

**REPORT of the Meeting of the Playing Fields
and Cemetery Committee held 1st December 2011**

Present: Cllr: Clive Parkinson (Chairman)

Cllrs: Emma Bone
Gill Brooks
Chris Clifford
Bob Griffin
Neil Halsall
Rob Hudson
Maggie Tyrrell
Judith Payne (Town Clerk)
Sandra Richardson (Deputy Town Clerk)

Absent: Cllr : Pam Shipp

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Jim Woodford (St. Mary's Church)

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST REPORT

(a) St. Mary's Closed Churchyard

(i) General Report

There were no matters to report

(ii) Chestnut Tree in Churchyard

Council's Tree Warden, Judith Hurford, had inspected the tree with South Gloucestershire Council's officers and had submitted a report which had been e-mailed to members prior to the meeting. A copy of the Tree Warden's report is appended to this report and her list of recommendations noted.

Jerry Dicker had produced photographs of the tree taken in 2006 showing the trunk touching the top metal bar inserted in the wall. This would indicate that the tree was not moving and that growth had caused it to put pressure on the metal bar.

Council's Tree Surgeon, Ian Pullen, had also examined the tree thoroughly and he was also of the opinion that the tree was not moving and was not in danger of toppling at this time. He advised that the tree should not be felled but monitored for six months and had given advice on ways to undertake the monitoring.

Cllr. Bob Griffin thought that the tree was unsafe and should be felled immediately.

It was obvious that the tree was putting pressure on the metal bar which, in turn, was causing some movement to the wall. It was agreed that, on the advice of the tree experts, the metal bar could be removed as it was not supporting the tree in any way.

Members raised the question of insurance liability as Council was responsible for the maintenance of the closed churchyard. The Clerk agreed to contact the insurance company to ascertain whether Council would be covered by insurance in the event of the tree causing damage. The Clerk was asked to obtain the Insurance Company's reply in writing.

It was also agreed that an independent tree expert be employed to examine the tree and give a professional written report. Cllr. Neil Halsall advised that he could provide the name of a suitable tree expert and the Clerk and Chairman would decide the appropriate person to carry out the inspection.

(b) Club Thornbury – Provision of Changing Rooms

(i) Response from Thornbury Rugby Club

The Clerk had spoken to the Chairman of Thornbury Rugby Club about the possibility of the Rugby Club entering into the same agreement to use the Sea Cadets toilet facilities as existed with Thornbury Town Football Club. The Rugby Club Chairman advised that an approach had been made but that the Sea Cadets had not been particularly keen to agree to this arrangement. Cllr. Clive Parkinson had spoken to a representative of the Sea Cadets who had expressed a willingness to allow the Rugby Club to use the facilities.

It was agreed that the Clubs make their own arrangements with the Sea Cadets and that any charges imposed for the facilities should be paid by the Clubs directly to the Sea Cadets.

(ii) Club Thornbury Annual General Meeting

Cllr. Clive Parkinson reported on his attendance at the recent Club Thornbury AGM. He had raised the issue of the Castle School Sixth Form changing rooms and views expressed by several of the clubs indicated that there was not a uniformity of opinion that the money raised for the provision of changing rooms at Gloucester Road should go towards the provision of changing rooms to service the proposed pitches on the land adjacent to the Leisure Centre.

Cllr. Rob Hudson reported that the provision of portaloos had been discussed but it had been agreed that such facilities were not viable as they needed professional maintenance. Thornbury Town Football Club had agreed to explore, with the Castle School, the possibility of opening the outside block of toilets at the Sixth Form Centre.

Cllr. Neil Halsall advised that Kim Hazeldine, South Gloucestershire Council's Sports Development Officer, who had been the main organiser of Club Thornbury, would soon be leaving South Gloucestershire Council. Cllr. Halsall said that Kim Hazeldine had given a lot of assistance to Club Thornbury and asked if the Club could function without a South Gloucestershire Council Officer. Cllr. Clive Parkinson advised that a School Liaison Officer would continue to attend meetings and Cllr. Halsall added the Leisure Centre would, also, send a representative.

(c) Development of Land at Poulterbrook and Field Adjacent to Leisure Centre

(i) Progress Report

There was nothing further to report at this time.

(ii) Poulterbrook Tree Clearance

A letter had been received from Jerry Dicker giving reasons why the trees should not be cleared from Poulterbrook on the grounds that the area had now become a wildlife habitat.

Mr. Dicker had been under the impression that Council no longer intended to use the land for football pitches but when the Clerk advised him that this was not the case, he had withdrawn his objection.

The Chairman reported that he met with the Clerk and the Contractor to discuss the proposed felling of the spruce trees and it had now been agreed that the trees would be cut off at ground level. The Contractor had provided the Clerk with a copy of his insurance policy and an order had been placed for work.

The information was noted.

(d) Skatepark

(i) Reformation of User Group

A letter had been received from a young resident requesting that Council consider rebuilding the skatepark and advising that he was endeavouring to raise funds for the project. Cllr. Clive Parkinson had responded to the letter and had also e-mailed Dan Potter, the Thornbury Churches Together Youth Outreach Worker, asking him to discuss the matter with the young resident.

Cllr. Gill Brooks had met with Dan Potter and discussed the possibility of him holding an event at the skatepark next year. The Clerk had also received the same request from Dan Potter and had provided him with information on insurance and licences. The Clerk had also suggested that he contact ex-councillor Penny Baker as she had experience in organising such events.

The information was noted.

(ii) Skatepark Painting

The Clerk had not received a response from South Gloucestershire Council to her request to forward a letter to the previous leader of the Skatepark User Group. The information was noted

(e) Repairs to the Paddling Pool

The Clerk had, so far, been unsuccessful in obtaining two further quotations for the repairs to the paddling pool as the work was rather specialised. She would continue to try and acquire further quotes. The information was noted.

(f) Chantry Playing Field – Complaints from Local Resident

(i) Safer and Stronger Community Group – Meeting of 30th November 2011

The Community Group meeting had been cancelled because of industrial action and would now take place on 25th January 2012. The information was noted.

(ii) Parking on Gloucester Road – Police Response

A response had been received from PCSO Dawn Golding advising that the police had never received any complaints about parking on Gloucester Road, but would patrol the area on Sundays when an officer was available. The information was noted.

(iii) Parking on Gloucester Road – South Gloucestershire Council Response

A response had been received from South Gloucestershire Council's Principal Engineer, Mark Parry, advising that parking that takes place on restricted areas of public highway covered by waiting restrictions would be the responsibility of South Gloucestershire Council's Parking Services Team to carry out enforcement action. Cars parked on unrestricted areas of public highway causing an obstruction was a matter for the police. Mr. Parry had passed a copy of Council's letter to the Parking Services Team. The information was noted.

3. MATTERS IN PROGRESS

There were no matters in progress

4. OPERATIONAL REPORT

- (i) Since the last meeting the Cemetery had accommodated four burials and two interments of cremated remains. The information was noted.
- (ii) Cllr. Clive Parkinson again raised the issue of the problem of concrete post stumps at the Chantry Field. The Clerk advised that a job sheet had been issued and would check with the Open Spaces Supervisor how the job was progressing.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence had been received