacing of the problem areas and had passed the information onto its contractors. The measurements of the area had been provided and a quotation to lay the surface requested.
27. **Allotments – To Agree Policy regarding overgrown plots and repairs to Polytunnels.** Following a number of queries from ploholders at Ravenscroft, regarding overgrown plots, Members had been asked to discuss a policy for office staff to follow. One Particular plot had been allowed to fall into poor condition and the holder had not paid his annual rental or deposit so had been given notice to vacate the plot with immediate effect. However other plots appeared overgrown but had been paid for. Clause 4.3.3 of the Rental Agreement states that the tenant must keep the plot in good condition, free from weeds, with sections of the plot cultivated within specific timescales. The matter was discussed and it was **AGREED.**

*That Mr Roper and Mr Head would undertake routine inspections of the allotment site, reporting any problems at the meetings of this committee. The office would then commence initial written contact with the ploholder to resolve the problem. If no response is received within 14 days a further letter should be sent indicating*

*the need for immediate action to rectify the issues. If there is still no action, a final letter should be sent after a further 7 days giving the plot holder notice to quit.*

The issue of polytunnels was raised and it was confirmed that minor repairs to existing structures were acceptable but any that fall into disrepair should be dismantled and permanently removed.

28. **To consider the addition of cover for Lorega Loss Recovery to Parish Council Insurance Policy at an additional cost of £239.40.** This additional cover would provide the services of a professional loss adjuster to assist the council with any claims for their buildings, in excess of £5,000. Members discussed the benefits of such cover and it was **AGREED.**

*That recommendation be given to incorporate this additional cover into the Parish Council's insurance policy at a cost of £239.40.*

29. **Budget Review.** The Financial Budget Comparison to 14<sup>th</sup> July 2010, had been distributed to members. It was explained that the Parish Hall Repairs and Replacements expenditure currently stood at £3,637, against a budget of £5,000. Unexpected costs of £1,921 had been incurred for remedial electrical repairs. Mrs Wheatley reported that the income for Pavilion Hire would most likely fall short of the expected budget as Weightwatchers had given notice that they would be cancelling their bookings within the next few weeks. Pavilion Utility expenses were higher than anticipated due to the increase in utility charges, however part of this overspend was due to be received from the Football Club. Members expressed grave concerns regarding the failure of the Football Club to pay its bills on time. It was acknowledged that the bill for the shortfall from last year's utilities was sent late but it was felt that the monthly utility instalments and rent payments should be made promptly, without the need for an invoice to be produced by the office. The need to explore ways of using the pavilion to its full potential had been identified and enquiries would be made regarding the potential to lease the building externally upon expiry of the current lease. Ideas to make the building available to other sectors of the local community should also be explored. It was recognised that the office would need to be fully aware of the availability of the building and would therefore need full details of the Football Clubs fixtures, training dates and social events. It was **DECIDED.**

*That a letter should be sent to the Football Club advising them of the necessity to pay all bills promptly, and requesting that the outstanding amounts be paid within 7 days. The letter should also request details of intended usage of the pavilion.*

Mrs Wheatley reported that the amount of £5,000 would be received in respect of unclaimed Funding from Horsham District Council and it was suggested that approval should be sought during the next full council meeting, to vire these funds to the Pavilions Maintenance and Repairs and Replacements to Parish Hall Budget headings. It was **AGREED.**

*That this matter should be referred to full council for approval.*

30. **Documents for Councillors to Read.** There were no documents for Councillors to read.
31. **Health and Safety.** No issues were raised.
32. **Chairman's Announcements.** It had been reported that a number of Pavilions and Leisure Centres around the district had been broken into and staff at the local buildings had been notified.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55pm