

Haslemere Town Council

Meeting of Council

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 18th June 2009

Town Mayor: * Melanie Odell
Deputy Mayor: * Bill Douglas
Councillors * present

Mrs P Blades	Mr P Isherwood
* Mrs M Borwick	* Mrs C King
* Mr M Dover	* Mr W King
* Mr J Edwards	Mr R Knowles
* Mrs F Foster	* Mrs C Lancaster
* Mr M Foster	Mr J Mackie
* Mrs B Hewett	* Mr S Mulliner
* Mr B Howard	* Mrs J Stevens

Prior to the meeting prayers were led by Reverend Richard Bodle St Alban's Church Hindhead.

A public presentation to Council was given by Paul Beach Headmaster and Governor Julian Price St Bartholomew's School Haslemere. (Grant Application) It was explained that they are planning to build a 'Children's Centre' and that already have grants for £500,000. A further £250,000 was needed. This is for use throughout the area. It will give help to vulnerable families providing job centre links and a place for child minders to meet and receive training. It will give direction for local schools seeking excellence in education.

62/09 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mackie, Isherwood, Dover, Blades, Knowles and SCC Councillors Harmer and Renshaw.

63/09 **QUESTIONS BY THE PUBLIC**

Clammer Hill possible opening of the allotment site resulted in several members of the public wishing to speak.

Isabel Cole questioned why the soil survey was not done, why the public had not been notified of this meeting and complained about lack of response to the email received the day before the meeting? In addition the question of permitted parking on the site was raised.

Town Clerk said that it is unusual for any Council to give a comprehensive response to communications within 24 hours of receipt. Councillor Mulliner had visited the site and collected a soil sample that consisted of clay and sand mix with a ph of 6.3. He explained that the National Allotments Holders Association had informed him that it is unusual for any allotment land to be ideal for growing and needed working. There was no reason why this land should not be worked. A quote revealed that the cost of a minimal soil sample analysis was £780 plus vat which was thought to be too expensive and not a good use of taxpayers money. Planning consent Town and Country Planning Development Order 1995 Schedule 12 empowered local authorities in this respect and a planning application was unnecessary. There already is a right of access that the Council maintains which should enable cars to park on that access.

Adrian Butter spoke in support of opening the site in that there is a significant waiting list for allotments and Councils have a duty to provide. He emphasised that the view from neighbour's dwellings will not be spoilt by a well maintained allotment. He reported that the Queen had an allotment. Costs could be phased as initially the uptake could be low. Access already exists and there are environmental considerations in that organic growing on allotments will support. Local food production avoids food miles and carbon fuel transport costs.

Aidan Heathcote spoke supporting the philosophy but his sole concern was parking. Already parking in the village was horrendous. He also explained that he had not received a response to his emails to HTC. Is planning consent required for car parking on the site?

Councillor Mulliner reported that on road parking was unacceptable as such on site parking was needed. Isabel Cole interjected to ask if the car park could be sunken into the hillside to not provide an eyesore. Councillor Mulliner again explained that Town and Country Planning Development Order 1995 Schedule 12 empowered local authorities in this respect and contact with WBC Planning Officer Brian Titmas indicated planning consent for the use of the existing facility was not required.

64/09 **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor C King declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 15 the grant for safer Waverley Partnership.

Councillor Odell declared an interest in relation to agenda item 21 the Council Chamber projector.

65/09 **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14th May 2009 are agreed and implemented.

66/09 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on 14th May 2009.

67/09 **CLAMMER HILL ALLOTMENTS**

The report enclosed with the agenda was considered. This gave three options for the Council to consider. Do nothing, agree to limited access and not to open site until funds are available.

Councillor Howard said that the parking issue and planning consent was unclear from the email from WBC contained in the report. Councillor Borwick said that the existing track would allow 10 cars to park if required.

The resolution below was proposed by Councillor Mulliner and seconded by Councillor W King.

RESOLVED that the site should be opened now in its current condition including limited access with vehicles and HTC to apply for grants for improvements and that costs and parking be clarified.

68/09 **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE TOWN MAYOR**

Woolmer Hill Sports Association car park grant seeks an extension to their Grant payment time as works will not complete within the six month period set by Council for applicants to claim.

RESOLVED that Woolmer Hill Sports Association be granted a further six month extension to the time in which they make their claim for payment.

Hamish Donaldson, Don Stacey and James Rapp were thanked for their magnificent contribution to the recent highly successful Haslemere Festival.

Councillor Fay Foster and Don Stacey were praised for their award of MBEs in the Queen's Birthday Honours. Council applauded their success.

69/09 **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

RESOLVED that the schedule of accounts paid since the last meeting is approved and that variances within the management accounts giving detailed income and expenditure by budget heading are noted.

70/09 **ACCOUNTS for Year ending 31st March 2009**

The above accounts were considered.

