

Girton Parish Council

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The Pavilion
Girton Recreation Ground
Cambridge Road, Girton
Cambridge CB3 0FH

Minutes of the Sport and Recreation Committee with Users held at Orchard Close Community Centre on 10th March 2010

Present: S & R Committee members – Cllr M Wilson(Chairman), Cllr L. Sparling,
Cllr J.Thorrold. Cllr. C. Starling, Cllr V. Godby, Co-opted Members: CMR Wilson,
G. Clare, L Miller

Users:Lesley-Ann Parker, Robert Killick (Girton Tennis Club) Glenda Mee (Girton United)
Chris Horton (Girton Colts), Julia Dale + two students (Yoga Group) Tony Welch (IVC Model
Aeroplane Club) Anne Bonnett, Susan Reich (Girton Glebe School) Sally Cliverd (Bobtails
Toddler Group) Peter Kirwan (Girton Cricket Club)

In Attendance: Robert Stone

Items:

10/24 Apologies: John Barnett (Cambridge Academy of English),Philip Couch (Table Tennis Group), Jason Miller (Tang Soo Do), Pam Manning (Dance Group), Barbara Wright (Line Dancing Group), Jane Mansley (Bobtails Toddler Group), Paul Clare (Girton United Football Club)

10/25 Members declaration of interest for items on the agenda.
None

10/26 To receive the confirmed Minutes of the Sport and Recreation Committee with Users held on Wednesday 9th September 2009

10/27 Matters arising from the Minutes:

i) minute 09/38 1 Fees. The Chair apologised for the delay in preparing the fees notification letter to users for 2010/11. They should be sent out within the next two weeks

ii) minute 09/38 7 Pavilion Extension – a motion concerning seeking funding on this matter is on the agenda of the Committee meeting following this meeting tonight.

iii)minute 09/38 8 Fence and self closing gates. New fencing is now in place to separate children in the play area from the carpark and to prevent dogs entering the recreation ground at this point.

Dog Walking route signs have been received and will be installed soon. It is expected that recommendations to establish several Dog Control orders will be put forward to the Parish Council covering failure to remove dog faeces and defining areas where dogs are excluded. Prior to coming into force if the proposals are approved there will be an active consultation period as required by law.

10/28 Bookings Administrators Report – The report dated 10th February 2010 was tabled. Chris Horton reported that the pitches on the 10 Acre Field had been waterlogged in places and asked if the ditches could be cleared. The Clerk noted that a Parish Councillor is a Civil Engineer and would be investigating levels and the drainage problems on the 10 acre field in order to inform the Environment Committee what was required.

10/29 Chairman's report:

1. Financial Background – Budget for 2010/11 and beyond:

The Chairman reported that the operational expenses on Sport and Recreation had remained fairly stable over the last 3 – 4 years running at between £48,000 and £50,000. This includes the costs of maintaining and operating the Pavilion, Courts, and Pitches but also includes expense on recreation which does not generate income – such as maintenance of play equipment, trim trail etc. User income offsets a proportion of this total – the target for income in 2009/10 was £27,000. (As of the date of the meeting a little over £24,000 was recorded as income received year to date).

The balance of the expense is met by income from the general precept. Fees are rising this year after most were not touched last year. The Committee has also looked at tightening up on anomalies within the fees schedule - areas like ensuring the Council receives payment for regular block bookings of courts. A new token charge for use of council premises for the long term storage of club/society property is also being introduced.

In setting the budget for 2010/11 the Council did look at the options for reducing operating expenses under Sport and Recreation but the major part of our costs are tied to contractual agreements for services – cleaning, grass-cutting, salaries for booking administrator and groundsman etc., or to legal/safety obligations – electrical and water testing, play equipment and courts safety inspections. Utilities costs have proved to be volatile over the past few years and this was an area where the Clerk had as an ongoing project looked to investigate whether savings could be realised in our arrangements for lighting and heating without undue detriment to the facilities.

The result of the budget process for the forthcoming year is that operational funds are maintained at a flat level and will only cover the basics for the year ahead. The Chairman was concerned that to achieve this and to balance the overall Parish budget for 2010/11 the three allocated cumulative reserves (Pavilion maintenance, Play equipment replacement, Playing Surfaces) were having funds transferred out to cover related operational expenses in 2010/11. So for example any maintenance to the Pavilion will use funds originally earmarked for a sinking fund to replace the building, likewise repairs to play equipment will use funds originally seen as built up for the major capital expense of replacing items of play equipment around the village.

