

**Minutes of the meeting of the  
PARKS, OPEN SPACES, CONSERVATION & FOOTPATHS COMMITTEE held on  
Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2012  
at the Freight House, Bradley Way, Rochford, Essex**

**Committee Present:** Chairman Cllr Mrs P Young, Cllr Mrs K Cooke, Cllr Mrs C Cunningham, Cllr Mrs L Haskew, Cllr V Leach (ex-officio), Cllr R Mitchell, Cllr R Patient (ex-officio), Cllr L Sampson, Cllr D Weir, Cllr Mrs M Weir and Members of the Hawkwell Parish Plan Group (HPPG) Mr E Short and Mrs P Peacock.

**Also Present:** Cllr J Scrivener, Mr L Barratt and Mr J Hickman (HPPG), Mrs L Athey, Mr G Dryhurst and the 'Friends of Magnolia'.

**54. 'Friends of Magnolia' attending to be given an update by the Chairman:**

**54.1** Cllr Mrs Young welcomed and thanked the 'Friends of Magnolia' for coming along and explained the need for the Parish to provide necessary paperwork and Risk Assessments with regard to ensuring safety and although this had taken some time to collate, the documents were nearly ready to implement.

**54.2** Mrs L Athey was introduced as an Officer for RDC's Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Team and, having set up a litter picking group across the District together with 'Friends of Cherry Orchard' and 'Sweyne Park', was willing to provide valuable guidance to Council and the 'Friends of Magnolia'. Mrs Athey recommended:-

- Members of the public be invited to an open meeting with representation from all types of park users involving horse-riders, dog walkers, joggers and walkers.
- Consider aims and set up a constitution – Mrs Athey was willing to share the framework of the constitution in place for 'Friends of Cherry Orchard' and Mr Short, speaking on behalf of the 'Friends of Magnolia', thanked Mrs Athey for the constitution which they would be pleased to adapt and adopt.
- Nominal subscription.
- To become independent of Officer/Councillor involvement; run and led by Members of the Public – Cllr Mrs Young advised that Councillor input would be required at Magnolia Park as a designated nature reserve with regulated areas.
- Publicity.
- Sourcing litter picking tools/bags (free of charge) from 'Keep Britain Tidy' Website.

Mrs Athey answered questions, one relating to insurance and the Clerk was asked to investigate any additional insurance requirements for the 'Friends of Magnolia'.

**54.3** The 'Friends of Magnolia' expressed some frustration regarding the long delay in processing the set-up of the Group as they were keen to proceed and urged Councillors to move forward quickly now to avoid further delays. Cllr Leach spoke of the sad fact that society had become litigious and it was something Council had to confront. He echoed Mrs Athey's comments in his vision for the 'Friends of Magnolia' to be independent from Council, much like the Parish Plan Group, but working within given parameters. Cllr Mrs Young clarified there were 5 actions and areas of working that had been risk assessed. Cllr Leach **proposed a meeting with the 'Friends of Magnolia' to be scheduled for December with the entire relevant paperwork ready in place to enable the Group to adopt their constitution and structure and this was seconded by Cllr Weir and the motion was carried.** A date was set for **Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013 at 7.30pm**. Cllr Leach reminded the meeting would not be required to be 'Clerked' but the Clerk was asked to check availability and book the Freight House Committee Room in the same way as parish meetings with tea and coffee. The Clerk advised that input from Members would be required to ensure all the necessary paperwork would be available for that date and Cllr Mrs Weir volunteered to circulate the information once

ready and Cllr Mrs Young assured the Parish would endeavour to get the paperwork out before then.

The `Friends of Magnolia` were thanked for their time and left the Chamber.

**55. Apologies for non-attendance at meeting:**

Cllr Mrs A Heath (other appointment). Members accepted the apologies tendered.

**56. Declarations of Interest:**

**a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;**

**b) Other Pecuniary Interest; or**

**c) Non-Pecuniary Interest**

**on any matter on the agenda for 12<sup>th</sup> November 2012.** None declared.

**57. To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2012 and to approve the destruction of the manuscript notes in respect of that meeting:**

Members approved the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2012 as a true record and agreed to the destruction of the manuscript notes in respect of that meeting.

**58. Parks – Action List Update:**

**58.1** The Clerk updated that the Magnolia Play Space Gate was scheduled for installation on Thursday and the total costs would approximate £1K.

