

**REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2016**

**MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE**

**Chairman:** \* Barbara Green

**Councillors** \* Jo Clark  
Barbara Dickens  
\* Tony Edwards (ex officio)  
\* Raj Khiroya  
\* Jill Leeming  
Alison Preedy  
\* Martin Trevett  
\* Jane White (ex officio)

\* Denotes members present

**Officers present** Yvonne Merritt – Clerk  
Claire James – Deputy Clerk

There were three members of the public present.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**1. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS**

The concern of the Chairman of Friends of Chorleywood Common with respect to the legal aspects of the delegated powers of the orders was noted. It was confirmed that these concerns had been raised with Three Rivers District Council. Cllr Martin Trevett in his District role confirmed that TRDC had been assured by the Council's Solicitor that all aspects were legal and the orders were due to be introduced for the District from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. Members agreed that as the issues had been raised with the Parish, the Clerk would write to the District Solicitor with the concerns of its resident. Members considered whether the concerns raised were sufficient to stop the introduction of the orders in the Parish and agreed that they were not.

The Committee

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL**

- 1.1 That the Council adopt the orders for the Common, Grovewood and the Allotments
- 1.2 That the Rangers and Clerk be trained as Authorised Officers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices on behalf of the District Council
- 1.3 That the Rangers receive an increment of one spinal point once training has taken place and official authorisation from TRDC has been given

This was proposed from the Chair and agreed unanimously.

The Clerk went on to clarify how the orders would operate once they were introduced. It was agreed that the introduction of the orders should be in the next issue of Chorleywood Matters and the Beating of the Bounds could be used for publicity of the scheme. It was noted that more dog bins were required in the Chorleywood House Estate Grounds and this would be passed on to TRDC.

**15/82 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs Barbara Dickens and Alison Preedy

**15/83 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Martin Trevett declared an interest as an allotment holder

**15/84 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2016 that had been taken at Full Council on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016 with no amendments be approved as a true and correct record.

**15/85 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**15/69 Travellers:** The Clerk advised that the locks had been changed on the Cricket Club Permissive Parking Area Barrier. Quotes for the replacement height barriers at this and the Lorry Permissive parking area had been received just prior to the meeting. There were only two quotes as there were only two local fabricators:

Company A £1,680 per barrier

Company B £2,241.75 per Barrier

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To accept the cheapest quote from Company A

This was proposed from the Chair and agreed unanimously.

The Clerk advised that Abbots Langley Parish Clerk was meeting soon with the Solicitor who would act on behalf of the Parish Councils to deal with travellers should the need arise.

**15/79 Purchase of two new Rough Terrain Vehicles (RTV's):** The Clerk advised that the RTVs had been delivered and were having trackers fitted to them

**15/75 Four Year Vision – Signage:** The CLA were able to advise on signage for the permissive horse track. Chess Valley Horse Riders had advised that they did not want to give advice on the permissive horse track signage. The Clerk advised that she would be attending the Chiltern Conservation Board's Common Day the following day and would use the opportunity to network.

**15/86 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2015/16**

In response to a Member's question regarding the overspend on the budget line for grass cutting, the Clerk explained that as it had been so wet, the cut and lift had taken approximately a third more off the Common than the previous year. Grazing was now taking place twice a year, there had been issues with the collars on the Spring grazing cutting the period short, but this had been sorted for the later period of grazing.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To note the report.

**15/87 OFFICER'S REPORT**

**Recommendation 1 Provision of Potted Plant Holders** – Members were given the background to the provision of the pot holders. It was noted that only five had so far been sold. It was suggested that families would be advised when letters were sent after the burials and that the Cemetery rules would be amended.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

That pot holders now be made available all year round, not just during the winter months.

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

**Recommendation 2 Turfing of Graves** – Members were advised of the current process of turfing of graves when turf became available from elsewhere in the Cemetery and the proposal from the Rangers to now seed. It was understood that it would incur minimal additional cost and would be neater, nicer for the families and easier for the Rangers.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

That the change from turfing to seeding of graves be introduced as appropriate

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

**Recommendation 3 Trees Works** – Three quotes for necessary Tree works and surveys had been made available to Councillors as part of the Officers Report. The difference in the quotes was noted and it was agreed that as all three quotes were from reputable tree surgeons, in the interests of minimising expenditure, on this occasion the cheapest quote from Company B would be taken.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

That Company B would be chosen to undertake the works identified in the quotes.

This was proposed by Cllr Jane White, seconded by Cllr Martin Trevett and carried unanimously.

