

Minutes of the SERVICES COMMITTEE Meeting

Held on Monday 1st February 2016 in the Council Office at 8.00pm

Cllrs.	Mr B Harding (Chairman)	Mrs S Williams
	Mrs M Heath (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs T Riley
	Mrs M Skelton	# Mr G Hollis
	Dr J Newby	# Mr W Davey
Clerk.	Mr J Coleman	
Co-Clerk	Mr R Hill	

1. Apologies for Absence
As denoted by # above.
2. Notification of any urgent matters to be taken under any other business.
Cllr. Skelton: Fix my Street. Cllr. Skelton advised the meeting that friends had alerted her to the Fix my Street website where the public can lodge highways complaints in their local areas. Cllr. Skelton reported that there were a lot of complaints from the Denham area on the website which was easier to use and report issues on than the TfB website.

Cllr. Skelton: Siding out of footpaths. Cllr. Skelton had observed that the pathway between Gerrards Cross and Tatling End had been sided out. It was not clear if Gerrards Cross Council had paid for this to be done or if TfB had done the work. The Co-Clerk to contact TfB to ascertain if they had done the work and if there were plans to do the same on the A412 footpath between the A40 junction to Denham Green.
3. Matters dealt with under urgent action since the last meeting on 4th January 2015
None.
4. Matters arising from the distributed and approved minutes of the Services Committee held on 4th January 2016 not dealt with in the agenda.
None.
5. Correspondence List
No requests had been made to the Clerk for copies of items on the correspondence list.
6. Financial Report
The latest Services Income and Expenditure report was distributed at the meeting and noted by the members.
7. Devolution of Services update
Report from the Co-Clerk as follows:

Overgrown Hedgerows and Trees

Following the representation by David Ward at the last meeting I have been trying to identify those properties in Higher Denham and other areas that are the offenders.

Letters are being issued as they are identified.

Identifying the properties is a long process and I would ask any councillor who sees a property that has any hedge, tree or shrub obstructing the highway or pavement to take a note of the address details and send them to me.

The Co-Clerk is following up on 3 properties in Redhill and a number in Higher Denham.

Grass Cutting Cycle and Higher Denham

I have met with the Higher Denham Community Association and proposed to them that they take on the responsibility of cutting the grass verges in Higher Denham.

They were quite receptive to the principle and we are to meet in the next few weeks to try and meet agreement. I am investigating how to calculate the amount of money to pay and to compare it with continuing to use Blue Sky.

They are wanting replace their mower as the one they currently have is not really suitable for the natural terrain of the grounds at the Glebe. The one they are seeking to purchase will have side blades that can be retracted and also automatically adjust to the varying heights of the ground that is being cut. Such a machine is commonly used by local authorities when cutting grass verges etc.

Maintenance of Public Rights of Way

I have met with Groundworks and they will continue to cut and maintain the Rights of Way we are responsible for. There is one small additional area for them to attend to and it so happens that its part of the 'Beating the Bounds' walk for 2016.

They have submitted a quotation for the works which is as follows

For clearance and maintenance of the devolved Rights of Way (2 cuts) £4,070.00 (plus VAT).

The costs in 2015/16 was £5,271.

In addition, they have quoted £406.00 clear the path through woodland on path DEN9/1 (needed for Beating the Bounds walk) and £50 for footpath DEN/26A/1 which leads to DEN54/1.

ROW to maintain	2015/2016	2016/2017	2016/17 Budget
All devolved ROWs	£5,271.00	£4070.00	
Path DEN 2/3		£406.00	
Path DEN26A/1		£50.00	
	Total Quote 2016/17	£4,526.00	£5,000.00

They will cut all the hedges etc. in February, before the birds nesting season, and will start the grass cutting and strimming March April. We will again do 2 cuts this year.

RECOMMEND the committee accept the quotation from Groundwork South for works as listed.

Drive Round Parish with Local Area Technician (LAT)

I had planned another Drive Round with our LAT on Wednesday 27 January unfortunately due to illness this had to be postponed.

8. The Pyghtle

The west side of the Pyghtle footpath has now been cleared by the ground staff at Denham Place. An area at the far end by the trees still needs to be cut back. Blue Sky will undertake the siding out of the footpath next week.

9. New Denham Allotments

A break-in had occurred on plots 94-98 and a goose had been stolen. The Police had been informed and a crime number issued. The bird has now been recovered.

A quote has been received from Blue Sky for the removal of the trees on plots 112 and 113. It is planned to cut the trees off at below ground level and poison the roots. The cost is £155.00 for each plot. The Co-Clerk had written to the owners of the house in Oxford Road that backs on to plot 112 asking them to remove an arbour over their back gate and a letter to the owner of the house that backs on to plot 113 (they are the plot holders on plot 113) informing them that their plot will no longer be available to rent and offering them another plot at the same rent. We await their replies.

The large derelict shed on plot 75 has been removed, however a lot of rubbish remains on the plot. A quote of £240.00 had been received from Blue Sky to remove all detritus from the plot.

Cllr. Heath raised the issue of the chickens on the allotments and if they were looked after properly; The Co-Clerk replied that the chickens were let out daily and kept within the regulations governing chickens on allotments.

PLAY AREAS, RECREATION GROUNDS AND AMENITY OPEN SPACES

10. Inspection Reports for Play Areas and Open Spaces by the Co-Clerk

An update from the Co-Clerk on Play Area matters had been circulated to the members prior to the meeting. The report follows:

Aldbourn Play Area

The Multi Play unit either must be repaired or removed before the next ROSPA report visit. ROSPA highlighted this equipment as in need of repair but because of its age the cost of repair quotes that we have received are so high as to indicate that the equipment should be replaced.

