

**SOMERTON TOWN COUNCIL:  
LAND & PROPERTIES COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2010  
AT THE PARISH ROMS**

1. **PRESENT:** Barrie Davies (in the Chair), Pauline Clarke, Ian Neale, Tony Jotcham, Jane Cook, Shane Broom, Nancy Langmaid (Minutes), Rodger Calderwood (Clerk to STC). Cllrs Chambers and were present for the Planning items. 8 members of the public attended. APOLOGIES were received from Cllrs Fraser-Hopewell, Bennett, Harrison and Mildon.
2. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:** Barrie Davis was proposed by Tony Jotcham, seconded by Pauline Clark, and was re-elected unopposed.
3. **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:** Tony Jotcham was proposed by Jane Cook, seconded by Nancy Langmaid and returned unopposed.
4. **PUBLIC QUESTION/COMMENT TIME.**  
Mr Gould asked about the formation of a Management Committee for the Recreation Ground Trustees and requested representation for the Tennis Club. The Tennis Club was invited to put the request in writing for the Trustees' meeting to be held the next day when a decision about user groups' representation on the Trustees Committee would be taken.
5. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:** No member of the Committee declared an interest in the Planning matters next considered. These items were included in this meeting because of the interval between full Council meetings under the new arrangements.
6. **PLANNING:**  

10/02007/CPO      Section 73 application for Non-Compliance with Conditions 3, 4 & 5 of planning permission 00/0010893, dated 6 March 2001, and Variation of these conditions to retain the existing plant, buildings, processing and storage area, provision of extra car parking and changes to working scheme; Ashen Cross Quarry. After some discussion and clarification about which existing Planning Permissions were involved, it was agreed that the Town Council had no objections.

10/02206/FUL      Alterations and the erection of a two storey and single storey extensions to dwellinghouse; 24 Pinewood Drive. No objections, but the Council requested conditions on the roofline to protect the neighbours' access to daylight.

10/02246/FUL      Renewal of extant planning permission 07/02849/FUL for alterations and the erection of a first floor extension; The Cottage, Gassons Lane. No objections.
7. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:** The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2010 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. They were agreed to be an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

8. MATTERS ARISING:

- 8.a. Maintenance at Horse Mill Lane: Vic Stannard will continue to maintain the area until his retirement in June, and then it will be added to the existing grass-cutting contract.
- 8.b. Sports Field boundary: the problems had continued during and after the major cycling event and little progress has been made so far.
- 8.c. Defects at Edgar Community Hall (ECH): Cllr Broom had noted several defects and agreed to write a list for presentation to the ECH Management working party. The Chairman asked him to co-operate with Sherry Briggs who has also started a list of defects.
- 8.d. Bar/Servery flooring: the flooring cannot be laid until alterations are made to the bar. Cllr Broom was asked to discuss the matter with Chris Macklin (Half Moon) and Martyn Smith.
- 8.e. Safety and Tidiness on the Etsome Terrace site: Cllr Neale reported that one section of fencing had been damaged and was to be repaired. As the Town Council owns those parts of the development site which are to become roadways, it was decided that STC volunteers will enter the site to tidy up and remove rubbish.
- 8.f. Storage containers on the Sports Field: Cllr Cook reported that the containers will remain on the field and another one was being acquired. She suggested the containers might be painted all the same green to make them less obtrusive.
- 8.g. Inventory of Maintenance Equipment: Cllrs Cook and Bennett are working on this.

- 9. COMMUNITY PLAY OFFICER - Play Day 7th August 2010: The Play Officer did not attend the meeting. Cllr Jotcham reported that the event will run from 12 noon to 4.00 p.m. Many activities had been mentioned as possibilities but nothing definite was known. He and Cllr Neale will press for urgent action and will send information to the Editor of Viaduct before 15<sup>th</sup> July.

