

Report of the Grounds Committee to the Parish Council

The Committee met at 8.10 pm on **Monday 19th December 2016**, in Committee Room 1 at the Parish Hall, Great Baddow. Cllr Mrs S Young chaired the meeting.

Present: Cllrs Mrs S Young, K Ronaldson, Mrs C Shaw, A Sosin, T Miller, K Liley, Mrs D Ronaldson and Mrs V Sadowsky

In Attendance: The Clerk of the Council
 The Grounds Supervisor

570/16 Apologies

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs J Fuller and Mrs J Sosin.

571/16 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Registerable Non Pecuniary Interests.

572/16 Minutes

The minutes from the last meeting held on 26th September 2016 were signed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw.

573/16 Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

574/16 Clerk's Report

1. Cigarette Bin and Litter Bin in Recreation Ground

The matter of the installation of the litter bin and a cigarette bin in the Recreation Ground is being progressed by the Grounds Supervisor and Chelmsford City Council will be approached. Regarding item 375/16 (1), the City Council is still to be approached about changing the current wheelie bin for two normal size dog waste bins and they will be asked about installing the litterbin at the same time.

2. Recreation Ground Changing Rooms

The Clerk still needs to speak with Cannon Hygiene about the hand dryers.

3. Rothmans Place

The barriers at the Rothmans Place entrance to the Recreation Ground have now been installed.

4. Water Risk Management Survey

The showers in the changing rooms have now been re-commissioned and the Clerk is speaking to Clearwater Technology about the de-commissioning of the shower in the Recreation Ground Office. The Grounds Supervisor told the meeting that the irrigation system on the bowling green has now be de-commissioned for the winter. Prime Irrigation Ltd, who have been maintaining the system for many years, have given further information to the Clerk, following the Water Risk Management Survey and the Clerk now needs to speak to Clearwater Technology.

575/16 Recreation Ground

1. Litter Bins

The matter of additional litter bins was discussed. The Clerk and Grounds Supervisor told the meeting that currently the Council's staff empty these

bins and that any additional bins would increase the workload for those staff. They also expressed concerns about potential vandalism, if the current bin near the Toddlers Play Area is re-sited to the Youth Shelter/Swings/Basketball area.

It was proposed by Cllr A Sosin and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw that a new bin should be installed near the outdoor gym and that the bin near the Toddlers Play Area should be removed and a new one installed nearer the Youth Shelter/Swings/Basketball area. It was also proposed that the money will be taken from the ring-fenced monies that were set aside in previous years for the installation of street furniture. This was agreed.

2. Charges for Open Spaces

The Clerk circulated a short report about the current and potential charges for the use of the Open Spaces. The meeting was told that after April 2017, this will probably include Noakes Place.

Currently the charges for sports are reviewed and set annually by the Council. Fees for Boot Camps, exercise classes and fun fairs have also been set in the past but have not been reviewed, so it was recommended that these be added to the annual review of fees and charges. This was agreed.

Currently, the Council makes no charges for the use of the Recreation Grounds which is attached to the hire of the Millennium Centre or for events. It was recommended that a charge for hires attached to the use of the Millennium Centre should be set at £25.00. Regarding charges for events, the Clerk was asked to check with Chelmsford City Council about whether the Parish Council will be given power under the new agreement to charge for events in Noakes Place and to check what the City Council's policy is regarding charitable events.

3. Proludic Play Equipment

The Council has been advised by two playground equipment experts that the at the surface in this area does not require immediate renewal. The Clerk told the meeting that she was not in favour of re-surfacing the area under the bucket swing with the matting because the Council has been advised that it should consider re-surfacing the whole area with a wet pour surface. The Clerk was asked to check the budget for monies set aside for re-surfacing and also the S106 and CIL monies. Quotes will be obtained for installing wet pour around the whole Proludic equipment area.

The Grounds Supervisor reported to the meeting that the basketball hoop and net were both damaged and it was agreed to look at repairing these items.

576/16 Lawn Cemetery

A report from the Deputy Clerk has been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Grounds Committee, at its meeting on 24th March 2014, agreed that the purchase of a plot prior to need would be allowed, subject to the following conditions: that the person purchasing the plot is a parishioner; the purchase is limited to one plot per person; the fee charged will be double the current fee applicable for purchase of a plot for immediate use.

It was also agreed that an annual review should be undertaken to consider the number of plots being purchased prior to use, and the number of reserved plots being opened during the year. The following table shows the percentage of graves purchased prior to need (reserved) to the graves purchased for immediate use.

2009	6%
2010	9.4%
2011	9.5%
2012	3.2%
2013	8.7%
2014	2.9%
2015	0.35%
2016	11.10%

The 2016 figure shows an increase in the number of plots purchased prior to need, from one plot in 2015 to six plots in 2016. However, the total number of plots purchased in 2016 is 52 which is an increase on the 35 plots purchased in 2015.

