

BADGER FARM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th March 2010

PRESENT:

Keith Taylor (Chair)
John Godbold
Dean Upton
Daniel Phelps
Will Hawthorne
Fenella Jarvis

IN ATTENDANCE:

Martin Macpherson (Clerk)
Cllr David Spender (WCC)
PC Joe Zubaidi

APOLOGIES:

Ray Stannard
Ian Tait
Cllr Charlotte Bailey (HCC)
Cllr Brian Collin (WCC)

904. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2010 were **AGREED** and signed as an accurate record.

905. Reports and Recommendations from Working Parties

a) Police

PC Joe Zubaidi reported that during the last month the following had been reported:

May Tree Close	Youth carrying a knife (confiscated) and youth arrested
Ivy Close	Burglary in unoccupied house
Badger Farm Rd	Suspicious male in van - approached passing boy
Davis Kickabout	Suspicious youth hiding in bushes

b) Open Space

MM reported that:

- (i) After long delays caused by the weather the new dog bin on the footpath from Lowden Close to Whiteshute Ridge has now been put in place.
- (ii) He had obtained quotes from Hilliers for the planting of a 30 metre long hedge of Pyracantha Mohave. They are:
 - (a) 3 ltr plants at 60 – 90 cm height £ 525 + VAT
 - (b) 10 ltr plants at 1.20 – 1.50 cm height £1,310 + VAT
 - (c) 45 ltr plants at 1.50 – 1.75 cm height £4,350 + VAT

Council **AGREED** that this was expensive and tasked **MM** to obtain quotes for “supply only” and for **DP** to investigate how and when students from the University’s Community Action group could get involved.

- (iii) Council further **AGREED** to purchase 16 “Red Robin” plants for planting in the Elder Close Garage bed.
- (iv) A resident had complained that the trees on the footpath behind 27 Harvest Close were very overgrown and required crowning. **DS** will take up with WCC.

DP and **FJ** reported that:

- (v) The dead tree on the corner between the Ridgeway and Badger Farm Road was causing a nuisance and required felling or cutting back. **DS** will take up with WCC.
- (vi) There was a very overgrown Cotoneaster on the footpath between Swift Close and Ashbarn Crescent. **DS** will take up with WCC.

DU noted that:

- (vii) The road sign at the junction of Ridgeway / Meadow Way / Rooks Down had been replaced. The one on the opposite side of the road delineating the change from Meadow Way to Rooks Down had not. **DS** will take up with WCC

c) Planning

MM reported that:

- (i) No new applications had been received:
- (ii) No applications had been approved.
- (iii) No applications had been refused.

d) Play Equipment

MM reported that:

- (i) Play Equipment inspections were up to date.
- (ii) The Annual Play Areas Inspection for 2010 by Dunlop Playground Services on behalf of WCC was carried out on 11 February 2009. The Inspector’s overall statement was that “Once again the standard of maintenance remains high”.

Equipment	Site	Risk	Comment/Action
Central Site		Low/Medium	
Goal Frame Kompan		Low	
Goal 5-a-side		V. Low	
RSS Multi-Unit Obstacle Course	Central	Low	Raised edges.
Wickstead Bridge, slide and ramp	Central	Low	Step treads not level

Wickstead Cradle seats	Central	Medium	Provide barriers to direct children away from swings on entering.
Davis Site	Davis	Medium	Raised Edges – No deterioration since last year
Wickstead Slide Unit	Davis	Medium	Replace missing cap. Seal rubber at edges. Remove staples
Swing Cradle Seats	Davis	Low	
Swing Flat seats	Davis	Medium	Unit is coming to the end of life. Loose eyebolts. Remove raised edges

The definition of a Low Risk is “monitor and take reasonable practical action if required.” The definition of a Medium Risk is “take action to reduce if possible”. Council **AGREED** to monitor the medium risk items. They further **AGREED** to note that the swings on the Davis Kickabout where nearing the end of their safe life and would need replacing in about two years.

e) Transport

NTR

f) Parish Website

NTR

g) Finance

MM reported that:

- (i) The cleared balance on 1 March 2010 was £35,093.53. There were no un-presented cheques. The bank statements and reconciliation for February 2010 were signed by **KT**.
- (ii) At the end of the fourth quarter of the financial year (30 March 2010) actual income & expenditure compared with budgeted income & expenditure is predicted to be:

Income				
Category	Budget to date	Actual to date	Shortfall	Surplus
Precept	27,600	27,600		
Other Income	250	529		279
Total Income	27,850	28,129		279
Expenditure				
Category	Budget to	Actual to	Overspend	Surplus

	date	date		
Business	4,300	4,030		270
Clerk Salary	6,547	5,955		592
Donations	2,100	2,100		
Litter	1,502	1,034		468
Open Space	620	210		410
Play Equipment	1,386	520		866
Whiteshute Ridge	9,000	10,657	1,657	
Total	25,455	24,506	1,657	2,885

The net Surplus is therefore £1,507 although tree felling on Whiteshute Ridge will probably cost most of this and a near break even position is likely. Council **AGREED** that the end of year situation is entirely satisfactory.