10. WORKING PARTY REPORTS:

- 10.a. The Edgar Community Hall Management Committee had produced a business plan which had been accepted by the Town Council. They had agreed and published hire fees and were working on a marketing strategy.  
Only one candidate had come forward for the post as Events Supervisor, and it was suggested that that person might be interviewed with a view to starting work when required, while other candidates were sought to work with him/her.
- 10.b. Recreation Grounds Maintenance: this was to be discussed at the Trustees' meeting the following day.
- 10.c. Cemetery:
  - Ground Maintenance Contract: Cllrs Broom and Jotcham will present a specification for the contract at the next Committee meeting.
  - Cemetery fees: Cllrs Broom and Jotcham will review current fees and put forward revised charges at the next meeting.
  - Benches: Cllrs Broom and Jotcham reported that they had identified spaces for 12 commemorative benches. One existing bench was unsafe and had been removed. A member of the public had offered a new bench in memory of her mother. It was agreed that, should other people wish to place a commemorative bench in the cemetery, the benches would be provided and installed by the Council for a fee to be agreed after costs had been worked out.
- 10.d. Allotments: the Committee thanked John Watts of the Allotments Association for some useful information about the site under consideration for allotments and about preparations for drawing

and signing a lease. (copies attached to these Minutes). After discussion about expected grant funding, size and layouts of allotments, it was realised that the Allotments Association is not yet formalised. It will not be possible for the Town Council to proceed with any lease until there is a formal Association with a bank account and a committee. The members of the Allotments group who were present agreed to arrange this and to discover in more detail the likely costs of preparing the site for use.

- 10.e. Play Equipment Inspections: This was taken at the beginning of the meeting when the Clerk was still present. Concerns were raised about the quality of inspections in the light of recently discovered faults. The Clerk explained that the failure of one item at Gassons Lane had been caused by metal fatigue which is undetectable before the metal breaks. The equipment was known to have been used by adults and this might have put additional strain on the spindle which failed. The manufacturer has sent an estimate for a replacement, but further investigation is needed to avoid acquiring an item which is likely to fail in the not-distant future. Monthly inspections by SSDC are free, but STC pays for the annual inspection which is due next month.(IN/BR)
- 10.f. Etsome Terrace issues: Cllr Neale produced a paper (copy attached) about the Etsome Terrace site in response to problems brought to the attention of the Town Council at its June meeting. There had been an on-site meeting with the concerned parent and Mr Edwards, a wheelchair user, about the safety of the gate and the suitability of the equipment. It was agreed that there was little equipment on the site that was suitable for the youngest children and they were using equipment designed for older age groups. The Clerk recommended that the issues should be discussed with SSDC Play Officers and a report should be brought to the Town Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> July. The large ornamental gate is stiff to open and would be difficult to modify. It opens out onto the road as an anti-bullying measure, but children are in danger of running directly into the traffic. It was decided that a safety barrier needed. In the original plans for the Memorial Garden, a small gate was envisaged from the adjacent development site through the low fencing on that side of the garden. Cllrs Davies and Neale and several others will investigate moving the security fencing back into the development site to allow such a small gate to be provided so that wheelchairs and prams can enter and leave the site more conveniently.

## 11. MAINTENANCE ITEMS

- 11.a. The wall behind the surgery building had been inspected and Mike Gillingham's estimate has been accepted. He will go ahead with the work. He has also been asked to quote for repairing the coping on the gable of the surgery building.
- 11.b. Post-and-rail fencing on Gassons Lane: the estimate that has been received is for the whole fence, not just replacement of the faulty parts, so new estimates are awaited.
- 11.c. The Sports Club Ramp to the changing rooms is unsatisfactory and will need replacing. The problem has been referred to the Recreation Ground Trustees.
- 11.d. Great Western Lane Play Area and Edgar Community Hall: Mr Billing has been asked to quote for maintenance of the plants on both sites. Cllr Clarke has some shrubs in containers for use at ECH. Mrs Ruth Woodcock was thanked for the work she has done as a volunteer on the plants at ECH.

12. CORRESPONDENCE FOR ACTION: No correspondence had been received.

13. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: The Chairman reported that most of the points he had intended to raise had been covered in the meeting. He was working on prices for maintenance and litter-picking in the areas for which the Committee is responsible. It was decided after discussion that, for a trial period, the post of handyman will not be filled when Vic Stannard retires, but that work that cannot be done by volunteers will be offered to local tradesmen as required. Bad behaviour on the Sports Field by young people is a continuing problem, possibly exacerbated by their wish to celebrate leaving school. The situation is being monitored and the Chairman is trying to arrange discussions with the police.
14. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING: Cemetery Maintenance contract; Play Day on 7<sup>th</sup> August; Cemetery fees; Allotments; Play equipment; ;gates to Memorial Garden at Etsome Terrace; Surgery repairs.
15. DATE AND VENUE FOR NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30 p.m. in the Parish Rooms.

The meeting ended at 9.41 p.m.