

**REPORT of the Meeting of the Playing Fields and
Cemetery Committee held 19th February 2015**

Present: Cllr: Clive Parkinson (Chairman)

Cllrs: Chris Clifford
Bob Griffin
Graham Lanfear
Pam Shipp
Maggie Tyrrell
Jack Hainsworth (St. Mary's Church)
Judith Payne (Town Clerk)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Local Resident, Mr. Peter Mainstone, of Buckingham Parade complained about the 'decimation' of the brambles and overgrown areas in Chantry Field adjacent to his property. Mr. Mainstone stated that this undergrowth was a wildlife corridor and also said that, in his opinion, Council staff were not wearing the correct protective clothing. He queried whether Council staff were trained and competent to operate the equipment they were using.

Mr. Mainstone was advised that his comments would be raised at the next Full Council meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs: Helen Harrison (Other Meeting)
Guy Rawlinson (Out of Thornbury)
Phyllida Parsloe (Indisposed)

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST REPORT

As Alison Richards, South Gloucestershire Council Officer, was in attendance it was agreed to take Agenda Item 2(d) as first business

(d) Dog Fouling – Mundy Playing Fields

Alison Richards was welcomed to the meeting and invited to address Committee. Ms. Richards provided information on the new regulatory framework for dog control and how it was less prescriptive than previous orders. South Gloucestershire Council was the only body that could issue public space protection orders but, as yet, no policies had been agreed. There was also no prescribed format for public consultation and Ms. Richards was asked if South Gloucestershire Council would be the authority or would it be the responsibility of the Town Council. She thought that South Gloucestershire Council would carry out the consultation but would expect the Town Council to be involved.

Control orders could only be enforced by South Gloucestershire Council or the Police and there would be a £100 fixed penalty fine for anyone found contravening the order and £1,000 if the matter went to Court. Members were advised that there were two South Gloucestershire Council Dog Wardens, one for dealing with stray dogs and the other with responsibilities for dog fouling problems. It was, therefore, a limit to the amount of monitoring that could be undertaken.

Charles Eardley-Wilmot asked what the dog control position was in other areas.

Ms. Richards advised that most areas in South Gloucestershire were covered by historic by-laws.

Mr. Eardley-Wilmot felt that the removal of dog faeces was not the answer to the problem as a certain amount of residue would inevitably be left on the ground even if there was an attempt to remove it. He asked who would liable if a claim for compensation was made as a result of an incident e.g. illness contracted from dog faeces.

Ms. Richards did not know who would be responsible should this situation arise.

Cllr. Lanfear asked if CCTV could be used to monitor areas covered by dog control orders. Ms. Richards said that this was not something that was being used at the present time.

Members asked if Ms. Richards was aware of the timescale for implementing a dog control order under the new regulatory framework and Cllr. Lanfear enquired which department would be producing these orders. Members were advised that Ms. Richards would be working in conjunction with the legal department.

As the Mundy Playing Fields was Council owned land, Ms Richards was asked if Council could produce its own set of rules for dog owners. She said that there was no reason why Council could not set its own rules but they would not be enforceable by law.

Ms Richards was thanked for her attendance and left the meeting.

Members discussed the serious situation regarding the amount of dog faeces now being deposited in the Mundy Playing Fields particularly in the play area and the football pitches. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that all dogs should be kept on leads in the Playing Fields and that dog walkers would be restricted to areas delineated by white finger posts.

It was also agreed that once the appropriate signage had been placed around the entrances to the Mundy Playing Fields and the white finger posts installed, the Clerk would issue a press release giving details of the proposal.

(a) St. Mary's Closed Churchyard - General Report

(i) General Report

Jack Hainsworth reported that a Working Party would be undertaking bramble clearance in the churchyard particularly the area adjacent to the back wall. There was no intention to chop large branches from any of the mature trees. Judith Hurford and Guy Rawlinson had identified the trees in the churchyard and had expressed their surprise at the state of the brambles and the shrubs.

The working party would be investigating the possibility of spraying the brambles once they had been cut and would also be clearing some of the shrubs.

