

# **Report of the Grounds Committee to the Parish Council**

The Committee met at 8.02 pm on **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014**, in Committee Room 1 at the Parish Hall, Great Baddow. Cllr Mrs S Young chaired the meeting.

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

In Attendance:       The Assistant Clerk of the Council  
                          The Administrative Assistant  
                          The Grounds Manager

## **539/14 Apologies**

There were apologies for absence from Cllrs T Hatcher and J Fuller.

## **540/14 Declarations of Interests**

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

## **541/14 Public Question Time**

There were no members of the public present.

## **542/14 Minutes**

The minutes from the last meeting held on 22nd September 2014 were signed as a true record. Presented and proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr K Ronaldson.

## **543/14 Clerk's Report**

A report prepared by the Assistant Clerk had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following items were discussed:

### **1. New Play Equipment**

Installation of the new play equipment started on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014. Progress of the work is to be monitored as the contractors have not been on site every day. The Chairman also requested that the Grounds Manager carry out an inspection of the work prior to the Contractors leaving site.

### **2. Damaged Equipment in the Recreation Ground**

Following the report of damage to the Proludic equipment, a new platform has been ordered and delivered. It was agreed not to make a claim on the insurance as it would incur an excess charge of £250.00 and affect next years no claims discount.

The Wicksteed Outdoor Gym has lost 4 bump stops from both the Surfer and Space Walker. These have now been replaced and glued into position.

### **3. Repair to Church Wall**

The damage to the wall in front of the Church has now been repaired.

### **4. Bicycle Racks at the Parish Hall**

Two bicycle racks have recently been installed at the Parish Hall by members of the Grounds staff.

### **5. Oak Trees from Chelmsford City Council**

Two Oak trees have been provided by Chelmsford City Council and these have now been planted in line with the existing trees at the Rothmans end of the Recreation Ground.

#### **6. Lawn Cemetery**

Cllr A Sosin enquired whether a quotation had been obtained for the laying on of power to the Lawn Cemetery. The Assistant Clerk replied that this had not been investigated, and it was agreed to reconsider the item in the 2016/17 budget discussions.

#### **7. Use of Open Space in the Recreation Ground**

Cllr A Sosin enquired whether a report had been written regarding the public use of the Recreation Ground, when part of it has been hired for an event. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that this had not yet been completed.

#### **8. Tree Warden**

Cllr A Sosin enquired whether an advertisement had been placed in the Great Baddow Times for a Tree Warden and was informed that this had not yet been done. The Assistant Clerk will arrange for this to be placed in the next edition.

#### **9. Cemetery Mower**

Cllr Mrs S Young enquired whether the small mower for the cemetery had been purchased and the Grounds Manager replied that it had not.

Following the decision at the previous Grounds meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2014, it was agreed that this should be ordered from the current year budget.

#### **10. Land O/S The White Horse PH**

Cllr Mrs S Young enquired whether there was any update about the ownership of the land, and the Assistant Clerk replied that there was not.

#### **11. All Weather Sports Courts and Changing Rooms**

Cllr A Sosin enquired about the progress of a grant application for the resurfacing of the All Weather Sports Courts, and the refurbishment of the changing rooms. Cllr Mrs S Young agreed to contact a surveyor who will provide guide costs for these items, and may also be able to assist with any grant application. It was noted that proposals are currently underway for a 3G football pitch at South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre, and for an astroturf pitch with overhead dome at Great Baddow High School. Any new surface proposed for the All Weather Sports Courts would need to be Multi Use, to enable a variety of sports to continue to be played.

#### **12. Policy on Sky Lanterns**

Cllr Mrs S Young confirmed that the Council meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December had agreed to follow the decision of Essex County Council and prohibit the launching of sky lanterns from its land and buildings.

### **544/14 Ground Manager's Report**

The Grounds Manager reported that despite staff shortages, a number of projects had progressed, including the recent installation of a replacement bench at Plumtree Avenue and refurbishment of two bus shelters. The Grounds Manager also reported that the posts on the Recreation Ground Tennis Courts are loose and moving out of position. The Assistant Clerk will investigate whether a quotation has been received for replacement or remedial work.

**545/14 Recreation Ground**

1. Letter from Great Baddow Bowling Club regarding the condition of the green. The Grounds Manager reported that it had been difficult to maintain a good covering of grass in some areas, and particularly around the edges of the rinks and by the patio doors. This has resulted in the surface becoming slippery when it is wet. This is due in part to the limited time available to address such issues as the rinks are in use from early in the morning. The Grounds Manager will consider rescheduling staff rotas to enable work to be carried out at the most appropriate times, and will investigate the use of alternative products to provide an improved surface. The Assistant Clerk will reply to the Bowling Club.

Cllr Mrs S Young noted that negotiations should now be progressed on the renewal of the lease.

2. Letter from Mr Smith concerning the grass surface underneath the Outdoor Gym equipment. The Grounds Manager will investigate the problem and advised that in the long term, the area underneath the gym equipment should be properly surfaced. It was agreed that quotations should be obtained for the 2016/17 budget. It was also noted that the surface underneath the Proludic play equipment is uneven and requires attention. Cllr Mrs S Young will provide details of a surveyor who will be asked to supply quotations for remedial works to the surfaces underneath both the Outdoor Gym and the Proludic play equipment. These matters will be referred to the February meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee if the information is available. The Grounds Manager will view the ground underneath the Proludic equipment and take any short term remedial action. The Assistant Clerk will reply to Mr Smith.

3. Email complaint concerning the surface condition of the All Weather Sports Courts, and the increase to pitch fees. The Grounds staff have now cleaned the courts with an electric power washer, and the users have noted some improvement in the playing surface. Cllr Mrs S Young proposed that this cleaning procedure should be included in the regular maintenance schedule for the grounds staff, and that the Grounds Managers request for a petrol engine power washer should be included in the Forward Plan. It was agreed that the pitch fees are already heavily subsidised, and that no allowance will be given.

The Assistant Clerk confirmed that she had not received any information from Paul Van Damme at Chelmsford City Council with regard to the cost of installing bollards around the overspill car park at the Millenium Centre. This will be chased in the New Year.

**546/14 Forward Plan**

Due to the absence of The Clerk the Forward Plan has been deferred to the next meeting.

**547/14 Matters for Information**

There were no matters for information.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.40 pm.

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