



Minutes of the Meeting of the Property Committee held in the Council Chamber 1, Billingshurst Village Hall, Roman Way, Billingshurst, on Wednesday 20 May 2009 commencing at 7.30pm.

059/09 Attendance and Apologies for absence.

Those Present: Cllrs. B. Barnes (Chairman), P. Berry, C. Griffin, D. Homer, R. Margetts, D. Rands

Apologies: Cllrs. G. Collins (prior commitment), J. Edsor (work commitment), S. Buck (unwell). These apologies were duly noted and accepted.

Also Present: Parish Clerk B. Bell, Assistant Clerk E. Berry, Mr R. Deefholts, Mrs L. Wilding.

060/09 Election of Chairman. Cllr. Berry nominated Cllr. Barnes to the post of Chairman, was seconded by Cllr. Griffin and a vote was taken: In Favour 4; Abstentions 1. **AGREED.** Cllr. Barnes accepted the post of Chairman.

061/09 To Receive Declarations of interest and notification of changes to members' interests. None.

062/09 Election of Vice Chairman. Cllr. Barnes nominated Cllr. Homer to the post of Vice Chairman, and was seconded by Cllr. Berry. Cllr. Margetts nominated Cllr. Rands to the post of Vice Chairman, there being no seconder – **MOTION LOST.** A vote was taken on Cllr. Barnes's proposal that Cllr. Homer be nominated to the post of Vice Chairman: In Favour 3; Against 1; Abstentions 2. **AGREED.** Cllr. Homer accepted the post of Vice Chairman.

063/09 Public Adjournment.

Mr Ray Deefholts wished to speak about agenda item 9 on metal detecting. Mr Deefholts stated that he is a member of the Federation of Independent Detectorists and is seeking permission from the Council for himself and two friends to use metal detectors on Parish Council land, primarily Station Road Gardens. He explained that detecting can be carried out over sensitive areas and care is taken to lift only a small turf to minimise damage. Smaller items found will remain in the possession of the land owner i.e. the Parish Council, but Horsham Museum may be interested in these finds. Other finds may fall under the Treasure Act, such as more than two coins over 300 years old. The Finds Liaison Officer is notified who would send the find to the British Museum for valuation by the Valuation Committee. The British Museum may wish to purchase the item(s). Mr Deefholts confirmed that they are covered by £5 million public liability insurance and said he would send a copy of the certificate to the Clerk. He provided a copy of the Metal Detectors Licence Agreement to the Clerk.

064/09 Metal Detecting – consider request from member of the public to conduct metal detecting on Parish Council land.

Cllr. Griffin proposed that permission be given to Mr Deefholts and his two friends to metal detect on Parish Council land subject to the licence agreement, and provision of a copy of the public liability insurance certificate. Cllr. Berry seconded the proposal and a vote was taken: In Favour 5; Abstentions 1. **AGREED.**

065/09 To Approve Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 April 2009.

The draft minutes having been previously circulated were taken as read. Cllr. Homer proposed that the minutes be accepted and signed as a true record, was seconded by Cllr. Margetts and a vote taken: 5 in Favour, 1 Abstention. **AGREED.** The minutes were duly signed as a true record by the Chairman.

066/09 Matters Arising (For Information Only).

Cllr. Homer said that the new shelter in Natts Lane was being used as a smoking room by people working at the nearby factory. It was agreed that although the shelter was not sufficiently enclosed to require signage, the Clerk would arrange for no-smoking signs to be put up at the shelter.