Mr. Hainsworth also reiterated his intention to provide the Clerk with photographs of the trees as discussed at the last meeting.

Mr. Hainsworth was thanked for his attendance and left the meeting.

(ii) War Memorial – Grant Application

Information was still awaited from the War Memorial Trust regarding Council's grant application and the Clerk agreed to try and progress the matter. The Clerk would give an update on the current situation at the next Full Council meeting.

(b) Development of Land at Poulterbrook and Field Adjacent to Leisure Centre

The Clerk had provided the Football Club with the required documentation and Richard Shorey had sent everything to the Gloucestershire Football Association. The Club was optimistic that the grant application would be successful.

Provided all the finance was in place, it was hoped that the work would start immediately after the Carnival.

The information was noted.

(c) Skatepark - User Group and Proposed Improvements

The Clerk had received confirmation from the contractor that work on the improvements to the ramps would commence on the week of the 23rd February. Dan Potter had reported that the young people were very pleased with the new grind rail.

The information was received and noted.

(d) Dog Fouling – Mundy Playing Fields

This matter was dealt with as first business.

(e) Installation of Defibrillator at Mundy Playing Fields

The Clerk reported a defibrillator had been received from the Football Club which was totally unfit for Council's purposes. It was just a portable machine and not in a cabinet that would be accessible to members of the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Clerk had advised Toni Watola of the Football Club accordingly. It would now be necessary to seek alternative funding for the equipment.

The information was noted

(f) Public Tennis Court Refurbishment

Brian Jordan of Thornbury Lawn Tennis Club had provided a detailed document indicating the work needed and the cost to refurbish Council's Courts 1 and 2. Copies of the proposal had been tabled for members' information. The proposed programme was over three years from 2015 to 2018 and a cost flow analysis had been included showing the amount required in the three individual years. The first year requirement was for £12,000 to resurface the courts and £2,200 to coat the surface. Council had agreed to give £5,700 towards the cost of the project and the Severn Vale Forum's officer recommendation had been for an award of £5,700. The Tennis Club would be providing £1,189 worth of volunteer effort and this left a shortfall of £1,611.

The Severn Vale Area Forum would be meeting on the 3rd March and Mr. Jordan would be attending to speak on behalf of the Tennis Club's grant application.

Cllr. Maggie Tyrrell advised that the Avon Lawn Tennis County Association could be applied to for small amounts of grants and the Clerk would advise Mr. Jordan accordingly.

It was agreed that, in the event that no further money was available from grant giving bodies for the shortfall, Council would be willing to provide a further £1600 towards the project.

(g) Request from Castle School Pupils for Various Works to Oakleaze Green

Cllr. Clive Parkinson had met with Megan, Emma and two of their friends and received good and positive suggestions on the type of information that should be incorporated in the consultation. The girls' first priority would be the establishment of a footpath across the area and any suggested play equipment would be for small children only.

The consultation would not take place until after the election and Cllr. Clive Parkinson would provide Town Hall staff with the information to be incorporated in the document.

The information was noted.

(h) Inflatable Theme Park – Mundy Playing Fields

The Clerk had written to one of the referees provided by the Company but had not received a response. No further information had been received from the applicant and it was agreed to remove the item from the agenda.

3. MATTERS IN PROGRESS

(a) Future Purchase of Play Equipment

The Clerk had produced a few suggestions for possible equipment and it was agreed that a Working Party be arranged to meet before the 24th March to identify new play equipment for the Mundy Playing Fields. Cllr. Clive Parkinson advised that he would suggest possible dates for the meeting.

Cllr. Parkinson also reported that he had attended a Castle School Council meeting where it was suggested that Castle School pupils would like to paint a mural on the pump house to brighten up the area. Members were not adverse to the suggestion and awaited more information on the proposals.

4. OPERATIONAL REPORT

Since the last meeting the Cemetery had accommodated one burial and four interments of cremated remains. The information was noted.

The Clerk reported that during the spell of icy weather a car had gone out of control on the ice and crashed into the cemetery wall. Council had been provided with the details of the owner of the car and would be seeking compensation for the damage. The information was noted.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence had been received.