

Porlock Recreation Ground Management Committee

Charity no. 304615

Minutes of meeting held at Porlock Recreation Ground Pavilion, Wednesday 28th February 2018

Members present:

YoungSook Joh (Treasurer), Russell Vowles (Chairman), Terry Gable, John Healey, Andy Woodcock

Volunteers present:

Danny Lynam, Ian Fraser

1. Apologies

Jane Thicknesse, Steve Spurrier, Ivor Jones, Nic Vowles, Debbie Pitkin

2. Public Session

This was attended by Lin Littlefield and Mike Johnson.

Lin Littlefield addressed the meeting raising five topics:

- I. Dog mess on playing field areas with the suggestion that dogs should be banned.
The Chairman noted that bans had been tried in the past and ignored probably by the same inconsiderate dog owners that still allow their dogs off the lead and let them foul without clearing up. The point was made that we have strict rules in place now which are backed by West Somerset District Council dog control orders which can result in a fine. The issue was identifying offenders and enforcement and the same issue would apply if a ban was in place. Terry Gable pointed out the initiatives that had recently been implemented (additional signage, dog waste bins) and that sadly it was hard to see what else could practically be done.
- II. Bins in the children's playground area (CPA) – not fit for purpose. Rubbish blowing out.
This transpired to be an historic issue resolved when the bins were replaced in Q4 2017.
- III. Installation of recycling bins
The Committee agreed this was a good idea but there is an issue with sorting the waste into streams suitable for collection. Members of the public put all sorts in bins. Idea to be reconsidered if a reliable volunteer was found to sort and process the waste.
- IV. Could paths be installed in the CPA between activity areas? It is too muddy.
The Chairman noted that this is something that we looked at last year aligned to improvement / replacement of the rubber safety surfaces. Quotes for improving the surfaces were received last year and additional paths could be incorporated. This is on our to-do list but other activities have so far taken priority.
- V. Possible installation of a "pirate galleon" as an addition to the CPA.
Lin to send further details. Lin's email address taken for follow-up later.

Mike Johnson was introduced as the new Chairman of Porlock Cricket Club. MJ outlined the renewed enthusiasm present in the Cricket Club and explained that around seven home fixtures were likely this season. The Committee all remarked how pleased they were to see this development. MJ mentioned the basis for the Recreation Ground charging the Cricket Club and asked how much this had been in the past. The Treasurer gave an overview of this and the Chairman agreed with MJ and IF that we would discuss this further and come to an agreement.

3. Volunteers

The Chairman welcomed Danny Lynam and Ian Fraser to the meeting as volunteers and observers.

Since our last meeting Danny Lynam attended the CF meeting, has followed up on matters relating to that, has checked up on the MUGA refurb work and has cleaned some of the rubber surfaces in the CPA. Danny was thanked for this work.

It was explained that Andy Woodcock has agreed to remain as a Trustee until the CIO ACM, after which he will formally hand over to Ian Fraser as the Trustee representing the Cricket Club.

Debbie Pitkin is still kindly handling inbound email and the online calendars bookings.

Initiated by John H, Paul Keal has been in contact about joining the committee initially on the basis of being a Football Club Rep. The Chairman has explained that under our Governing Document and the new CIO constitution there can be only one such representative trustee and that at present John Healey has this role. We would however welcome Paul as a volunteer and in the future as a trustee if he so wished and was voted in. The Chairman has provided Paul with information about becoming a charity trustee and recent minutes / updates about the recreation ground. Further discussion is to be had with him about this going forward and who is to be the Football Club Rep.

Action: Russell Vowles & John Healey

4. Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 17th January 2018

Amendments

There were no amendments and the Minutes were approved and signed as a true and correct record.

Matters arising

- i. Use of the top pitch as the main pitch
JH met with Ian Cape to discuss using the top pitch as the main pitch as suggested by TG as it might be less boggy. Conclusion: the top pitch is too small and cannot accommodate use as the main pitch.
- ii. Verti-drain treatment of pitches.
Committee happy to proceed if beneficial - Football Club to decide with Ian Cape. JH has not met with Ian Cape about this yet. Carried forward. **Action: John Healey**

iii. Electrical work

Lee Hardick (with some help from JH & RV) has installed the changing room extractor and replacement outdoor sockets. Cost as per quote.

Lee gave his time for free to help with replacement of timers for the MUGA and Tennis Courts. These are now operational without the need for tokens. The total cost was c. £80 less than the £200 budget previously approved. The committee wishes to thank Lee for his time on this.

iv. CPA inspection documentation

JH has spoken with RoSPA who have said that they will send a suitable form / document for recording inspections. This is awaited. In the meantime JH has been photographing items in the CPA. Chase up / implement recording as per RoSPA recommendation.

