

CROXLEY GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
ON TUESDAY 8 JANUARY 2008 AT 8.00 pm

Present Cllr C Jefford in the Chair D Allison – Clerk to the Council
A Taft – Minute Taker

Cllrs Brading, Dann, Martin, Norman, Shafe and Vassiliou
Voting Members 7
In attendance Cllr Brand
There was one member of the public present

At the start of the meeting, the Clerk apologised that the Agenda reference numbers should have ended in /08 not /07, and the Minutes of the meeting will show the correct suffix.

EA413/08 Apologies for Absence
Apologies were received from Cllrs Birch and Seeley.

EA414/08 Declarations of Interest
None declared.

EA415/08 Representations from the Public
There were no representations from members of the public.

EA416/08 Minutes
It was proposed by Cllr Norman and seconded by Cllr Martin that the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2007 be approved as correct. The proposal was agreed by a majority vote, and the Chairman signed the minutes.

EA417/08 Matters Arising
There were no matters arising.

EA418/08 Active Works List
The Chairman introduced this item details of which were issued with the agenda. The Clerk detailed the works for December and January to which one Member stated that he was unhappy with the active works list and would like it to be a much more comprehensive list of tasks undertaken by the Rangers. The Clerk suggested that the Member prepare a paper requesting that it be put before the full Council meeting.

It was queried why a birch tree at the library (nearest the entrance) had had 8" of bark removed and also why the ruts on the Green were still there. The Clerk said that he would find out about the birch tree, but work had taken place on the ruts by Parrotts Close but a full repair could not be undertaken as the ground was too wet.

The Clerk was asked to find out the date of the review for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the woodland maintenance.

[Post meeting note: Clause 11 of the MOU states "Three Rivers District Council and Croxley Green Parish Council will review the arrangements in March 2006". The birch tree was checked and the bark has indeed been stripped off, presumably by vandals.]

EA419/08 Budget 2008/09
The Chairman introduced this item and asked the Clerk to elaborate. The Clerk referred to the draft budget (v4, dated 18 December 2007), circulated to Members at or

immediately after the Council meeting held on 20 December 2007. It was decided that Members would look at each item in turn to review and debate which projects would go forward for discussion at full Council meeting on 31 January 2008.

Street Trees

It was acknowledged that residents have mixed views regarding street trees; some regret the loss of street trees while others object to them due to the mess created by them. Therefore, if and where they are replaced, residents must be in agreement. Hertfordshire Highways are responsible for street trees, with TRDC being responsible for any mess (such as berries) created by them, and it was suggested that we liaise with these bodies so that we can ascertain who is responsible for what. It had been decided at the last Planning and Development meeting that street trees should fall into their portfolio, whereas trees in open spaces should be in the portfolio of the Environment and Amenity committee.

Grounds Maintenance

Following a discussion it was agreed to reduce grounds maintenance from £1200 to £600 and maintenance contracts from £1300 to £1200. As far as the £1000 for plants, shrubs and trees, this sum would provide any replacement trees required, for example in the Orchard. The Clerk explained that we would need to buy more mature trees due to the constant vandalism of the young trees historically planted.

Charity Quiz

It was agreed that the Chairman would have a reduced Allowance in 2008/09 to fund this event. The Chairman's Allowance was reduced by £210 accordingly.

Basketball

This item was considered by Members who decided that it was a lot of expense for a small number benefiting from this activity, many of whom were not residents of Croxley Green. It was pointed out that the multi-sports court in Barton Way recreation ground is available to anyone wishing to play basketball. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Shafe and seconded by Cllr Vassiliou that funding should no longer be provided for the basketball classes and this was agreed.

It was recommended that the Coach is informed as soon as possible so that he can make alternative arrangements to continue with the classes should he wish to do so.

Coach Trip to Seaside and

London Christmas Lights 2009 trip

It was generally felt that these trips should be in the remit of other organisations such as the Red Cross or the Welcome Club, but supported by the Parish Council with a donation given.

It was confirmed that these outings will be advertised and spaces will be on a first-come first-served basis to ensure there is no discrimination. It was thought that two trips may not be necessary and Members decided that these two trips should be held on alternate years. Therefore, the trip to the seaside would be taken out of the 2008/09 budget and the trip to see the Christmas lights would remain.

Community Bus Social Tea Afternoon

After a short discussion it was agreed that the figure for this item be reduced to £100 and there will be one tea afternoon in the financial year 2008/09.

Garden Competition

It was proposed by Cllr Norman that the administration of the garden competition should be handed over to a gardening club and this was seconded by Cllr Shafe. It was felt that this would be a good way to develop the competition and the Gardening Club would have greater expertise. The Clerk added that the details could be decided at a later date. The budget sum of £230 was unchanged.

Christmas Lights

The financial provision of £7000 was to cover the possible extension of the Christmas decorations on the lampposts but it was pointed out that £4200 of the £7000 should this be required would be taken from reserves.

Dog Hygiene

£9,600 has been allocated for dog hygiene and the Clerk explained that approximately 5,000 bio-degradable waste bags per month are being supplied by the Parish Council and 40 dog bins need to be emptied twice per week in summer and once per week in winter. The Clerk added that the increase is to cover extending the twice weekly emptying to a month either side of the summer months. It was queried why the rangers check the dog bins and the Clerk confirmed that the contractors who empty the dog bins will not be paid if a bin has not been emptied and therefore it is worthwhile to check that the contractors are carrying out their duties correctly. A breakdown of the cost of the dog waste bags was requested and the Clerk stated that he would find out this information. Members agreed that this budget item is presented at full Council.

[Post meeting note: A pack of 20 bio-degradable waste bags costs Croxley Green Parish Council 36 pence.]

Updating War Memorial

It was agreed that this was an excellent proposal although there may be some extensive research time required including how to modify the War Memorial. Due to the time this research is likely to take, Members decided that it would be best to move the sum of £2000 forward to 2009/10.

Craft & Hobbies Taster Day

The Craft and Hobbies day had been an extremely successful event and it was agreed that this proposal be put before full Council. The next craft fair will again aim to promote activities and clubs in Croxley Green and invitations will be issued to such bodies.

Fireworks on The Green

It was agreed that the New Year's Eve firework display had proved extremely successful and very good feedback had been received from local residents. The Clerk confirmed that the £4700 proposed for this item included an amount for inflation and that any extra money would be spent on extra fireworks. It was agreed that this proposal be put before full Council.

Teddy Bears Picnic

It was agreed that this proposal be put forward to full Council. It was suggested that leaflets are given to mother and toddler groups to fully promote this initiative.

Development of Play Areas

This proposal for £20,000 to be allocated to the development of existing play areas (Barton Way) was put forward by Cllr Martin. It was explained that this is an area in desperate need of investment and has been identified as such by both schools, Junior Council, toddler groups as well as parents, childminders and children themselves. Members discussed this proposal and it was suggested that Three Rivers District Council may wish to contribute towards this development and to repair any acts of vandalism should it become necessary, although modern play equipment is virtually vandal-proof. The proposal that this item remain in the budget was made by Cllr Brading and seconded by Cllr Shafe. The proposal was agreed by majority vote.

EA420/08

Maintenance Contract with TRDC for the Green and Stones Orchard

The Chairman introduced this item and Cllr Brading informed the Committee that following a meeting of the Executive Committee held at TRDC last night, a report in Part 2 (which was made public immediately) stated that Croxley Green Parish

Council should be considered alongside other tenders for the maintenance contract for the Green and Stones Orchard.

EA421/08

Tree Bulletin

No tree work to report.

EA422/08

Closure

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.17pm.