

Report of the Lands Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 13th January 2010 at 7.30pm

1. Apologies:

Mr M Ellison-Taylor

Present:

Ms S Bennell, Mr N Corke (Chair), Mr D Gray, Mrs C Girling, Mr J Larter and Mr R Parlone.

In attendance:

Eileen A Coe (Town Clerk)

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Skate park

Raised lip on surface to ramp transition – The Town Clerk endeavoured to contact GBH Engineering as requested at last meeting, but all numbers for the company are now not in use, so it appears they are no longer in business. Deferred to next meeting until weather improves for further investigation.

4. Pageant Field

- Vandalism and Damage Report:

Christmas tree light bulbs removed – Action: replaced as necessary during the festive season

Conifer in tub on Market Hill uprooted – Action: re-potted in Cemetery

Headstone in Churchyard broken – Action: Rev Graham Owen informed

- Inspection sheets

Noted and approved – Actions: none

It was noted that the Grounds Contractor had started the Cemetery winter cut before the snow, and was now clearing the Office path, Cemetery path and Saturday and Tuesday Markets as requested in addition to other duties. The winter cut would resume once the snow has gone. The Christmas lime tree lights had been removed and stored away along with the barriers.

- CCTV

No report

- Pavilion subsidence

Mr Corke agreed to investigate the problem with the Grounds Contractor and report back to the next meeting.

- Gates

Mr Corke reported that he had contacted Paul Emeny, who has kindly agreed to clean down and re-paint the gates in the spring.

5. Cemetery

- Path

The Town Clerk advised that to comply with insurance the Town Council should take all reasonable steps to make the pathway safe, if this is not possible then access should be restricted. There followed some discussion and the risk assessment for the Cemetery and Pageant Field was reviewed to take into account the hazards of snow and ice, and agreed. The Town Clerk provided a draft Winter Gritting Record, as it is a requirement of the insurance to log and record gritting, which was approved. It was felt that common sense should prevail in prioritising the areas to be cleared and members were satisfied that the Grounds Contractor was competent to carry out this additional task, within the contracted hours. It was agreed to purchase 20 bags of salt from Fram DIY to be stored in the Cemetery for use as and when required.

- Gates

It was reported that Living Metal had agreed to resolve the problem of the gates catching and by adding some small rubber blocks to protect the gates hitting the posts and added a strip down the striker plate to protect the gates when they make contact in the closed position. (Correspondence item 33) It was noted that this had not yet been completed. The Town Clerk would contact Living Metal and Mr Corke agreed to inspect the gates and report back to the next meeting.

6. Allotments

No business.

7. Churchyard Maintenance

The Town Clerk had contacted Rev Graham Owen regarding the Churchyard driveway, and following discussion he would be willing to adopt a 'shared responsibility'. Town Council has responsibility for the grounds maintenance which includes the right of way path through the Churchyard and the PCC has

responsibility for inviting the public into the Church for the services and events etc. It was suggested that one side of the paved path and steps should be cleared and gritted and one side of the gravel driveway every morning. It was noted that the raking of the gravel was not a good idea as this would damage the tarmac underneath. It had been indicated that the PCC would be willing to contribute towards the cost of the salt. Following some discussion a contribution of £100 was suggested, this would enable the Churchyard driveway, path, Church Lane steps and steps to Church Street to be cleared and gritted every day Monday – Friday when necessary. The Risk Assessment for the Churchyard was reviewed and amendments agreed. The Town Clerk would contact Rev Owen to advise him of the decision.

8. Fen Meadow

No business.

9. Tree Warden

Response from Elite Tree Services following inspection of the Cherry tree on Fen Meadow. (correspondence item 32) The response and advice was noted and it was agreed that the tree's condition would be monitored. It was agreed to purchase 1,000 snow-drops at a cost of £73.00 using funds from the Recycling Budget. Ms Bennell kindly agreed to plant them.

10. Memorial Inspection 2010

The Town Clerk provided copies of the documents from the last inspection carried out in 2005. Following some discussion it was agreed to carry out the Inspection during a period between 18th January and 30th April. The Town Clerk would erect a Public Notice at the Cemetery and Ms Bennell would put details in the next edition of Framfare. Mr Coe, Ms Bennell, Mr Corke and Mr Larter would carry out the inspection and report back to the committee. It was agreed to adhere to the guidance for Managing the safety of Burial Grounds Memorials produced by the Ministry of Justice. The guidance sets out a sensible approach to assist burial ground operators to meet their legal responsibilities.

11. Other Correspondence

25. Suffolk Coastal District Council

Notice of intent to remove T1- Spruce at Hill House, Fore Street. Noted.

17. War Memorial Trust

Invitation to a half day conference entitled 'looking after war memorials' on Thursday 4th March at The Guildhall, Cambridge. The Town Clerk was interested in attending, but felt it was too far to travel.

12. Grounds Maintenance Actions

None.

13. Matters of Report or Items for next agenda

The Town Clerk reported that a request had been received from a third party to keep close cut two graves in the wildflower section. The request prompted some considerable discussion. It was agreed that requests should come from direct relatives of the deceased only and not third parties. As this area has been managed as a wildflower meadow for some years, it was agreed that it would be better if no further graves were added to the list, unless absolutely necessary, in order to retain the award winning site. However, it was noted that relatives have the right to keep family graves tended, if they so wish, but it would be discouraged in this area in order to retain the status quo.

The Town Clerk was requested to investigate the cost of hand held grit spreaders in time for the next meeting. It was agreed to hire a medium skip and request the Grounds Contractor to clear the accumulation of rubbish stored temporarily in the Cemetery.

Ms Bennell reported that it had been previously agreed to dig away the soil to reveal the graves along the pathway, which had been covered up for some years, the spoil could also go in the skip

The Town Clerk reported that Jim Nunn has been working voluntarily for some time updating the burial records in the Churchyard and Cemetery, using the Town Council records as reference and has spent some time with her cross referencing, all of which will help make inputting easier once the computer programme is purchased. It was agreed to send a letter of thanks for his efforts.

14. Next Meeting

Please note: Change of date:

Monday 15th February at 7.30pm