

**MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE  
HELD AT MELKSHAM TOWN HALL  
ON MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2009**

**Present:** Mr Vic Oakman Mrs Adrienne Westbrook  
Mr Chris Petty Mr Simon White (Chairman)  
Mrs Louise Smith Mrs Pam Wiltshire  
Mrs Terri Welch Mr Richard Wiltshire (ex officio)

Also in attendance: Councillor Sheila Wilkinson

**2009**

**29. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Jon Hubbard, Councillor Adrienne Westbrook substituted.

**30. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**31. a) Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**b) Matters arising**

Therefore there were no matters arising.

**32. a) Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of 15 June 2009 had been circulated with the agenda and the Clerk reminded councillors that the minutes were approved at the Town Council meeting on 13 July 2009.

**b) Matters arising therefrom**

**i) Foresters Park Play Area – Fencing Issue**

The Town Clerk informed councillors that since the Town Council agreed to erect hedging along the top part of this area at the request of a local resident, the resident has in fact since moved. He suggested that the matter be put on hold pending any further approach from the new occupants.

A question was raised as to whether or not the chain link fencing had been repaired

**RESOLVED:** To agree with the recommendation of the Clerk with regard to the hedge and that he be asked to check the situation regarding the chain link fencing with the Town Caretaker.

**ii) Town Inspection/Reporting of Problems**

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that town inspections were now underway.

**RESOLVED:** To note this information.

**iii) Any other matters arising**

**Minute 27 – Laurel in Churchyard**

With regards to the laurel hedge in St Michael & All Angels Church the Clerk was asked why the wooden border asked for by the committee had not yet been provided.

He was also asked if the ivy on the lychgate could be looked at, as this could cause damage if not dealt with soon.

The Clerk informed the meeting that the work on the wooden border has not been forgotten and is on a “ to do” list for the caretaking staff. He agreed to check the situation regarding the Ivy.

**Resolved:** To note the information.

**33. Allotments**

**i) Section 106 Agreements**

This item had been placed on the agenda at the request of Councillor Richard Wiltshire who has asked for a progress report.

The Town Clerk explained that he had written to West Wiltshire District Council as requested to ask whether consideration could be given for future Section 106 Agreements to allow for some allotment land to be provided when dealing with planning applications of 25 dwellings or more. No reply had been received.

The Town Clerk explained he had contacted David Hubbard, Wiltshire Council about the council’s request. Mr Hubbard explained this is something that can be looked at when dealing with the Local Plan. There are many requests

when compiling Section 106 Agreements and allotments could be included, but almost definitely at the exclusion of something else.

The possibility of using Foresters Park Play Area for allotments was raised, since it is estimated that to replace the current play equipment would cost in the region of £100,000. Furthermore the plans for the new eastern development proposes a play area just the other side of the eastern boundary hedge and the new Clackers Brook play area is also operational and nearby.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made

- The condition of the soil in Foresters Park Road might not be suitable. However it was felt that the land nearer the planned new development boundary may be more suitable.
- The possibility of an area for older children to play in and the possibility of landscaping to create distinctive areas was raised.

Finally under this agenda item it was reported that allotments which have been split into two on the brook side of the facility in Southbrook Road are causing problems. It appears that the portion closest to the brook tend to flood. The Clerk was asked to take this into account when letting in future

**RESOLVED:**

- It was agreed to note the information regarding Section 106 agreements.
- That the Town Clerk be asked to investigate the feasibility of allotments being located in Foresters Park play area to include soil survey and planning issues.
- That the Clerk considers the flooding issue at Southbrook Road allotment in future allocations.

**ii) Waiting List**

A report had been produced by Bob Brownrigg, Admin Assistant on the current waiting list which stands at 36 (**Report attached**).

Concern was raised that allotments are being sub-let by plot holders to friends and family which is not fair to those who have been on the waiting list for quite a long time.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the waiting list report be expanded to show how many people are waiting for allotments in particular areas of the town and

- (ii) That the Clerk checks that the current Allotment Tenancy Agreement covers the sub letting issue, as mentioned above.

**iii) Allotment Request**

A request had been received from Carers Support asking if a client of theirs could be moved up the waiting list for an allotment, as due to his various health problems he suffers from depression. They felt that having an allotment would be therapeutic for him and his family, and would give him a focus and a sense of achievement.

Considerable discussion ensued when both sides of the argument were given a good airing. However, as a compromise it was agreed to make further investigations into his circumstances i.e. where he is on the list? if he was after a specific allotment plot? and to report to a future meeting for discussion.

However, if without causing too much disruption to the list, the request could be met the Clerk was asked to liaise with the Chairman of Amenities to enable a speedy response to this issue.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk takes the necessary action.

**iv) Sheds/Greenhouses**

A letter had been received from Wiltshire Council stating there are no permitted development rights for structures on allotments and that all sheds and greenhouses require planning permission.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to note this information.

**34. Grasscutting**

A letter had been received from Mrs Edna Oakman complaining about the state of the grass at Methuen Avenue play area due to the contractor's (employed by the Town Council) lack of care or regard to the fact that this area is a children's play area.

Mrs Oakman explained she had complained at least 4 times since the contractor took over responsibility for grass cutting in this area and felt that some action was needed by the Town Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- To terminate this contract at the end of this season and to re-tender again for next year with a more detailed specification.

- That the Town Clerk be asked to notify Mrs Oakman of the Committee's decision.

### **35. Town Hall Storage**

A letter had been received from the Good News Church (regular users of our rooms) asking if the Town Council would consider their request to install storage under the back stairs for their equipment, along with a display cabinet. They offered to undertake the work or make a grant towards the costs involved. A sketch was also provided.

The Town Clerk explained that a similar request had been submitted a few years ago and refused. However this latest proposal seemed to be an improvement on the original plan.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- i) To agree in principle with this proposal but that further investigations between the council and the Good News Church are undertaken regarding materials and the design.
- ii) That once a satisfactory design has been agreed the Clerk liaises with the Twinning Association on the re-siting of their display.

### **36. Litter Bins**

The Clerk explained the bin installed in Snowberry Lane needs replacing, as it has been destroyed and asked the Town Council whether they wished to purchase a more substantial bin.

During discussion the clerk was asked:

- To ascertain why the bin next to the Roundhouse has not yet been replaced.
- To investigate what bins are available in Church Street Car Park, as there does not seem to be an adequate number.

#### **RESOLVED:** That the Clerk:

- (i) Investigates what bins might be available through Mouchel who are sourcing a supply of bins for the Town Centre.
- (ii) Approaches Wiltshire Council to see if they would be prepared to match fund a new bin in Snowberry Lane as this is on the route to the new Community Oak School.
- (iii) Investigates why the bin next to the Roundhouse has not been replaced and how many bins there are in Church Street car park and the costs of providing additional ones if needed.

**37. Committee Room – Request it be resurfaced with carpet**

A request had been received from the Citizens Advice Bureau who use the Committee Room on a Monday and Friday, as to whether it would be possible to provide carpeting to the floor since a recent health and safety audit has identified that the wooden flooring is not suitable for use with typing chairs.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed the Town Clerk:

- (i) Investigate costs and reports back to a future meeting for discussion.
- (ii) Contacts the Association of Hardwood Flooring to see if they recommend anything that might resolve the problem.

**38. Payments for Approval**

**RESOLVED:** Payments were approved.