

Environment Committee
Minutes of a Meeting of the held on 25th February 2010

Present: Mr Gregory (Chairman), Mrs Burgess, Mr Salisbury, Mr Gilboy, Mr Gallagher, Mr Blanch
In attendance: Mrs King, Mrs Jones (Clerk)

251 Refurbishment of the Observer Post

Mark Russell made a presentation regarding the refurbishment of the Observer Post. The interior work was nearly completed, the equipment was in place and the exterior work would be undertaken shortly. Mr Russell had circulated information regarding health and safety guidelines for visitors. A discussion followed regarding the control of visitors and health and safety issues. It was considered that interest in the Post would be high at the beginning but would decline over time. Numbers of visitors would need to be strictly controlled and access to the newly established conservation area at the Observer Field would need to be restricted. The suggestion was that the Post would be open on about four occasions a year but that arrangements could be made for interested groups to visit separately. Applications to visit would need to be made through the Parish Council office. It was agreed that only limited publicity be given to the Post as large numbers of visitors could not be accommodated. Mr Russell was thanked for the huge amount of work and time he had devoted to this project and he then left the meeting.

252 Declarations of Interest: None

253 Approval of the Minutes The minutes of the meeting held 5th November 2009 (previously circulated) were taken as read and confirmed as a true record

254 Clerk's Report and Matters Arising from the Minutes

Skatepark: The insurance claim with regard to the accident is ongoing. The insurance company had requested documentation regarding weekly site inspection but as inspections were carried out informally by MSDC this information was not available. The possibility of checks being undertaken by the groundsmen was discussed. It had also been reported that the contractors were undertaking work to the concrete but the clerk had received no notification of this.

Dog Bins: The Chairman reported that there were already three bins along the Whitemans Green/Ardingly Path area and he considered this was sufficient. It was agreed to look at the erection of a further bin along Mytten Twitten

255 Financial Statement and Budget

The financial statement and budget had been previously circulated by the clerk. Income and expenditure were in line with the budget but it was noted that there had been additional, unexpected, costs in connection with the public toilets due to a very high invoice for water; repairs had been put in hand to deal with this. Members considered that these costs were part of a necessary service offered to the community.

256 Action Relating to the Recent Cold Weather

The Chairman had had several requests from residents for salt bins but these could not be supplied on demand; residents would need to meet these costs. A salt bin had been provided for the churchyard and the residents at Whitemans Close were going to purchase a bin. A discussion followed regarding the necessity of neighbours looking after elderly residents, the need for residents to clear snow, etc. and what actions could be taken by the Parish Council to improve the situation. Insurance was an issue but it was felt that more could be done to improve the condition of pavements by local people. The possibility of purchasing a snow blower could also be investigated.

257 New Bench in Polestub Lane

A request had been received from a member of the public to provide a new memorial bench at Polestub Lane. It was agreed that this offer be accepted by the Council, subject to the approval of the style of bench.

258 Cemetery Matters

The Chairman had met with Mr Preeble who was willing to sponsor new wooden gates for the entrance in Newbury Lane by the Garden of Remembrance. After discussion, it was agreed to accept this kind offer. Mr Gallagher reported on the benefits of joining the Association of Natural Burial Grounds. It was agreed that the costs of membership be circulated to members and, providing this was at an acceptable level, membership of the Association should proceed. It was considered that the membership could be of benefit for the Local Nature Reserve project.

259 Christmas Festival

The Chairman reported that this had been a successful event and the new Christmas lights had been welcomed. It was noted that the road closure signs had been stolen and would need to be replaced. There had been issues with regard to rogue traders and also problems with the road closure in South Street. More Parish Council volunteers would be required next year. Additional lighting was also needed further up the High Street. The possibility of either installing extra lighting or some more Christmas Trees would need to be considered before the next Festival.

260 South East in Bloom

The Chairman was considering attendance at a local seminar. It was agreed that consideration be given to this once more information was available.

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