

Whiteley Parish Council

Recreation and General Purposes Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the above Committee held at Meadowside Leisure Centre, Whiteley on Thursday 17th February 2011 at 7.40pm.

Parish Council Committee members present: Pat Thew (Chairman), Al Menzies (Vice-Chairman), Vivian Achwal, Colin Bielckus, Kairen Goves, Lydia Sullivan.

Parish Councillors: Roland Diffey, Brenda Hatch, David Jenkins, two members of the public, Parish Clerk Nicki Oliver.

1. **To receive apologies for absence** Mike Evans
2. **To receive declarations of interest regarding agenda items** None.
3. **To adjourn meeting to allow participation by members of the public** Not required.
4. **Meeting resumed to consider the following agenda items:**

4.1 To receive an update on Area K issues (Chairman) **The Chairman has been advised by Countrywide that residents can ask for the service charge to be increased to cover the cost of supplying and maintaining grit bins.**

4.2 To receive an update on the sculpture bench project: installation of plaque (Clerk) **Replacement plaque is ready for collection.**

4.3 To receive an update from the Skatepark User Forum (Chairman/Clerk) **Gravity has provided an initial quote for a new skatepark, the cost far exceeds the current budget. Another contractor has expressed an interest in quoting, Clerk to meet on site to discuss the project.**

4.4 To note any outstanding play area repairs and landscape maintenance issues **WCC has confirmed the wet area inside the Mollison Rise play area gate will be looked at.**

4.4.1 To receive update on repairs to timber sculpture benches. (Cllr Menzies) **Repairs will be carried out when the weather improves.**

4.5 To receive report and recommendations from Environment Champion/ Whiteley Action Group (Cllr Menzies) **The Government's U turn on the proposed forest sell off was noted.**

4.6 To receive update on proposals for additional youth facilities (Chairman) **It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda in view of agenda items 4.3 and 4.10.**

4.7 To consider request for floodlighting to Meadowside MUGA/tennis courts for use by local junior football teams and local organisations. **Nothing further to report.**

4.8 To consider small projects, cost £300-£10,000, that may be eligible for a community grant from the Lottery. **It was agreed to remove this item from the agenda.**

4.9 Proposal to pursue a management plan for the Meadowside conservation area

4.9.1 To receive a report from a meeting held with Hampshire Wildlife Trust 25th January **Report attached. It was agreed to recommend to Full Council that a project to fence the conservation area and graze with cattle or ponies for a couple of months a year be pursued.**

4.10 To receive update on proposal for an outside gym area for Meadowside (Cllr Achwal) **There has been both positive and negative responses to the project, some further information on likely running and maintenance costs to be researched by Cllr Achwal.**

4.11 Proposal to investigate the possibility of installing a bench in Marjoram Way (Chairman) **Quotes still awaited.**

4.12 Proposal to investigate the possibility of a Parish Council led event in 2011 such as a fete, following the success of the WAG and the Whiteley Energy Weekend (Cllr Sullivan) **Refer to next meeting.**

5. To identify any unmanaged risks within this committee's remit None.

6. Review effectiveness of communication, development of links with other community organisations and support for local democracy through making information more widely available A consultation article on the outdoor gym was included in the February edition of the Whiteley Voice.

7. Recent correspondence/ reports from meetings attended of relevance to this committee

Meeting with WCC and DC Leisure to discuss pitch management 26th January (Chairman)

The Chairman and Vice Chairman met with WCC and DC Leisure on 26th January to discuss the pitch management, procedures were agreed. The Whiteley Youth FC chairmen also attended later, he will liaise with DC Leisure, taking into account advice from the groundsman on suitability of the pitches for weekend playing

No pitch should be played by adults more than three times per week.

Meeting closed 8.18pm

Meadowside Conservation Area

Site meeting to discuss management 11am 25th January 2011

Present: David Rumble Hampshire Wildlife Trust Head of Conservation (South Hampshire), Pat Thew, Al Menzies and Nicki Oliver

David looked at the site and advised that the conservation area was a good example of how the farm land at Whiteley would have looked before it was developed.

He felt the area has great potential as an ephemeral damp meadow but to prevent it turning into woods some active management would be required.

Key elements of the management required are to cut back the coarse grass and undergrowth and take away the cuttings, the pond could be cleared, a third per year or completely every three years in late winter.

Clearing the undergrowth would allow finer species to establish – eg the site is ideal for Southern Marsh Orchids. Introducing commercial wildflowers is not encouraged but hay from local wildflower meadows could be scattered over the site to introduce seed from local species.

There are two options for management, the use of a forage harvester to cut and collect or to introduce cattle or hardy ponies for a couple of months during late summer. The pond would need clearing by hand or if the cattle/ponies option was used it would be carried out by the animals.

To accommodate animals the area would need to be stock fenced with a gated coral. The area would not be open for dogs or public while the animals were on site.

David indicated that grants may be available for fencing and hire of cattle from PUSH under the green infrastructure policies. David is willing to make the introduction to the appropriate officer at PUSH and is also able to provide contacts for farmers able to supply cattle or ponies.

Those present were keen to pursue the periodic introduction of animals as it is the most efficient way of management and would be of ecological interest to local people.