Action: John Healey

5. Correspondence

i. The Chairman reported that he had received an email from Rosemary Boaz on the topic of the Rec being rather muddy and slippery. Rosemary was stressing her support and that of others for the idea of a paved path around the Rec and some sort of mud free path in the dog field. The Chairman responded explaining that the path was one of many "legacy use" ideas that in due course would be considered. As a short term measure some wood chippings were spread in problem areas of the dog field.

6. Improvements and maintenance

i. Pavilion

A fire inspection identified that our two water based extinguishers were corroded and needed replacement. These have now been replaced (£50+VAT ea) and also fitted on brackets next to the doors as required by the fire inspector.

The Chairman has spoken to the Toddlers Group (Kim) so that they are aware of the new location. Kim will make others aware so that care can be taken. The extinguishers have been positioned so that they cannot be knocked upwards and fall on someone and we have been assured that a toddler would not be strong enough to actuate an extinguisher.

ii. Grounds Maintenance Equipment

Sadly the new aerator / slitter appears to have a manufacturing fault causing blades to come off. This is due to some of the bolts fitted being too short. The Chairman has spoken to Lloyds the supplier who will supply us with replacement parts. Ian Cape is aware. Needs to be chased.

Action: Russell Vowles

iii. Electrical Work

Extractor, outdoor sockets and timers for MUGA and Tennis court lights all done. See matters arising.

The RCD trip in the kitchen still keeps tripping. Cause unknown. Alan Leonard has been asked again (by Terry) to supply a quote for a replacement consumer unit which (due to RCBO on each circuit) will help identify which circuit is causing the earth fault. **Action: Terry and Russell to chase**

iv. MUGA refurbishment

Danny L provided an update: Contractors can't start until weather improves. End of March / April likely. Needs chasing. **Action: Danny Lynam**

Quote on email received from West Country Blacksmiths for refurbishment of the basketball hoops and associated metal work. These need fixing as corrosion has caused some parts to partially detach. Work to include dismantling, stripping paint, welding and fitting of replacement parts, repainting and refitting. £600+VAT. The Committee agreed to proceed with this work nem.con.

Action: Danny Lynam/ Russell Vowles

7. Country Fair

i. CF team meeting held 1st Feb.

All going to plan so far.

ii. Food vendors

Food vendors have all been contacted Kitnors, Meryl (veggie / cold), Toni (hog roast) confirmed. Oggies Pasties are also keen to be part of the fair but cannot yet confirm availability – TBC.

iii. Face Painting

We have a volunteer to do face painting with proceeds going to the Rec. Materials will be needed which we will probably have to buy. Budget TBC but agreed in principal nem.con. The Chairman noted that Snazaroo (based in Minehead) are one of the largest suppliers of face paint. We will investigate the possibility of sponsorship from them and / or them helping out with materials and additional face painters. **Action: Nicola Vowles**

iv. Not-for-profit community organisations.

Discussion about balancing the need for the Rec to retain income from the Country Fair whilst, in light of the legacy, being sensitive to community organisations that have in the past given a sizeable proportion or all of their takings to the Rec. Last year there was some push back regarding this so clarity is required. On the basis that other not-for-profit organisations pay £10 per pitch the Chairman proposed that:

- a) The charge for not for profit community organisations would be set at £10 plus an additional £30 (£40 total) for Pavilion users (traditionally Porlock Ladies tea and cake). This was agreed nem.con.
- b) A letter would be sent to the organisations concerned explaining why the Rec still needs income and that, if they have a good day, we would appreciate a further donation towards running of the Rec but that this is optional. This was agreed nem.con.

Need to follow-up with community organisations. **Action: Russell Vowles**

iii. Income from food vendors and attractions

There had been discussion regarding charging of food vendors and others providing commercial attractions such as the bouncy castle. Traditionally a percentage of takings has been charged. Should we instead charge a fixed "pitch" fee?

The Chairman explained that he had spoken to all the food vendors about this and the consensus was that they would only consider paying a fixed fee if it was very low. The % of takings is preferred as their risk is mitigated if we had a washout year. Similarly, if they do well the Rec also

benefits. Given the income generated for % of takings in previous years the Chairman proposed that:

We continue with the policy that food vendors and commercial attractions pay us 20% of their gross takings. Negotiate this and minimise exceptions where possible. This was agreed nem.con

It was also agreed that that after verbal agreement all arrangements would be followed up with a letter so that the financial basis was clear to all prior to the Fair. **Action: Nicola Vowles**

8. Treasurers Report

i. Account balances

The Treasurer reported that the balances were as follows:

Cash at hand: £168.05. Current Account: £6,198.94 Savings account £14,742.64.