- i. 051/09 (ii) - The Assistant Clerk has reported the problem with the bypass drainage channel to HDC.
- ii. 051/09 (iv) - Jim Gee at HDC has confirmed that the gaps around the head wall at Station Road Gardens have been filled, and the football field should be re-seeded soon. Cllr. Barnes confirmed that the head wall gaps had been filled.
- iii. 051/09 (v) - The electronic sign has finally been fitted in the front window of Budgens, but there is a communication problem between the sign and the modem and it is hoped that this will be rectified soon.
- iv. 051/09 (ix) - The upgraded street lights in Lower Station Road and Natts Lane are currently being installed.
- v. 051/09 (xi) - The Five Oaks dog bin has been installed and anti-fouling signage displayed.
- vi. 051/09 (xii) - The Dauxwood lease is due imminently from the Council's solicitor for signature by the Council.
- vii. 051/09 (xiii) - The drainage works in Jubilee Fields car park have been completed.
- viii. 051/09 (xix) - The Clerk wrote to the Billingshurst Children and Family Centre asking them to move the tree on the site of the former cricket pavilion to within the boundary of the leased area. The planting scheme was submitted after planning permission was granted, so the tree is not a condition of the planning permission.
- ix. 053/09 (i) - The Clerk wrote to the Bowmen of Billingshurst confirming that permission has been given for them to place a container for equipment on the middle/lower field at the lower end and requesting a copy of their risk assessment, which has still not yet been received. The Clerk also checked with HDC and confirms that planning permission is required for the proposed storage container.
- x. 053/09 (ii) - The Clerk negotiated a licence fee of £3,000 for the period 27/04/09 – 30/09/09 for the side loader vehicle driver training at Jubilee Fields. The Clerk also visited Jubilee Fields and took photographs of the condition of the car park and access road areas, copies were provided to HDC.
- xi. 053/09 (iii) - The meeting to discuss the spoil heaps and screen planting at Jubilee Fields has not been held yet.
- xii. 054/09 - The Clerk has written to WSCC to ask them to forward the implementation of bus shelters in Forge Way as per the S106 agreement for the Forge Way development.
- xiii. 055/09 - The Clerk wrote to BSRA asking whether there were any volunteers who may like to become involved with the skate park/football cage projects. The Clerk also contacted HDC who have confirmed that, where possible, they hope to link the equipment with the provision of the Snack Wagon.
- xiv. 056/09 - The Clerk has contacted IMI to accept the quotation for the Churchyard Inspections and said that IMI had confirmed that notices would have to be erected in the Churchyard imminently and had strongly advised that two advertisements were

placed in the newspaper. The Clerk said that as this was such a sensitive subject, it was important that this advice was heeded.

- xv. 057/09 (ii) – The Assistant Clerk has written to Plumridge & Peters to order the plaque for the Adversane Green bench.
- xvi. 057/09 (iii) - HDC confirmed that the Snack Wagon's programme has been provisionally agreed up until the end of the summer holidays.

067/09 Weekly Inspections of Play Equipment Reports.

Health & Safety checklist reports noted: A contractor has been contacted to action the missing bolt on play equipment in Cranham Avenue.

068/09 Lower Station Road Recreation Ground:

- i. Dauxwood Pre-School – consider request by the Pre-School to use Lower Station Road recreation ground for their annual sports day on 11 July 2009.

The Clerk has written to Dauxwood Pre-School requesting a copy of their public liability insurance, which has not yet been received. Cllr. Homer proposed that permission be given as previously, subject to receipt of the insurance copy, was seconded by Cllr. Rands and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.**

- ii. Report from meeting with surveyor into potential boundary dispute.

A meeting was held on Tuesday 12 May with Mr Nicholas Symes. Mr Symes has recommended that the owner of Fairlight be asked to prove that they have erected their chestnut paling fencing on the boundary line, and will confirm this course of action in writing. Cllr. Griffin asked why the Parish Council had not sent letters to the owner and the Clerk confirmed that the Council had sent letters but the owner had failed to reply, so the Committee had previously resolved to employ a surveyor.

069/09 Jubilee Fields:

- i. Billingshurst Football Club – consider request for donation towards cost of weed killing.

Cllr. Homer proposed that the Parish Council donates £685.00 minus VAT from the £3,000 the Parish Council is due to receive from Horsham District Council for the licence agreement for the side loader training. Cllr. Rands seconded the proposal which was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.**

- ii. Trim Trail Monkey Bars – consider quotation from Playsafe Playgrounds.

This was discussed after a member of the Community Forum suggested heightening the monkey bars. Playsafe Playgrounds provided two quotations:

- Refurbish existing Monkey Bars to make higher at a cost of £820 + VAT
- Install an additional taller set of Monkey Bars at a cost of £2,180 + VAT

It was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** not to go ahead with either suggestion at this time.