I have been contacted by a new company who claim to specialise in equipment renovation and repair and I am endeavouring to get a quote from them before a final decision on how to proceed is made.

If repairs costs continue to prove cost prohibitive I will request quotes for replacement as per the decision of last meeting. I hope if we do decide to proceed with replacing the equipment that we can get the work completed before the ROSPA visit so that we are able to save additional expenditure costs.

Tatling End Play Area

The Run and Fitness sessions have continued to run each Friday since the beginning of February and are enjoyed by all participants. The numbers are averaging 5 per week.

Following the decision of the committee at its last meeting I am preparing a tender process for the replace of the children's swings and the slides.

Cllr. Newby reported that the third step on the slide was broken and needed repairing. The Clerk will visit tomorrow, assess the damage and instruct the Handyman to effect a repair if deemed possible. If the unit cannot be repaired tape should be obtained and placed to prevent the unit being used as well, a notice must be installed stating that the unit is out of order. Cllr. Heath enquired as to the cost of a new slide; the Co-Clerk replied that it was around the 4k mark.

We do have some timber play equipment at this location and we have never had any evidence of vandalism or arson here I am intending to get quotes for both the steel and timber equipment so that we can decide on the most cost effective way to proceed.

Knighton Way Lane Play Area

The Co-Clerk will get detailed quotations for the supply of a suitable safety surface installation under the sprung rockers as this was another area of concern mentioned in the last ROSPA report.

Aldbourn Field

I very much regret to say the saga over any possible use of the Aldbourn/Tilehouse land continues to drag on.

Following another enquiry Mr Brian Dean, head of BCC HQ Assurance, Asset Management (Property), has informed us that we are no further forward on a decision as to what to do with this land.

Mr Dean reported that the County Council is (via its property consultants Carter Jonas) continuing to undertake a thorough review of all of its property assets and that this is a fairly lengthy process. Also, that the Children's Services department which has previously had control of the site (as it was held for school purposes) is still, apparently, going through the process of having the land declared surplus to requirements.

Mr Dean informs us, again, there would not be a problem offering a relatively short term tenancy (say 1-2 years) of the land in question, but accepts that we have already advised, quite understandably, that due to the expenditure in bringing the land back into a fit state, only a much longer term arrangement would be appropriate and this is something the County Council cannot, or will not, commit to until the review has been completed.

Mr Dean reminds us that unfortunately BCC currently have an embargo on any non-essential expenditure but, once we are through the winter period and the grass starts to grow again, if we let him know if it becomes a cause for concern he will try to arrange for some further basic maintenance work (grass cutting) to be done.

I will monitor the situation and keep in regular contact with Mr Dean, keep a check on the fields to try and ensure that the grass does not grow too long and attempt to get this matter resolved.

11. Denham Green Railings

The Clerk reported that the Handyman had now completed the installation of the new railings.

12. Denham Cricket Club

An email letter had been received today from the Chairman of Denham Cricket Club (DCC). The letter was requested to be noted in these minutes. It needs to be noted that the letter had not been received until today and that members had not had a chance to read it prior to the meeting and that it should be placed on the agenda for the March meeting. DCC had received a quotation for new practice nets of £29,600.00

The letter requested that DPC send a letter to them stating that we are in negotiation for a new long lease (c. 28 years) as previously granted by DPC. The letter further requested that DPC look at the proposed site for the new nets which would be situated by the old tennis court area. Cllr. Harding asked the Clerk to look back at the previous minutes and chase up the DCC Chairman for any information DPC had requested from him previously. Cllr. Harding also requested that a letter be drafted to indicate that DPC are renewing the DCC lease and to circulate the letter to the members present. Cllr. Harding noted that there is a DCC board meeting scheduled for February but there was no point in sending a representative from DPC to the meeting as all we are doing is renewing the lease. Cllr.

Skelton sought confirmation that DPC was not involved in the acquisition of the new nets; it was confirmed that the nets would be grant funded for which the DCC were totally responsible.

LIGHTING AND HIGHWAYS

LIGHTING MATTERS

13. Lighting Considerations

The consultation with residents regarding the proposed new lights in Newtown Road is under way. All residents have received letters inviting them to suggest where the new lights could be sited for best effect. Cllrs. Pamment and Bowen, both residents of Newtown Road are conducting the consultation.

HIGHWAY MATTERS

14. Denham Avenue

There had been no progress on the matter of procuring planters for the footpath at the junction of Village Road and the A412 due to the illness of our LAT. A licence to place the planters will be required from BCC. Cllr. Williams advised the meeting that she had found a source for planters at a reasonable cost.

15. Springbridge Direct Ltd.

The Clerk had written to the Principal Enforcement Officer at BCC and we await her reply. A copy of the letter had been circulated to members prior to the meeting and was noted.

16. Destruction of Verges Between Residential Properties and Esso Garage on A40

As with item 14 above, a licence will be required from BCC in order to install the bollards at this location.

The issue of parking in Old Mill Road by the A40 junction was raised. There have been a lot of complaints by residents of cars parked dangerously all day at this location. The parked cars effectively reduce the road width to one car. The Police have been informed and have been requested to monitor the situation. It was suggested that we approach the Police to ascertain if they still issue warning tickets/leaflets that could be placed on windscreens as this has proved to be effective in other areas. Cllr. Williams enquired if the gullies had been cleared at this location as flooding had added to the problem; the Co-Clerk replied that one side had definitely been cleared. Cllr Williams stated that this had not cured the problem and that the other side also needed clearing.

OTHER MATTERS

17. Any other business notified at 2 above

The matters raised in 2 above were discussed in 2 above.

18. Date of Next Meeting

To confirm the next scheduled meeting as Monday 7th March 2016 at 8pm in the Council Office.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

John Coleman-Clerk
Roy Hill-Co Clerk