Tenax investment fund: We receive quarterly valuations so an updated value was not reported.

The Chairman added that the valuation reported at the last meeting 17 Jan 18 was £560,323. Aggregate performance data for the fund (published by Morning Star) shows that the fund value has remained largely static despite recent stock market volatility. Significant change is not expected until payment of the next dividend into the fund which happens in May.

ii. 2017 accounts

The Treasurer reported that the work on the 2017 accounts with Karen Hanlan our independent auditor is largely complete and she will soon circulate the accounts on email to all Trustees for their review. Assuming there are no issues they are ready for submission to the Charity Commission.

iii. Accounting for transition to CIO and going forward

Karen Hanlan has explained to us that when we transition to the CIO a final set of accounts for the existing charity will be expected as will reporting of a partial year for the CIO. This will of course mean that we incur some unavoidable additional accounting costs. Karen's charges for this will be on the same basis as the work she has already undertaken.

The Chairman proposed that given Karen's experience with us and comparatively low cost we proceed on the basis of using Karen Hanlan to carry out the transition accounting work. Once the CIO is up and running and our annual turnover is below regulatory limits requiring an independent examiner we can then review whether it makes sense to continue using Karen (qualified as an Independent Examiner) or an alternative accountancy practitioner. Agreed nem.con.

9. Bowls Club Funding Request

The Chairman reported that he had written to John Mathieson (Bowls Club Chairman) and arranged a meeting which was held at the bowling on 29th January. The purpose was to discuss the approach we agreed at the Committee meeting on 17th January:

"to fund a proportion of this crucial work but that the Bowls Club Committee should investigate what grants or other funding they are able to secure elsewhere."

The meeting went well with all understanding that it made sense to try and find other grant money toward this. Inevitably however, this would delay being able to place an order for the work and hence the implementation which is not ideal. The meeting concluded with three actions identified:

- a) The Bowling Club to investigate and apply for sources of grant funding
- b) The Bowling Club to consider how much of its own funds it can contribute.

- c) RV to ask the Rec Committee if the Rec would commit funding that may be needed to enable grants from elsewhere that require match funding and if so, could this be put in writing to other grant funding bodies when needed?

On this basis the Chairman proposed that the Rec should agree to support this this essential work by committing funds needed to enable matched funding grants from elsewhere. As match funding, this would be limited to half the cost of the work which is c. £14K. This was agreed nem.con.

Action: Russell Vowles to confirm with the Bowls Club

10. Sign for the bottom gate (proposed closure during football season)

Between meetings wording for this sign could not be agreed. Members of the committee acknowledged the aim of threatening this closure was to reduce dog fouling permitted by some inconsiderate owners but that even the threat of closure would upset the majority of considerate users. It was felt this would reflect badly on the Rec especially if the sign did not make clear that the Football Club had made the request. The Football Club representative (John Healey) was not happy with the wording that mentioned the Football Club and no alternative had been proposed.

Given the above and following discussion of alternative approaches to reduce the persistent dog fouling issue, John Healey proposed trial of a temporary fence that would run from close to the dog waste bin at the SE corner of the CPA to the first goal post. The idea of this was to force walkers and dogs to take a route that avoided most of the pitch. The committee backed this proposal on the basis that the fence would be:

- a) Temporary in nature fitted and removed as needed by the football club (not Ian Cape).
- b) Only implemented if, after John had discussed it with Ian Cape, it was practical for Ian to maintain the pitches without him having to remove and replace the fence.
- c) Fitted with a sign (wording to be proposed by John Healey and agreed by the Committee)
- d) Have its effect reviewed both in terms of dog mess and complaints if any about its installation. If the result was negative the fence would be removed and not used.
- e) Purchased by the Football Club.

On this basis a trial of the temporary fence was agreed by majority.

Action: John Healey to discuss with Ian and propose sign wording for review by the committee.

Further, the Committee agreed nem.con to abandon the idea of a sign threatening closure of the gate in the Football Season.

11. Community Update

The Chairman proposed that the Rec update provided for the Porlock Vale Newsletter should be sent by email to all those who attended and left email addresses at our June 2017 meeting. This was agreed nem.con. **Action: Russell Vowles**

12. Any Other Business

The Chairman informed the Committee that Susan Taylor's Executor had let us know that Glen Cottage would now be sold by auction planned for 3pm on April 6th in Porlock Village Hall. This would soon be publicised in the local press and elsewhere.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 28th March 2018, 6.30pm in the Pavilion.