- iii. The Clerk showed photographs of a table which had been badly vandalised at Jubilee Fields Burnt Row Wood. Cllrs. Barnes and Leaney had repaired the bench and the Clerk thanked both Councillors for their hard work. This was **AGREED.**

070/09 Adversane Hall – consider quotation from D.J. Long for five yearly electrical inspection of the hall at £320.00 + VAT.

The hall is the property of the Parish Council; the lease is ambiguous as to whose responsibility it is to pay for this inspection. Cllr. Margetts proposed that the Parish Council instructs D.J. Long to carry out the electrical inspection of the Adversane Hall, was seconded by Cllr. Berry and a vote was taken: In Favour 5; Against 1. **AGREED.**

071/09 Adversane Green – report on the condition of the footpath.

A letter had been received from an Adversane resident which mentions that the footpath across the Green is in dreadful condition. It is not a designated footpath; Cllr. Berry provided some photographs of its condition. It was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to approach the Youth Offending Team via the Community Payback Scheme to have the grass encroachment on the pathway cleared.

072/09 Asbestos Inspections – consider inspection of Council buildings for asbestos.

The Clerk reported that at a recent Clerk's meeting, she had been made aware of the necessity to consider inspection of Council buildings for asbestos. Cllr. Barnes said that the Adversane Hall was a tin building and was unlikely to contain asbestos. Cllr. Rands said that asbestos is only dangerous if it is disturbed. Cllr. Barnes agreed to look at the Adversane Hall and proposed that the Parish Council does not order an inspection of its properties. Cllr. Griffin seconded the proposal and a vote was taken: In Favour 5; Against 1. This was **AGREED**.

073/09 Tree Inspections:

- i. **Consider annual inspection of tree numbers 620 and 569 at a cost of £250 + VAT by Ian Keen.**

The Clerk advised that the tree survey had recommended annual inspections of these trees in Cleveland Gardens. Cllr. Barnes said that he had inspected these two trees again and did not feel that there had been any change since last autumn, they seemed fairly healthy and in good condition. Cllr. Berry said an expert had advised an annual inspection, so the Council should do that. Cllr. Griffin said that the trees had been inspected annually by Cllr. Barnes and felt that the trees did not have to be inspected by an expert. Cllr. Homer questioned how the insurers would view the Council not undertaking the expert inspection. Cllr. Griffin proposed that Cllrs. Rands, Homer and Barnes should look at the trees and if they think that the trees are OK, the Committee should accept their advice. Cllr. Margetts seconded this proposal and a vote was taken: In Favour 5; Against 1. This was **AGREED**.

- ii. **Yew Tree in Churchyard – consider requesting an inspection by Ian Keen as this tree is dying back.**

The tree survey carried out last year did not specify a problem with this tree but in September last year Cllr. P. Davies advised the Clerk that the tree seemed to be dying back. The Clerk sent photographs to Ian Keen who recommended that the compost be removed from around its base as a matter of good hygiene and the tree should be re-inspected next year. Ian Keen has quoted £175 + VAT to inspect the tree. Cllr. Barnes had again inspected this tree and thought it was a lovely tree with approximately 10% of dieback but three branches are a problem. The Clerk said that an inspection would identify the cause of the dying back. Cllr. Barnes said that the grass cuttings had been cleared around the very bottom of the tree but there were still some in evidence and these should be cleared further. Cllr. Homer proposed that whilst he and Cllrs. Barnes and Rands inspect trees numbers 620 and 569 in Cleveland Gardens, the Yew Tree should be inspected at the same time and if they think that the trees are OK, the Committee should accept their advice, was seconded by Cllr. Griffin and a vote was taken: In Favour 5; Against 1. **AGREED**.