This together with lower allocations being deposited into the Sport and Recreation allocated reserve funds over the last several years does mean that our ability to use these funds for new capital expenditure is constrained and so a project may need to be postponed for a few years until funds have been built back up again. Over the past year the play equipment reserve fund was used to purchase the cone-climber unit which is about to be installed as a replacement for the monkey bars. The same reserve fund may

not have sufficient remaining to cover re-fencing and upgrading the play equipment at Weaver's Field this coming year.

2. Planning for the future – priorities: Shortages of funds as identified above mean that setting priorities and forward planning is highly important. The MUGA is approaching the end of its lifetime, providing it is maintained properly, within the next 3 to 5 years. The replacement of the surface is a call on the Games Surfaces allocated reserve. The committee will need to consider either replacing the surface like-for-like or some other form of artificial surface. Should the surface remain multi-use or favour a particular activity? Research indicates that the technology of sports surfaces is advancing rapidly and so the options and related costs will need to be carefully assessed against what is available. The input from users and clubs will be essential in addressing this over the next few years.

Improvements for disabled access will also need to come to fruition. Again more input from users would be a good way forward.

3. The Chairman reported that the Council was in the early stages of initial discussions aiming at establishing a working relationship with the bowling club established in advance of the new bowling green planned to be built by the Council at Wellbrook Way.

At this point Chris Horton (Girton Colts FC) expressed his thanks on behalf of the football club to the Committee for the excellent facilities of both the Pavilion and pitches. Peter Kirwan echoed these comments on behalf of Girton Cricket Club.

10/30 Comments from Users/Clubs/Individuals:

i)Lights for Tennis Club Use:

The Tennis Club representatives noted that concern had been raised by their members over the availability of the courts using the floodlights on non Club nights. Due to the inclement weather during this winter members of the Tennis Club have rarely been able to use the courts on the designated club nights of Wednesday and Friday. It was requested that some flexibility for members to be able to use the courts on other evenings be re-introduced as a lights timer switch had now been installed. The additional use of flood lights on a very limited number of occasions was not considered by the Club to add significantly to the electric bill.

The Clerk assured the representatives that flexibility in accommodating this type of use was possible and regretted the lack of consultation with the club prior to the change. The Clerk also noted that the agreement for the use of the tennis courts set up some 10 years ago had never been finalised or updated and that working on this would be in the interests of both parties.

ii)Moss on Tennis Courts: Arrangements are in place to have the moss removed in the next few weeks.

ii) Heating in Hall:

A representative of Julia Dale's Yoga Class asked why the heating for the Pavilion Hall had not been working adequately over this extremely cold winter.

The Clerk said that investigations to the problems with heating had been carried out over several months but the likely causes finally appeared to have been identified. Council had changed electricity suppliers in Summer. An electrician had now discovered that although a new meter had been installed this had not been working correctly. The electricity company had been contacted and an engineer would be coming shortly to rectify the problem. Apologies were also given to the fact that the ceiling heater had also not been working to their full capacity and may be due to the fact that after 10 years they may need replacing. Once the new meter is installed we should see an improvement in the heating.

iii) Plaque for Vic Watson:

The Chair invited Chris Horton to explain the background to the suggestion for a plaque to the other users. The Committee had agreed to proceed with the plaque but could put no funds towards the estimated £300 cost. The Clerk had been investigating the procedure for another suggestion, which the Council had yet to consider or approve, that the track from Cambridge Road past the Tennis Courts and the school also be named in honour of Vic Watson. He understood that the cost of this would be around £450. Starting fund raising to cover the cost of one or both was the priority and the Chairman suggested that if Mr Horton draft something for insertion in the Girton Parish News and forward it to him for additions/comments then the publicity would have the additional weight of the Committee behind it. The Clerk noted that a £50 anonymous donation from outside the village had already been promised.

iv) Hot Water:

Glenda Mee (Girton United FC) said that the new water heater installed in the kitchen cannot sufficient hot water needed on Saturdays/Sundays for general washing up. Sally Cliverd (Bobtails Toddler Group) supported this complaint. The Clerk said that the large water heater in the loft would be reconnected.

v) Tidiness of kitchen:

Users will be reminded to leave the kitchen and crockery in a clean and tidy state.

10/31 Date of Users Meeting:

No date was confirmed also meeting more often than twice a year (additionally in June?) was supported by the users.

The meeting ended at 9pm