The use of reserved plots has reduced slightly in 2016, where to date seven reserved plots have been opened for burial. There is obviously a loss of income when a reserved plot is used, as the Deed will have been paid for in advance rather than at the time of interment. However there does seem to be a reduction in the number of years elapsing between the purchase of the Deed and the use of the plot.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr A Sosin that the current conditions in place for the prior purchase of a plot should be continued. The number of years elapsing between purchase and use appears to be reducing and therefore the Council is not losing as much income as had been initially thought. This should continue to be reviewed on an annual basis. This was agreed.

577/16 Fees and Charges

The Clerk and Cllr Mrs S Young have met with representatives from the Bowling Club and from the Cricket Club. It was noted that during discussions, both clubs indicated that they think that the facilities can be looked after to the same standard, for less money. No suggestions were made about how this could be achieved and calculations undertaken using the information that was provided by the late Grounds Manager about the hours spent on each facility, show that the facilities were costing the Council about the same amount of money as the contractor is currently being paid. Enquiries will be made of other clubs in the locality about their maintenance bills.

At the meeting with the Bowling Club, Cllr Mrs S Young suggested that the Council may be looking at a rise of about 10-12% for next year, which would take the fee to about £6200.00. The Club Secretary has contacted the Clerk and indicated that the Club's committee would accept this kind of rise.

At the meeting with the Cricket Club, Cllr Mrs S Young suggested a fee that would be the equivalent of £70.00 a match, which seems to be the level of fee that is being charged by other local organisations. The representative from the Club said that the fee is what they pay at their other venues and so the Club could go to that figure. However, for the thirty matches that the Cricket Club play under the terms of the licence, this would only mean an increase to £2100.00, which would only represent an increase to the Council of about £200-£250 a year.

The Clerk advised the meeting that the Council has agreed, under the terms of the licence granted to the Cricket Club, to provide the cricket facilities for a period of 10 years from 2014. Also, that any decision made about the fee chargeable must be reasonable under the terms of the licence.

It was proposed by Cllr A Sosin and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw that a recommendation will be made to the Finance & General Purpose committee that the fee payable by the Great Baddow Bowling Club for the green for the 2017/18 financial year will be £6200.00. This was agreed unanimously.

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw that a recommendation will be made to the Finance & General Purposes committee that the fee payable by the Great Baddow Cricket Club for the cricket pitch for the 2017/18 financial year will be £1260.00 plus changing rooms costs. It was agreed that the pre-payment and post-payment charges should be abandoned and so the fee for the 2017 season must be paid to the Council before 31st May 2017. A vote was taken on the proposal and 6 voted in favour, 1 against and there was 1 abstention. The proposal was carried.

578/16 Forward Plan

The Clerk had circulated an updated forward plan prior to the meeting. The following items were discussed:

- Lawn Cemetery – Electricity to cemetery shed and toilets. The future position will be changed to “Improve Facilities” from “Extra storage”. It was also agreed that the Clerk and the Ground Supervisor should investigate the closure of the toilets and establish whether they can now be opened.
- Lawn Cemetery – Establishment of a natural burial ground. Regarding the current position, the discussion about the establishment of a new area needs to be undertaken by the Council.
- Land – Negotiations regarding additional allotments. The Clerk confirmed that Notices to Quit were issued to the allotment tenants at Vicarage Lane, who have plots on the next parcel of land that will be required for cemetery, in January 2016. The notices will expire in January 2018. It is not expected that the next parcel of land will be required until at least 2026 but this will need to be confirmed once usage has been assessed.
- Recreation Ground/Noakes Place – Litter bins. Further to the earlier discussion, it was agreed that this item can be removed from the list.
- Recreation Ground – Refurbish toilets. The matter of the hand dryers is in hand and is being actioned.

The updated report was noted.

579/16 Matters for Information

- Cllr K Liley reported that he has received a number of complaints about the irregularity of the number 45 bus service. It was agreed to place the matter on the next Highways & Amenities committee agenda.
- In the absence of a specific item, the Grounds Supervisor updated the meeting on work undertaken in the last two weeks, since she took up the position. A lot of work has been carried out in the Blue Lion/Buckleys area



and this is now much improved. Work is also being carried out at the Toddlers Play Area and in Noakes Place. New planting will be taking place at the entrance to the Lawn Cemetery tomorrow and the Games Attendant is working this week to undertake the football renovations. The Grounds Supervisor was thanked for the update and it was agreed that a specific agenda item for an update report will appear on the March 2017 agenda.

580/16 Private and Confidential

It was resolved that the meeting would be closed to the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted in the following items. Proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw.



581/16 Bowling Club Lease

This matter was discussed briefly at the meeting with the Bowling Club and the Club Secretary agreed to check with their solicitor about what was happening. It has now been confirmed to the Clerk by the Club Secretary that the delay has been at their end and their solicitor will now be actioning the lease as quickly as possible.

582/16 Noakes Place Agreement

The Clerk reported that following a decision by the Council, this matter will now be referred to the Council's solicitor and it is hoped that this will be done before the end of the week.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.29 pm.

Signed..........Dated..........