074/09 Forge Way:

- i. **Consider offer by Horsham District Council to transfer play area in Forge Way to the Parish Council.**

The Clerk reported that an informal request had been received from Horsham District Council Parks Services to transfer the play area at Forge Way to the Parish Council. Cllr. Rands proposed that the Parish Council does not accept the transfer of this play area, was seconded by Cllr. Griffin and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED**.

ii. Report from the meeting with the developer and West Sussex County Council Highways on the condition of the road following the development.

A meeting took place on Tuesday 19 May with WSCC Highways, Cllrs. Barnes and Yarham, Clerk and Assistant Clerk. The Clerk reported that the road will be planed off and surface dressed from outside the play area to the far southern end of the development. The work should be implemented by the end of this year. The pavement and verge will be re-instated where the sewer was laid.

075/09 Youth Offending Team Scheme – consider suggestions for assistance in Billingshurst.

Information had been received from the Probation Service regarding offenders carrying out work within the community. The following areas have been put forward for works to be carried out:

- Re-painting of the car park white lines at the village hall.
- Grass encroachment over the footpath over Adversane green.

Cllr. Rands suggested masonry paint could be used to re-paint the car park white lines. Cllr. Berry suggested that this proposed work should be mentioned to the Village Hall Management Committee out of courtesy. It was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that the materials required to carry out this work could be purchased from Austen's in the village on the Parish Council's account.

076/09 Bus Shelter Working Party – consider report from Working Party and further action.

The Working Party suggested 4 actions for the approval of the Property Committee. These are as follows:

- i. *The Working Party place an article in the next available newsletter and the consultation cards be used with a question worded thus:
I BELIEVE THAT A BUS SHELTER IS NEEDED(location)
IN (road)
For example, a reply might read "I believe that a bus shelter is needed outside C4C in Station Road" or "I believe that a bus shelter is needed next to the post box in Silver Lane".*
- ii. *A letter is written to the bus company asking if it has any views on the busiest bus stops in Billingshurst. They could also be asked how we would go about requesting that a bus stop is moved in case it is ever felt that this might be necessary.*
- iii. *A letter is written to the local resident associations asking their views as to possible locations for bus shelters.*
- iv. *A letter is written to the West Sussex County Times asking peoples views as to possible locations for bus shelters.*

It was agreed that under point (i) above, Mrs Wilding would write a paragraph for the newsletter and the example noted above would form part of the newsletter article, rather than included on the postcard.

Cllr. Barnes proposed that the 4 items be agreed for action, was seconded by Cllr. Rands and **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED.**

It was also **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to recommend to F&GP the costs for the consultation cards with the next newsletter.

077/09 Chairman's Announcements.

- i. Cllr. Griffin made a complaint to the Deputy Clerk about pavements in Five Oaks that have not been cleaned. This was reported to HDC and should be done this week.
- ii. The Assistant Clerk has actioned the repair of the bench at the Cricket Pitch as it has been vandalised/damaged. The vandalism has also been reported to the Police, crime No: WC3/045/982/09 and local PCSO's made aware and asked to keep an eye on the area when patrolling. PC Keeley, the Schools Liaison officer has been asked to visit the Weald School to speak to sixth formers who use the area and the Street Scene Team have recognised the problems being faced by Billingshurst at the moment and have been asked to regularly target the area and undertake some educational/enforcement work over the next few weeks prior to the summer holidays.
- iii. The hoardings around the Townlands site have been pulled down and this has been reported to Saxon Weald for repair.
- iv. Branches/garden rubbish has been dumped alongside the wall in Clevelands Gardens possibly from a property in Clevelands. The Assistant Clerk has arranged to have this cleared. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the Housing Association responsible for properties in Cleve Way to request that they ask residents not to dump garden rubbish in Clevelands Gardens.
- v. The Assistant Clerk has reported the lack of grass cutting at Cherry Tree Walk in the High Street to WSCC, and it was done today.
- vi. The Clerk chased WSCC about the drainage issues on the Church Path. They have agreed to put in a gully on either side of the path to assist with drainage but have advised that this is a long term job.
- vii. Cllr. Barnes reported that the deluge of rain recently had caused gravel to flood into the drainage channel at Jubilee Fields, and said he would speak to Mr Burroughs.

078/09 Date of Next Meeting: 17 June 2009

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm