

**REPORT of the Meeting of the Playing Fields
and Cemetery Committee held 4th September 2008**

Present: Cllr: Lesley Jones (Chairman)

Cllrs: Gill Brooks
Clive Parkinson
Guy Rawlinson
Judith Payne (Town Clerk)

Apologies: Cllrs: Penny Baker (Other Commitment)
Bob Griffin (Out of Thornbury)
Phyllida Parsloe (Out of Thornbury)
Ann Rogers (Out of Thornbury)
Jim Woodford (St. Mary's Church)

1. MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST REPORT

(a) St. Mary's Closed Churchyard

(i) General Report

No report was available as Jim Woodford was not in attendance.

(ii) Floodlighting – Reimbursement of Electricity Charges

The Clerk reported on her discussions with Marjory Entwistle, Honorary Treasurer of St. Mary's Church regarding the agreement of Council to pay the electricity costs for floodlighting the church. Mrs. Entwistle had been advised that Council would not have the power to reimburse the Church for the electricity costs going back to 2000 without copies of relevant electricity bills and sub-meter readings. Council and Committee minutes going back to the beginning of the project had been examined but no reference could be found to a formal agreement with the Church or any estimate given of the estimated annual electricity costs. The letter sent by the previous Clerk to Mr. Mullinex of St. Mary's Church, discussed at the last meeting, provided evidence that an agreement did exist and also indicated how the system of reimbursement should be conducted.

Mrs. Entwistle advised that a sub-meter reading had been taken in January 2008 and, this year, the Church would be able to provide copies of electricity bills which would enable Council to calculate floodlighting costs for the current year.

It was agreed that on production of electricity bills and sub-meter readings, Council would reimburse the Church for this year's floodlighting electricity consumption. The Church, like many other local organisations, would have an opportunity to submit an application for a Council grant which would be considered by the Finance and Policy in December.

(b) Skatepark

(i) Lease

A draft lease had now been received from South Gloucestershire Council and copies had been circulated with the agenda for members' information.

Concern was expressed that the lease would be for a fifteen year term back dated to April 2000 thus leaving less than a seven year term remaining. Several of the Lessee covenants were also questioned and it was agreed that the Clerk would raise these issues with South Gloucestershire Council's Legal Department. Further consideration of the draft lease would be given at the next meeting after a response to Committee's queries had been received from South Gloucestershire Council.

(ii) Summer Event

As reported at the last Full Council Meeting the Summer Event had been extremely successful.

Cllr. Penny Baker had been asked to contact the youngsters that had formed the original skatepark user group but that had not been possible because the group had disbursed. She would, however, be discussing the matter with Jay Wide this week with a view to consulting with the youngsters about the formation of a new group.

(c) Proposed Play Area – Eastland Avenue/Park View Avenue -Construction of Natural Play Environment Area

The Chairman, Cllrs. Neil Halsall, Clive Parkinson and Ann Rogers had met with Alison Brown and viewed the natural play area draft plan produced by South Gloucestershire Council. Also present at the meeting were Jane Spence and Emma Bevan representatives of the Play Rangers but, unfortunately, none of the local residents had been available to attend. The Play Rangers' representatives thought that the plans were very good and expressed an interest in holding play sessions in the area once the project had been completed.

The draft plan was tabled for members' information and it was agreed that the proposals were most innovative. The ambitious project would require significant funding and it would be necessary to form a community group to take responsibility for any funding applications. St. Mary's Church Hall had been booked for a public consultation day on Saturday 11th October 2008 when the plan would be available for local residents to view. It was hoped that volunteers could be encouraged to join the community group on that day. The cost of hire of the church hall would be £35 for the day.

The Chairman had requested that Alison Brown of South Gloucestershire Council prepare a leaflet for members to distribute to local residents prior to the Consultation Day and a draft copy of the leaflet was tabled for members' information. At this time there was no indication that South Gloucestershire Council would charge for the preparation of the leaflet and it was agreed that the Chairman would ask Alison Brown to arrange for 300 to be printed. 250 would be delivered by hand to local residents leaving 50 available for distribution on the public consultation day.

The Chairman also advised members that Andy Graham of Merlin Housing would be invited to attend the consultation day. As Merlin Housing owned the garages that abutted the play area, it was deemed important that he be involved, initially, in the project.

(d) Club Thornbury – Report of Annual General Meeting

Cllr. Clive Parkinson had attended the AGM held on 9th July 2008 and advised that all the organisation's officer posts had been filled. There was nothing further to report as the situation regarding the sixth form changing rooms had not changed since the last meeting.

(e) Development of Land at Poulterbook

At the last Committee Meeting Mr. Toni Watola had advised that the preparation of the 5 to 10 year Vision for football requirements would be completed within a couple of months with a view to submitting an application for funding in September/October this year. It was agreed, therefore, to invite Mr. Watola to the next meeting to give an update on the current situation.

(f) Provision of Play Equipment – Chantry Road Play Area

The Clerk reported that the installation of the play equipment would commence on Monday 8th September and be completed by the 10th. The information was welcomed.

(g) Pavilion Dressing Room Improvements

The Clerk reported that the painting had been completed and the new lighting would be installed shortly. Arrangements had been made for the floor to be re-screeded within the next week.

The information was noted.

(h) Construction of Electricity Substations at the Mundy Playing Fields

The Clerk had sought confirmation from Council's solicitors that Central Networks would be paying all costs connected with this matter including the public notice required by the Charity Commission. A response had been received advising that, as the Electricity Acts gave considerable powers to the Electricity Board, Council's solicitor had written to Geldards to ascertain that Central Networks would pay for the costs of drawing up the notice and advertising it.

The information was noted.

(i) Electricity Sub Station at Chantry Road Play Area – New Fencing

The Clerk had managed to contact Adrian Walters of Central Networks who had inspected the site eighteen months previously. He was extremely surprised that the problem had not been resolved and agreed to investigate the situation and the lack of progress as a matter of urgency.

The information was noted.

(j) Damage to Streamleaze Green Play Equipment

Reports received from the Play Rangers on the incident at Streamleaze Green Play Area had been circulated with the agenda for members' information. Members agreed that the information in the Play Rangers' reports indicated that the damage to the play unit would not have occurred if the Play Rangers had not be operating a play session in the play area. It was agreed to advise the Play Rangers accordingly and seek reimbursement for the repair to the equipment.

(k) Summer Inspection

The Summer Inspection had taken place on 28th July 2008 when members visited the Skatepark, Chantry Road Play Area and Mundy Playing Fields. It was noticed at the skatepark that two areas needed resurfacing and that one set of bars on the top of a ramp needed repair.

2. MATTERS IN PROGRESS

There were no matters in progress to consider.

3. OPERATIONAL REPORT

- (i) Since the last meeting the cemetery had accommodated four burials, eight interments of cremated remains and two scatterings of ashes.
- (ii) Since the Summer Inspection the two areas at the skatepark, identified as needing attention, had been repaired and the bars at the top of the ramp would be welded in the near future. The information was noted.
- (iii) The Clerk reported that new sleepers had been purchased to replace the ones at Osprey Park play area that had been seeping tar during hot weather.
- (iv) The Clerk advised that plans were being prepared to build arbours for the cremated remains area. The construction of the arbours would be carried out by Council's outside staff. The information was noted.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

There were no items of correspondence to consider.