**58.2** Progress with the wildflower bed/meadow preparation was queried and the Clerk clarified Cllr Sampson was currently researching funding for projects.

Members accepted the Action List Update.

**59. Financial Report (October):**

The Clerk advised the Magnolia Play Space gate had not been budgeted for but was essential as the previous gate was defective. The costing would be allocated to the Equipment & Maintenance Budget and although this was overspent, there were other budgets that would not spend their full amount. Members accepted the Financial Report.

**60. Agree Parks Committee Budget 2013/14 for recommendation to Finance:**

The Chairman referred to Parks Committee Budget Bid 2 adjusted downwards as per the Clerk's report. Members were asked to approve the Budget for recommendation to Finance Committee and after a show of hands **the Parks Budget Bid for 2013/14 was approved.**

**61. Hawkwell Parish Action Plan – Update on Action Points Progress:**

The Chairman advised a Working Group comprising Cllrs Mrs Cooke, Mrs Haskew and Mrs Weir had met and produced the report of recommended actions for Parks. Members went through the report point by point and actions were agreed as follows:-

**Services & Amenities**

Item 1: Cllr Sampson to contact Shelley Hall, RRAVS designated funding Officer.

Item 8: Cllr Mrs Cooke agreed to draft a letter to be sent via the Clerk.

Cllr Mrs Cooke agreed to laminate signage via the office for shop windows and noticeboards.

Item 9: Agreed to remove as duplicated.

Item 15: Cllr Mrs Cooke to write letters to Schools and pass to the Clerk for issue on headed paper.

Item 20: Cllr Mitchell agreed to research garden share.

**Environment**

Item 2: Cllr Mrs Weir to explore the possibility of producing a small booklet.

## 62. Verbal update on potential funding opportunities for Parks Projects by Cllr L Sampson:

Cllr Sampson updated that he had researched grant possibilities for Capital Projects and focussed on 3 main areas for 2013/14 aiming to apply by January 2013:-

- **Play equipment** – tentative bid to the Prince's Trust (£5K) and if approved a more detailed bid would be sought;
- **Awards for All** – small scale grants for replacement seating; detailed funding proposals and detailed costings would be required which Cllr Sampson would discuss with the Clerk. Cllr Sampson expressed his desire to process the information by January/February with the knowledge that some project funding may not be taken up by the end of the financial year leaving some funds in the pot.
- **Explore sponsorship from local employers** – Cllr Sampson gave an overview including match funding with an aspiration to conduct a whole parish appeal **and he proposed in January to approach employers that could be associated with a wildflower meadow with a view to sponsorship** for publicity. The ideas were discussed at length and **Cllr Patient moved the proposal which was carried. Cllr Mrs Cooke proposed the Parks Committee recommend the motion to Full Council in January for approval; this was seconded by Cllr Leach and the motion was carried.**

Members thanked Cllr Sampson for his excellent support.

## 63. Ash Tree Disease – Verbal update:

The Clerk gave a summary of the latest information she had regarding Ash Tree Disease reported by the Groundsman. The Clerk had sought advice from RDC and the disease was reportable to the Forestry Commission. Cllr Mrs Weir informed DNA testing kits could be sought and added that new trees were being cut down. The Clerk to investigate the need to apply for DNA testing kits.

## 64. Summary of decisions:

- Clerk to investigate insurance requirements for the 'Friends of Magnolia'.
- Approved Parks Budget Bid 2013/14 for recommendation to Finance.
- Parish Action Plan Progress:-
  - Cllr Sampson agreed to contact Shelley Hall, RRAVS designated funding Officer;
  - Cllr Mrs Cooke agreed to draft a letter to be sent via the Clerk re. item 8;
  - Cllr Mrs Cooke agreed to laminate signage via the office for shop windows and noticeboards;
  - Agreed to remove item 9 as duplicated;
  - Cllr Mrs Cooke to write letters to Schools and pass to the Clerk for issue on headed paper;
  - Cllr Mitchell agreed to research garden share; and
  - Cllr Mrs Weir to explore the possibility of producing a small booklet.
- Approved motion for Cllr Sampson to approach employers for wildflower garden sponsorship with recommendation to go to Full Council in January.
- Clerk to research the need for DNA testing kits for Ash Tree Disease.

The meeting closed at 08.50pm.

Chairman

***Please recycle this document from within Full Council papers for use at the next Standing Committee Meeting.***