RESOLVED that the accounts for year ending 31st March 2008 are approved and that the Town Mayor as Chairman signs the approved accounts.

71/09 **INTERNAL AUDIT**

The report of the internal auditor was considered. The following actions were discussed. It was noted that the errors in the superannuation payments had been remedied. The interest had now been added to the National Savings Account. Contact with the HSBC bank will be made to encourage them to provide statements made up to the month end.

The internal auditor had no comments to make in relation to the Council decision to distribute the gratuity fund.

The report of the Town Clerk on the internal auditor's work was received.

RESOLVED that the Internal Auditor Alan Harland is reappointed.

72/09 **EXTERNAL AUDIT**

Councillors noted that the external auditor return date has been set for the 30th June as the latest date when the Town Council is to return the required forms. Should the Town Council fail to return in time then penalties could be applied. The date of return over the past three years has progressively got tighter.

RESOLVED that the Statement of accounts section 1 and Annual Governance Statement section 2 for the external audit return for year ending 31st March 2009 is approved and signed.

73/09 **ASSET REGISTER**

The asset register was reviewed by Council in November 2008. Since November it has changed with the addition of gift of painting of HMS Haslemere by the past Mayor and purchase of seats for the Town. External audit require a copy of the asset register for the intermediate audit questionnaire. This needs to balance with the figures in the audit return.

RESOLVED that the asset register be approved.

74/09 **FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT**

Council considered and reviewed the financial risk assessment.

RESOLVED that the financial risk assessment is agreed.

75/09 **MANAGEMENT PLAN 2009 -10**

Council considered the above plan.

Councillor W King mentioned the air raid shelter at Shottermill adjacent to SCC land near the Working Men's Club. His concern is that if opened it will become a Health and Safety problem for the local community. Councillor C King thought the brambles hid an eyesore. Councillor Borwick thought it should make money if taxpayer's funds are spent. Councillor Mulliner said there should be a clear benefit to the Community it may be an option to fill it in and plant something nice on top. Councillor Howard said it is SCC land but it is still Haslemere land.

Councillor C King said that the Weyhill public toilet had been surveyed by structural engineers and was safe to open. The cast iron water main required replacement. The flower bed outside needed improvement.

RESOLVED that the Management Plan for 2009-10 be agreed.

76/09 **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the committees held on the following dates 12-03-09, 09-04-09 and 07-05-09 are agreed and implemented.

77/09 **GRANTS PANEL**

RESOLVED that minutes of the meeting held on the 28th May 2009 are agreed.

RESOLVED that the request by Councillor Mackie is granted that the date of the October Grants Panel be changed to 5th November.

(a) **Safer Waverley Partnership.**

This application concerned funding for the WBC Annual Junior Citizen event September 2009. Some 1500 primary aged children (10 / 11years) are taught to deal with potentially dangerous situations.

Councillors at the grants panel had expressed the following views. This application involved revenue funding which was something that HTC did not usually undertake. This matter was thought to be an education authority function. Schools usually provide transport for school trips with parent's support. The purchase of safety equipment for children may not result in them wearing it as young persons may not see this as being fashionable. Generally thought it was worthwhile but not an activity the Town Council should fund.

Councillor W King thought that the activity was worthwhile and supported by many WBC towns and that it should be reconsidered.

RESOLVED that a sub group consisting of the Mayor Deputy Mayor and Councillor Mackie should review this application and have delegated power to approve or refuse as required.

(b) **St Stephen's Church**

This application was for the restoration of their historic organ.

Councillors at the grants panel had expressed the following views. Applications for maintenance of churches should not normally be granted as they could set a precedent that would be difficult to control. A previous application for a church in Beacon Hill for cemetery grass cutting had been refused. Small grants are usually aimed at assisting the local youth and the elderly and projects which may attract other funds (pump priming). However, there was a small grants budget surplus for 2008/09 and should demand for funds be such that there is an under spend in 2009/10 Council might be minded to contribute to this scheme. A balance sheet had not been included with the application as is required.

RESOLVED that the grant be refused and that the applicant is encouraged to reapply (including a balance sheet) in time for the last meeting in this financial year to be held on the 4th March 2010 where Council will reconsider this matter should there be sufficient surplus budget available.

(c) **Haslemere Lawn Tennis Club Ltd**

This application is for a replacement club house constructed on the site of the existing.

Councillors at the grants panel had expressed the following views. In 1995 Haslemere Town Council granted a significant sum to the recreation pavilion which was to avoid adhoc club development that is currently occurring. In addition one idea was that the Council may want to research a loan facility to assist clubs. It was noted that Haslemere Tennis Club was one of the most successful clubs in the area. The toilet facilities close location to the site were thought to be essential when caring for young people and avoiding the walk to the pavilion. Health and Safety and child protection are issues that support this project. It was noted that there was already the planning consent in place and the need for costly pile foundations to avoid tree roots. Recent grant support had been given to clubs in Beacon Hill.