**Recommendation 4 Renewal of Parking Enforcement Contract 16/17** – It was noted that additional signage was being installed at the request of the Parish Council and that the patrol of the permissive parking area outside the Old Shepherd Public House was being included in the contract at no extra cost. Residents next to the Old Shepherd were to be given permits when the scheme became operational as these residents had paid for easements to their properties.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

That the renewal of the contract be accepted and that the Golf Club be asked for a similar contribution to the scheme as in previous years.

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

The rest of the report was then reviewed.

**Grovewood:** The Clerk advised that a meeting had been held with Friends of Grovewood with respect to the possibility of a management plan being established for Grovewood. She pointed out that this had been done three times before, had cost a considerable amount and then the plan had been rejected. The significant difference between maintenance and management of the wood had been noted. They were now waiting on reports from the Woodland Trust.

**Park Run:** It was noted that the Park Run would not be going ahead on the Common as it had not been possible to identify a suitable route.

**Allotments:** Members were advised that quotes were being sought for the fencing work at Copmans Wick. In the letter that would be going out to residents adjacent to the allotments, a note stating that dogs were not to let loose on the Allotments was to be included. It was noted that all gates from residences opening into the allotments were in fact illegal as no permission had ever been granted.

**Bee Orchids:** It was noted that horse riders had recently ridden across the area containing the bee orchids (not part of or even near the permissive horse track) one weekend and had destroyed more than 15% of the plants. It was considered to be a mindless act of vandalism and a press article had been issued. It was felt that if this continued all the bee orchids could be lost. It was agreed that the Clerk would go to the British Horse Society and would also report the incident to Natural England.

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To note the report

### **ALLOTMENTS**

#### **15/88 OCCUPATION**

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To note the occupation

#### **15/89 WAITING LISTS**

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To note the details on the waiting list.

### **LAWN CEMETERY**

#### **15/90 INTERMENTS**

The Committee

**RESOLVED**

To note the number of interments that had taken place.

### **COMMON AND GROVEWOOD**

#### **15/91 FOUR YEAR VISION**

The Clerk advised that she had come across a company that may offer a suitable surface for the permissive parking areas on the Common at a relatively low price and explained the process that they undertook. She would be following this up with the Open Spaces Society to confirm that the approach would be acceptable and legal and if confirmed, she would get quotes. Members asked if other Commons had used this surface and if so, could a visit be organised. It was also suggested that in addition to the permissive parking areas, the tracks to Cherry Tree Cottages and Artichoke Dell be considered. The Clerk would report back to a further committee meeting and meanwhile the Parking Areas Investigation item would be moved nearer the top of the list on the Four Year Vision.

It was suggested that Signage on the Common should be higher on the Priorities. It was felt that the Calendar of surveys was not as pressing as these came up regularly anyway. It was noted that the Clerk had been given the investigation of the Leisure trail as a top priority in her PDR by the Council. With respect to the item on Water Harvesting at the allotments, the Clerk explained the system that was in place at Croxley Green. It was noted that it worked well but was very costly, water pressure was also raised as an issue. It was felt that this could be revisited next year.

**15/92 WEBSITE**

Cllr Jane White gave a presentation on her findings and ideas for the Parish Council Website. She expressed the view that it was acceptable but a little dated but that there were a number of improvements that could be made to aid navigation and make information more accessible. A lot of the pages were very wordy and required perseverance to get to required information eg costs which were often at the bottom of a page. The Common was not promoted sufficiently and all the awards that the Common has were not obvious. It was suggested that the appropriate logos be displayed on the front page.

The Clerk advised Members that it had become clear that a lot of people did not know how to use the Common. This was based on the experience of the Common Ranger taking children out on walks on the Common. The Council needed to promote the common advising what is available on the Common and the suggestion of a Children's page on the website with access to quizzes etc or a format similar to the old 'I SPY' books may be a way forward. The idea of a Common Rangers 'blog' was also raised. The fixed point photography undertaken by a volunteer from Friends of Chorleywood Common was also discussed.

**GENERAL**

**15/93 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS**

See Recommendation 1.

**15/94 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Committee noted that for the recent Clean for the Queen event, Risk assessments had been completed and Health and Safety Notices and briefing had been given to volunteers taking part. Certificates and commemorative water bottles had been given to children participating in the event. It was noted that the commemorative water bottles had been paid for by County Councillor Chris Hayward out of his Locality budget. Thanks were to be passed on to him for this and also to the Junction at Christchurch who had provided very welcome tea, coffee and cakes. It was felt that following on from this successful event a similar exercise should be repeated.

**15/95 CLOSURE**

The meeting having commenced at 7.30 pm closed at 9.36pm.

Signed .....agreed via email..... Date 11/04/16.....

These minutes were agreed as a true and correct record at the Open Spaces meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Signed..... Date.....