- (iii) The second half 2009/10 VAT refund claim for £931:23 had been forwarded to HM R & C on 8 March.

h) Community Project

MM reported on **DP's** Parish Survey:

- (i) He distributed an action grid listing all the issues raised which he had split into categories. Council went through the list and amended certain items for accuracy.
- (ii) **MM** will now refine and update the grid and redistribute it to Councillors who will discuss priorities and implementation at the next meeting.

i) Community Centre Lease Compliance

NTR

j) Whiteshute Ridge

MM reported that:

- (i) The annual clearance of new saplings and growth had been completed.
- (ii) The annual tree survey had been completed revealing the following problems and recommended actions:

Tree	Type	Condition	Notes
204	Ash	Poor	Wind blown limb heavy lean (Needs Felling)
225	Ash	Poor	Needs Felling
285	Ash	Poor	Dying Crown
306	Ash	Good	Needs Crown Clean
313	Maple	Fair	Rotten cavity – Reduce Crown

The remaining 169 trees surveyed are in satisfactory condition. Council **AGREED** to contract SERCO tree surgeons to carry out the recommended work on trees 204, 225 and 313 but to leave the felled branches as habitat for wildlife. **MM** will seek further advice about trees 285 and 306.

k) County Council Rep

CB was unable to attend but had forwarded a written report covering:

- (i) Council Tax. Set at 1.9% – an increase of 38p per week for Band D.
- (ii) Grit Bins. See Minute 906 below.
- (iii) Safer Route to School. The footpath will be widened and railings erected.
- (iv) Parking on the Ridgeway. The Road Safety Officer had evaluated the situation at school times and reported that “having cars parked there acted as traffic calming and reduced speed along the road. Further lining would speed up traffic”.
- (v) St Cross Rail Bridge. Work is on track for opening at the end of March.
- (vi) Park & Ride (South). Update on biodiversity, animal habitats and lighting.

l) City Council Reps

DS reported on:

- (i) Open Space Maintenance. An area of land beside the footpath from Wren Close to Stanmore was not covered by any schedule or contract. This will be rectified when the contract is re-let next year. Consideration will then be given to maintaining it as a slightly wild area for biodiversity.
- (ii) Signage around Plough Way. The house numbering system in Plough Way and Lowden Close continues to cause confusion. He will propose clearer signage to WCC to resolve.
- (iii) Environment Scrutiny Panel. He updated Council on recent discussions about Local Emergency Plans and Parish Council involvement.

m). Notice Board Rep

NTR

n). Newsletter Rep

NTR

o). WDALC

NTR

906. Grit Bins

MM reported that:

- a) A Grant of £500 has been received from **CB** and banked on 5th March.
- b) Since receiving the above grant HCC had announced the results of its study into the provision of additional grit bins. Provision has been made in next year’s budget for “additional bins to be located where they can provide assistance to the community”. It goes on to say that “the County Council will own and maintain these bins”. Requests for additional bins must be forwarded to HCC by the end of April.
- c) At the last meeting Council identified an immediate requirement for two additional bins with a further three sites as desirable (Minute 898 page 669 refers). After discussion about the best way to proceed Council **AGREED** that **MM** should now contract WCC to fit three bins at the priority sites. These will be paid for by the Parish Council subsidised by the HCC grant. Councillors will nominate further desirable locations at the next meeting which will then be submitted to HCC.

907. Correspondence

The following correspondence was discussed:

- a) The completed HALC 2010 Survey was forwarded on 9 February 2010.
- b) Serco have informed us that the cost of dog bin emptying will increase from £3.10 to £5.00 per bin from 1st April.
- c) The next BF & OB RCA User Group Meeting will take place at 7.30pm on Wednesday 17th March.

908. Payment of Accounts

The following payments were approved and signed:

Cheque	Payee	Details	Amount	VAT
1453	M D Macpherson	Clerk Salary & Expenses	£ 421.33	-
1454	SERCO	WSR – Tree Survey	£ 2,647.05	£ 394.24
1455	WCC	Annual Play Inspection	£ 86.95	£ 12.95

909. Any other business

There being no further business the meeting closed at 2135.

Signed

Date