

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Gaskell Recreation Ground Board of Management held at 7.00pm on Thursday 26 November 2009 in the Guildhall, Much Wenlock

Present: in the Chair, Cllr Mrs L Durbin

Councillors: Mrs P Daffurn, Mrs A Dugdale, Mr M Grace, Mr E W Humphries, Mr T Lathe, Mr T Pinches, Mr R Stuart and Mr D Turner.

Messrs Mr C Bowden, Mr G D A Bowden, Mr T Childs and Mr D Davies (representing Wenlock Estates).

In attendance: Mr R D May, Clerk to the Board of Management

52 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mr M Whiteman OBE.

The Board asked the Clerk to send a letter of condolence to Cllr Whiteman.

53 Declarations of Interest

Personal

Cllr Turner declared a personal interest as a member of Much Wenlock Bowling Club.

Cllr Pinches declared a personal interest as a member of Much Wenlock Cricket Club.

Cllr Grace declared personal interests as a committee member of Much Wenlock Cricket Club and a Governor of William Brookes School.

Cllr Lathe declared a personal interest as a trustee of the Edge Charity.

Prejudicial

None

54 Gaskell Recreation Ground Consultation Exercise – to discuss the Pleydell Smithyman report: The Vision for the Gaskell Recreation Ground, 2012 and Beyond, Final Report – November 2009.

The Chairman introduced the item, stating that it was recognised that there were some inaccuracies in the report but that there was no funding available for a revised report. She therefore asked the Board to concentrate on their response to the recommendations in the report.

She reminded the meeting that the funding for the consultation exercise and report had been provided by Advantage West Midlands through the Town Council's Much Wenlock 2012 Legacy Group.

Cllr Turner then reported back to the Board on the recent meeting between the Town Council delegation (comprising himself, Cllrs Whiteman, Pinches and Durbin and the Town Clerk) and Shropshire Council officials (George Candler, Tim Smith and Alan Penton) to discuss the future management of the Gaskell Field. He reported that the meeting had been constructive and that Shropshire Council were currently awaiting William Brookes School's statement of needs concerning the new sports facilities and the Gaskell Field. The meeting attendees agreed that the current Joint Use Agreement should run until April 2011 and that the Town Council's financial contribution should remain unchanged until then. The meeting discussed the current poor state of the Gaskell Field and it was agreed that Shropshire Council would seek a quotation for a study into drainage improvement – for which the Town Council may be asked for a financial contribution.

The meeting discussed Shropshire Council’s leisure services and open spaces management approaches and the delegates were advised that Shropshire Council were interested in linking the management of Shadwell Quarry, the old railway line and Windmill Hill. The Board was advised that this initial meeting was primarily concerned with scene-setting and that the Board needed to decide on its preferred management option for the Gaskell Field. Board members suggested that a service level agreement was needed for 2010/11 and consideration should be given to setting up a users’ forum.

The Board then discussed the six potential management options described in the Pleydell Smithyman report. After a period of discussion Board members agreed that they had insufficient information to be able to reject any of the six options. It was suggested that hybrid options might also need to be investigated, that William Brookes School’s requirements for the Gaskell Field and the local community’s requirements for the new leisure centre’s facilities also needed to be understood.

After further discussion it was

RESOLVED: That a working group be set up to investigate the potential management options and report back to the Board of Management; that the working group should comprise Cllrs Pinches, Humphries, Turner and Durbin and Messrs G Bowden and C Bowden; and that the working group should take account of current legal agreements and constraints in their investigations.

The Clerk was asked to place two copies of the Pleydell Smithyman report in Much Wenlock Library and post a copy of the report on the Town Council’s website.

55 Signage Improvements

Cllr Turner reminded the Board that signage improvements had been put on hold for the duration of the consultation exercise. Whilst it was recognised that future signage would need to reflect the chosen management arrangements, there was a need to consider interim signage improvements. Cllr Turner agreed to review the paper on signage and submit it for consideration at the ordinary meeting of the Board in January.

56 Propose paper on funding

The Chairman, referring to a paper previously issued to Board members, advised that a small amount of Advantage West Midlands money (under £500) was available to help develop a funding strategy or help submit a bid for Community Spaces lottery funding. After a discussion it was

RESOLVED: That a Stage 1 application for Community Spaces lottery funding be prepared on behalf of the Board of Management and that the Chairman should prepare a contributory “wish list”.

57 Date of next meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be an ordinary meeting – to be held at 7.00pm on Thursday 21 January 2009 in the Guildhall.

Signed Chairman

21 January 2010

Approved