RESOLVED that a grant of **£1,000** be awarded.

(d) **Transition Towns Haslemere**

This application is for matched funding for training two members.

Councillors at the grants panel expressed the following views. This is a new generation of community leaders that need encouragement and support.

RESOLVED that a grant of **£200** be awarded.

78/09 **ST CHRISTOPHER'S GREEN TREES**

A report was received that WBC manage the above land. Their tree expert is to let a contract to reduce the loading on some branches and remove a silver birch. The fear is that the extended branch loading may result in failure of a limb.

The Council's Christmas lights are in some of the trees. The fear is that tree surgeons will have to climb into the trees containing lights and risk damage to bulbs and cables. It is suggested that a cherry picker is used to avoid this. An additional cost of £250 is sought by Waverley to cover the cost.

RESOLVED that Haslemere Town Council pay WBC £250 to cover the cost of the cherry picker hire.

79/09 **WBC LICENCE WOODCOCK GREEN**

It was reported that WBC having received a request from Beacon Hill Heavy Brigade volunteers for a licence to undertake work on their land has now offered HTC the licence. WBC concerns are adequacy of insurance and health and safety associated with such works. For example if HTC properly resolve to approve works on the land in question then the understanding is that our Council has insurance cover. Clearly, the HTC has insurance cover and a letter has been sent to Zurich to ask for clarification as to the extent of cover in these circumstances. Particularly, with volunteers under the supervision of Town Councillors undertaking works on our behalf.

Councillor Mulliner raised the following issues the grass clause 3i should be 10mm (not 30mm) and 75mm high as this is more suitable for a garden. In 5 last line clause (v) is mentioned it should read 4 also a spelling mistake 'Atrea' should read area. In 7 last line 3 change to *'the land should be reinstated to a minimum standard of the state of the land on 'date'*. There should be a photograph or before work commenced in appendix 1 that shows the state to which the land is to be returned. Councillor Dover has photographs that may help.

RESOLVED that the Mayor, Councillor Mulliner and Town Clerk work on the wording of the licence prior to the Mayor signing it for return.

RESOLVED that delegated power is given to the Town Mayor and Town Clerk and in their absence their deputies, to authorise properly supervised volunteers working on WBC land (as outlined in the above licence, Woodcock Green, Grover's Gardens and Marchant's Hill) on behalf of the Town Council.

RESOLVED that agreement to works is approved providing the Council's insurance is adequate for this purpose, a suitable written project risk assessment is in place, works are properly supervised by a Town Councillor and that at least 21 days notice is given to the Council prior to commencement of works.

80/09 **WBC LAND / GROUNDS MAINTENANCE MEETING**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st June be agreed.

81/09 **REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES and MEMBER WORKING GROUPS**

The following verbal report was given.

Councillor Hewett reported on twinning events. Councillor Howard reported on the May 2010 anniversary when vintage cars could travel to Bernay as part of the celebrations. Councillor C King thought the youth should be involved along with the Town Band.

82/09 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that in accordance with the provisions of section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

APPENDIX 3 EXEMPT within the agenda contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Grayswood Computer Services / Church Micros quote was withdrawn and the Mayor left the Chamber.

AMENITIES WORKING GROUP

This matter was placed in the exempt section of the agenda as there were matters concerning use of Council land that could result in legal proceedings.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 29th April 2009 are agreed and implemented.

The Town clerk reported that the Council's deeds show that some land was being used by the neighbour for general use and storage of timber. The neighbour was elderly and legal action may be unnecessary. The allotment land concerned at Collards Lane Allotments was in a wooded area that is unsuitable for allotment use without significant expenditure. It would be simpler to formalise the current scenario and let the land on an annual basis a position that would protect the Council's interests in the future.

RESOLVED that authority to be given to negotiate the letting of land that the neighbour Peter Elliot had encroached upon.

COUNCIL CHAMBER PROJECTOR

Council noted that further to the failure of the projector bulb and estimated bulb replacement cost of £350 consideration has been given to replacing the projector. The cost of projectors has fallen in recent years and minimum prices of £490 plus vat are possible. Councillors will recall that the current projector was second hand when we first purchased it and has served well over some years.

The view was that the office should select from the internet and seek best value. Councillor Borwick asked that if the quote provided by Church Micros was less then what would we do. The Town Clerk replied that the quote had now been withdrawn to avoid any conflict in interests. Also explained that he did not have the expertise to select from the internet and that the projector needed to be installed on the Council Chamber ceiling which will incur additional costs.

RESOLVED that Grayswood Computers be asked to give advice as to which projector to purchase and as part of the Council's service level agreement Grayswood Computers be asked to install.

Chairman

Closed 8.55pm