

OPEN SESSION: There were 5 members of the public present.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 4th July 2018 at 7.00pm at Ringwood Gateway, The Furlong, Ringwood.

PRESENT: Cllr Andy Briers (Chairman)
Cllr Angela Wiseman (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Philip Day
Cllr Hilary Edge
Cllr Darren Loose
Cllr Anne Murphy
Cllr Gloria O'Reilly
Cllr Tony Ring
Cllr Tim Ward

IN ATTENDANCE: Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Nicola Vodden, Meetings Administrator
Cllr Jeremy Heron

OS/5792 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Members were present.

OS/5793 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared at this stage.

OS/5794 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6th June 2018, having been circulated, be approved and signed as a correct record.

With the agreement of all Members, item 7. Allotment rules, was brought forward on the agenda, as there were members of the public present, interested in the matter.

OS/5795 CHANGES TO ALLOTMENT RULES

Cllr Briers declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as he is an allotment holder. He continued to Chair the meeting and took part in the discussion.

Members were asked to consider the report on changes to the allotment rules (*Annex A*) and the Chairman invited members of the public to comment.

An allotment holder at Hightown Gardens commented on the inadequate policing of allotments, as some were not being worked. As this has an impact on other plots, he requested that this be monitored more closely and more regularly. With reference to the report and the growing of flowers, he highlighted the benefits to the environment of promoting bees, in this way, and how this helps with pollination and improved crops. He also commented that for some allotment holders, their fruit cages exceeded the proposed '20% of the plot' limit and this was not sufficient. He suggested that 25% would be more appropriate.

An allotment holder at Upper Kingston commented that there were a number of plots which had not been worked and this encouraged rabbits and rats. He agreed that more regular policing would identify this. In relation to the size of fruit cages, he thought that to specify a size limit was negative and against what people were trying to achieve, with cages enabling production of a valuable crop and unprotected crops providing food for animals. He commented on the lack of knowledge amongst allotment holders of the proposed amendments to the allotment rules and believed that there had been a breakdown in communication. He thought the proposals would add a level of confusion and the rules would be challenged and requested better consultation with allotment holders, to gain agreement, rather than impose new rules.

The Town Clerk indicated that the item had been prompted by a request for a poly-tunnel. It is not clear from the rules whether this type of 'building' would be allowed and he sought clarification from Members in this regard. The suggested change to the wording of the rules would enable officers to determine future requests without reference to the Committee.

He indicated that a variety of buildings were in existence on plots, some of which exceeded that stated in the current rules and some for which permission had not been sought. This has not been enforced against and it is proposed that the new rules would only apply from the next change of tenancy. He accepted the point made with regard to consultation of allotment holders and indicated that this was possible, but would delay the implementation of any changes to the rules.

Members agreed that the rules be clarified, but that allotment holders are advised of the proposed changes in relation to structures. It was agreed that the matter be deferred in order for this consultation process to take place. They decided that an invitation to comment on the proposals is to be circulated with the tenancy renewal letters, in September. It was also suggested that a small working party be formed, which includes allotment holders, to consider the comments received and to re-draft the rules.

In relation to the outstanding request for permission for a poly-tunnel, Members agreed that this be permitted on the condition that it does not exceed 25% of the entire plot.

RESOLVED: 1) That the request for a poly-tunnel be permitted on condition that it does not exceed 25% of the plot; and
2) That the proposed changes to the allotment rules, in relation to structures, be deferred to enable allotment holders to be consulted.

ACTION C Wilkins

**OS/5796
CARVERS CLUBHOUSE**

Members thanked The Manager for her report (*Annex B*) and approved of the new name for the facility 'Carvers Clubhouse'.

It was noted that a meeting with the Cricket Club had been arranged and proposals were also awaited from the Bowls Club. Members wished to ensure that The Manager be kept informed of these discussions and any outcomes that will impact on Carvers and the Clubhouse.

RESOLVED: That the Manager 's report be received.

ACTION C Bennett

OS/5797

IMPROVEMENT OF FENCE AT CARVERS PLAY AREA

Members considered the options available for replacement of the galvanised chain link fence at the play area (*Annex C*).

Whilst some would have preferred a similar fence to that which already skirts the south and west sides, as this would have created uniformity, Members agreed that securing the area and preventing unwarranted access was the purpose of the fence and overriding priority. Following discussions, it was decided that the fence be replaced with the Heras mesh fence.

RESOLVED: That the galvanised chain link fence, to the north and east of the play area at Carvers, be replaced with a new, 2m high green-coated Heras Triton welded mesh panel fence at a cost of £4,300.

ACTION C Wilkins

OS/5798

EVENTS MANAGEMENT

Pedal Car Grand Prix – Sunday 8th July 2018

Cllr Day informed Members that Hampshire Highways had attended Meeting House Lane to make repairs to the cobbles, however not all of the work has been completed and some of the work that has been done is not to a satisfactory standard. A complaint has been made and it is hoped that a team will be deployed to deal with certain areas before the race and a further road closure will be necessary, in due course, to complete the job properly.

Remembrance Day Service – 11th November 2018

Cllr Day reported that the plans for the Armistice Day Service are in hand and he would be speaking to Reverend Roberts to ascertain the support he needs from the Town Council.

Sharing of resources/experience

Cllr Day indicated that the Events Team (ET) were talking to the Carnival Committee to see if resources can be shared. In the same vein, Ringwood Rotary Club had organised a meeting, this month, to bring together all parties wishing to organise events in the town, but unfortunately this has been cancelled and rescheduled for September.

Event-Co-Ordinator role

Full Council agreed that there be a 6 month trial of the new Event Co-Ordinator role and further discussions would take place on what support the ET needs and how this will work in practice.

Fireworks

It is proposed that the fireworks event be on Sunday 4th November. The provider has been booked and the ET are in discussion with Ringwood Brewery to provide refreshments.

RESOLVED: That the update in respect of events be received.

OS/5799

IMPROVEMENTS AT THE CEMETERY

Members considered the two proposals for enhancement works at the cemetery (*Annex D*).

Storage/waste compound

This would improve the appearance of the cemetery by screening off an area of the car park for the skip, storage of wood chipping, green waste and possibly a salt bin. When considering

the options, it was noted that the difference in cost, should the grounds team be tasked with building the compound, would be in the region of £1,200, taking into consideration the cost of materials. However this would also impact on other duties. Members agreed that the compound be built and that a contractor be employed to undertake the work.

Planting of a hedge along the Rugby Club boundary

This has been awaited since the removal of the overgrown conifer hedge. A temporary mesh fence had been put in place, but this provides a more suitable and permanent solution. Members agreed the proposal.

RESOLVED: 1) That a contractor be engaged to construct the storage/waste area in the car park at the cemetery at a cost of £2,490 plus VAT; and
2) That the proposal to plant a Photinus Red Robin hedge on the boundary of the cemetery and the Rugby Club be approved at a cost of approximately £600.

ACTION C Wilkins

OS/5800 PROJECTS

The Town Clerk indicated that any progress made with projects, since the last meeting, had been highlighted in the reports (*Annex E*).

A4 Mansfield Road verge – Cllr Day offered to liaise with Ringwood Society to progress this project.

Cllr O’Reilly reported that the boardwalk in Pocket Park required some attention. The Town Clerk was aware and had liaised with the Grounds Foreman as to a suitable replacement that would be more durable, given its setting. It was noted that, with the proposed changes to earmarked reserves, it was intended that there be a fund available to deal with repairs and improvements to infrastructure, such as this. It was also a possibility that developers contributions could be used.

RESOLVED: That the update in respect of projects be received.

ACTION C Wilkins

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.06 pm.

Note: The text in the Action Boxes above does not form part of these minutes.

RECEIVED
25th July 2018

APPROVED
5th September 2018

TOWN MAYOR

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Changes to Allotment Garden Rules

1. Introduction and reason why decision required

- 1.1 Recent experiences and the latest round of inspections suggest that the rules need to be changed to:
 - 1.1.1 Ensure plots are used exclusively for cultivation by the tenant to produce vegetables or fruit for consumption by the tenant and his or her family; and
 - 1.1.2 Clarify the restriction on adding buildings and structures and facilitate its fair and consistent application.

2. Background information, options, impact assessment and risks

- 2.1. The current allotment garden rules provide:

“The tenant shall keep the allotment garden clean and in a good state of cultivation and fertility and in good condition” and

“The tenant shall not, without the written consent of the Council erect any building on the allotment garden, provided that consent shall not be refused under this sub-paragraph to the erection of any building reasonably necessary for the purpose of keeping hens or rabbits or for the storage of gardening implements. Consent under this Clause will not normally be given for any building, or buildings, that in total exceed 6’ x 8’ (2m x 2.4m) in size. Under no circumstances is asbestos, or any form of asbestos, to be used on any building, fence or structure on the allotment garden.”
- 2.2. Some tenants’ “cultivation” of their plots includes the growing of what appear to be Christmas trees and other non-food producing plants. This is contrary to the purposes of the Allotments Acts and the spirit of the agreements but, arguably at least, not contrary to their letter
- 2.3. A number of plots currently have upon them a variety of structures, including:
 - 2.3.1. Timber tool-sheds and potting-sheds;
 - 2.3.2. Timber summerhouses; and
 - 2.3.3. Greenhouses, poly-tunnels, fruit-cages and other covered frameworks of varying size, construction and degrees of permanence (although many considerably exceed 2m x 2.4m).
- 2.4. Some tenants have applied for permission for these structures whilst others have not. The use of the word “building” in the rules seems to have caused genuine uncertainty; with some tenants interpreting this as applying only to substantial and permanent structures like tool-sheds whilst others have construed it more widely. Officers seek to apply and enforce the rules fairly and proportionately but are unclear about (i) what structures are intended to be allowed without restriction, what permitted subject to prior approval only and what prohibited entirely and (ii) where prior approval is required, what criteria are to be applied.
- 2.5. Restrictions should only be applied as necessary to achieve reasonable policy objectives, which, it is suggested, would include the following
 - 2.5.1. Discouraging tenants from making expensive improvements to plots which cannot readily be removed when tenancies end (because they have no security of tenure and won’t want to lose their “investment” any more than the Council would want to pay compensation or incur cost in removing them);

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- 2.5.2. Ensuring that anything brought on to plots is safe and sufficiently well designed and maintained as not to be or become unacceptably unsightly or a nuisance to other tenants;
 - 2.5.3. Ensuring that plots are used only for permitted purposes and are properly cultivated (that is, that inappropriate, unnecessary or unused structures do not provide a pretext for insufficient cultivation or non-cultivation of plots for food production);
 - 2.5.4. Providing clear guidance to tenants about what is allowed that also enables officers to identify when enforcement action needs to be taken and to take it without the need for further decisions from members; and
 - 2.5.5. Reducing bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork.
- 2.6. If the foregoing policy objectives are accepted, it is suggested that the restriction be re-framed as follows:

“The tenant shall not erect or place any building or structure of any kind on the allotment garden except as follows:

- (a) A single timber tool-shed or potting shed of floor area not exceeding [6]m² is permitted;*
- (b) A single greenhouse of floor area not exceeding [6]m² is permitted;*
- (c) One or more poly-tunnels, fruit-cages or similar covered frameworks of floor area not exceeding in total [15]m² or [25]% of the garden (whichever is the smaller) are permitted; and*
- (d) One or more hen-coops or rabbit-hutches with covered runs of floor area not exceeding in total [25]% of the garden are permitted*

Provided that:

- (i) All buildings or structures shall be erected in a good and workman-like manner and maintained in a safe and good condition that causes no nuisance or annoyance to the tenant of any other garden;*
- (ii) No building or structure is to exceed [2.5]m in height;*
- (iii) All buildings or structures upon the garden shall at all times remain the property and responsibility of the tenant who may remove them at any time including upon termination of this agreement (howsoever arising)*
- (iv) Any building or structure must be removed upon the expiry of this agreement if so requested on behalf of the Council or at any other time upon the expiry of a reasonable period of notice in writing given on behalf of the Council to the effect that the Council, acting reasonably, considers that it is unused or does not otherwise fully comply with this agreement; and*
- (v) Under no circumstances whatsoever are any asbestos-containing materials to be brought onto the garden.*

- 2.6 Any change in the rules approved in principle by members will be formally incorporated in each tenancy agreement from each grant or next renewal but applied informally from now on. However, in view of the uncertain meaning and enforcement of current and past rules, officers do not propose to take any action in respect of any existing buildings or structures (whether they appear to comply with the new rules or not).

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

Whether to approve the suggested rule change. [RECOMMENDATION: Approve].

For further information, contact:

Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk Direct Dial: 01425 484720 Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk

RECREATION, LESIURE AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**4th July 2018****Monthly report from Manager, Carvers Clubhouse**

Due to annual leave this report was written on 22nd June 2018.

1. Branding and marketing

We have formerly adopted the name *Carvers Clubhouse* as a replacement for 'The Place' and will start using this in marketing materials immediately. Over the next few weeks we will have banners up around the play area to promote the café and the Clubhouse in lieu of more permanent signage which will take a little more time to put in place. Our facebook presence is improving and word is getting out about our new provision.

2. Café

The café is now operating its summer opening hours so will be open Monday to Saturday until the start of September. The menu has been generally very well received with some very positive comments online about the prices, quality and it being a very child friendly venue.

3. Hirers and activities in July

It is set to be a busy month as we come towards the start of the summer holidays.

The Young Carers had a very good first booking for their 'youth club' and are looking forward to returning every month.

We will be welcoming the NCS (National Citizens Service) in July. They will be with us Monday to Friday from 2nd July to 10th August. We are pleased that they are keen to do up to 7 days of practical volunteering work in Carvers Recreation Park including painting and tidying certain areas. On each of the days there will be a group consisting of 12-14 young people and 2 team leaders over the aged of 18 supervising this group with a member of our team dropping by every so often to check all is going well.

After identifying a need through the local health visiting team we have launched a 'Ringwood Twins Group' at the Clubhouse. This is a support club for parents of twins and more. Currently no group exists in the area and so parents have had to travel to Salisbury or Wimborne. They will be using the centre every fortnight.

22 Spanish students aged 12-14 from Talk a Lot New Forest will be using our facilities on the 4th July.

This month we will also start our partnership with Ringwood School to provide free lunches for those who would normally receive free school meals to tackle summer hunger. They will be able to select food from our regular menu. We have agreed a budget of up to £750 for the project with Ringwood School- £2 per lunch (we will subsidize the lunches as well as part of our contribution to this).

Finally we are also working with NFDC to host their summer roadshow. More details to follow.

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4. Youth Intervention Work

Chris and I had a useful meeting with the Ringwood Benefice Office to discuss the current status of RTC's youth service provision, use of Carvers Clubhouse and Ringwood Youth Club. It was agreed that it is not possible to combine targeted youth work and general community provision at the same venue and supported the direction that the Clubhouse was going in. We discussed options for youth work and agreed that the first stage was to have a very clear grasp of the scale of need and what the needs were. It was agreed that RTC could attend meetings of a local forum for schools to discuss provision for disadvantaged pupils and also to work with the Rotary who are undertaking a community asset mapping exercise as this might help in identifying local resources and gaps in provision.

5. Events

This month we are looking forward to hosting our second Skate Park competition, funded by NFDC. The centre and café will be open for the duration of the event.

For further information, contact:

Charmaine Bennett, Manager, Carvers Clubhouse
Direct dial: 01425 484727
Email: Charmaine.bennett@ringwood.gov.uk

Improvement of fence at Carvers Play Area

1. Introduction and reason why decision required

- 1.1 At the previous meeting of this committee, the possible replacement of the present concrete post and galvanised chain link fence was discussed and further information was requested about costs of different specifications of fence.

2. Background information, options, impact assessment and risks

- 2.1 The table below sets out some alternative specifications:

Description	Est. cost
New 2m high green-coated Heras Triton welded mesh panel fence to N. and E. sides of play area	£4,300
New 1.8m high galvanised only finish bow top railings to N. & E. sides	£7,850
Same on N. side only	£6,100
Same in green finish, N & E. sides	£8,665
Same in green finish on N. side only	£6,740

- 2.2 Mesh panel fencing is difficult to climb over because the gaps in the mesh are small and the panels flex under load. However, that very flexibility can lead to deformations that are difficult to correct. Railings would be significantly more durable but easier to climb over. The S. and W. sides of the Play Area have bow top railings with a galvanised only finish. The non-recurrent budget for all improvements at Carvers Recreation Ground this year is £10,000.

- 2.3 Volunteers from the National Citizen Service have expressed an interest in helping with community projects at Carvers, which seem likely to include re-painting some or all of the Pavilion, the storage sheds and whatever play equipment is not to be replaced.

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

Whether to replace the galvanised chain link fence at Carvers Play Area and, if so, what specification of replacement to recommend.

For further information, contact:

Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk

RECREATION, LEISURE & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE4th July 2018**Improvements at the Cemetery****1. Introduction and reason why decision required**

- 1.1 The current budget includes a non-recurrent budget of £3,000 for improvements to the Cemetery. This report sets out some suggestions and their estimated costs so that members can either agree specific measures or indicate their preferred priorities.

2. Background information, options, impact assessment and risks

- 2.1 Alternative arrangements for disposal of waste are now in effect; the large wheeled bin has been removed and a skip is used instead. This has to be readily accessible from Hightown Road but for aesthetic reasons ought to be screened. The first proposal is therefore to create a fenced compound in the car parking area to screen the skip. The opportunity will be taken to create a storage area for green waste, wood-chip, etc which may also have room for the salt bin. Competitive quotes for the work have been obtained and the cheapest is £2,490 plus VAT. Our Grounds Maintenance Staff could carry out the work at slightly lower cost (£2,294) but have very limited capacity for such tasks at present and, not being specialists in this kind of work, are unlikely to achieve the same quality of result as a commercial specialist. The fence would be of 1800mm featheredge boarded fencing on posts set in concrete at appropriate centres. Two 1500mm wide gates would be hung to conceal the skip when access isn't required.
- 2.2 The second proposal is the planting of a hedge along the boundary separating the cemetery from the Rugby Club premises. This has been awaiting attention since the overgrown conifer hedge was removed. The proposal is to plant a hedge of Photinus Red Robin (see Figure 1 below). This shrub would present an attractive green and red backdrop to a section of the cemetery that is much visited and would be relatively low maintenance. Cost is estimated at about £600 for the plants.
- 2.3 These two proposals are likely to exceed slightly the non-recurrent budget mentioned but any excess would be modest and could be met from other grounds maintenance budgets if members are content.

3. Issues for decision and any recommendations

Whether to approve either or both of the proposals for enhancement works described above.

For further information, contact:

Chris Wilkins, Town Clerk
Direct Dial: 01425 484720
Email: chris.wilkins@ringwood.gov.uk

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Figure 1 - Hedge of Photinus Red Robin



Item No.	Name	Recent developments	Resource use				Finish in 2018-19?	Notes
			Finance			Staff time		
			Budget	Spent to date	Predicted out-turn			
Projects with budgetary implications (bids included in 2018-19 budget)								
A1	Play equipment replacement	Revised tenders received will be appraised by evaluation panel on 16 th July.	£40,000	£0	£40,000	Moderate	Probable	Discussions with tenderers were required to clarify tenders and enable fair comparison.
A2	War Memorial repairs	£1,500 earmarked reserve established. Project Outline approved on 7 th Feb.		£125	Uncertain	Moderate	Probable	Detailed specification being prepared ahead of procurement exercise. 75% grant funding anticipated.
A3	Cemetery improvements	Utilities compound and new hedge approved at committee on 4 th July.	£3,000	£0	£3,000	Moderate	Probable	Orders will be placed with independent contractors for the fencing work and for purchase of the hedging plants following ratification at full Council.
A4	Mansfield Road verge	Woodland Trust/ Rotary donation of plants being explored	£1,160	£0	£1,160	Minimal	Probable	
A5	Carvers Rec improvements	Mesh fencing approved at committee meeting on 4 th July.	£10,000	£0	£10,000	Moderate	Probable	An order will be placed with independent contractors for the fencing work following ratification at full Council
A6	Front deck mower replacement	Delivery of new machine taken in April.	£20,000	£11,596	£11,596	Minimal	Definite	Amount spent includes trade in on old machine (£3,000). This item will not be updated further.
A7	WW1 Armistice – contribution to commemorative event	Details of ceremonies and parade and help needed from RTC are awaited from RBL	£1,000	£0	£1,000	Minimal	Probable	Transferred from P&F list
Projects with budgetary implications (not included in 2018-19 budget but added since)								
B1	Roller mower replacement	Approved at P&F in April. Delivery of new machine taken in April.		£4,750	£4,750	Minimal	Definite	Amount spent includes trade in on old machines (£750). This item will not be updated further.

B2	Bickerley tracks maintenance	Project suspended owing to insufficient support from residents		£0	£0	Moderate	N/A	Contractors' details passed to interested residents to consider own arrangements. This item will not be updated further.
B3	Pocket Park boardwalk repair/replacement	Dilapidations reported by members		£?				Officers will research options and costs.
Projects with no budgetary implications								
C1	Long Lane recreation facilities development feasibility study	Draft study report received will be considered by working party on 12 th July.				Moderate	Probable	
C2	Bickerley drainage works	Additional site remediation works completed. Further site meeting fixed at end of July to agree timetable for removal of fence and reinstatement works.				Moderate	Probable	Assurances received that site will be ready for fun fair.



