

Appendix C

REPORT OF MEETING OF THE GREENS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
OF LONGDON PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON
TUESDAY, MARCH 30TH, 2010

Present: Cllr. S. K. Welch (Chairman); Cllr. C. D. Cherry; Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke;
Cllr. A. J. Juxon; Cllr. M. J. Nash; and Cllr. K. C. Taylor.

Also present was the Clerk.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. Mrs. G. D. Duckett

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Juxon and seconded by Cllr. Taylor, the minutes of the previous meeting, held in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, January 19th, 2010, were approved and signed.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Play Area

The expected communication not having been received from Fisher German, it was agreed that the Clerk should now contact the firm.

(ii) Shropshire Brook

The work had now been completed but not yet inspected.

Cllr. Welch suggested that the school might be invited to carry out their own investigation of the brook and suggest ways in which it could be maintained.

He himself would like to see native bluebells and daffodils planted along its banks.

He reminded the Committee that the Shropshire Brook was the habitat of the native white-clawed crayfish, now under threat from the American red-clawed species.

At a later stage, an interpretation board might be erected alongside the brook.

(iii) Litter

Cllr. Cherry said that he was pleased to see two men collecting litter from the side of the A51 three weeks ago.

Cllr. Welch pointed out that all the litter being discarded was, in fact, recyclable!

There was, he added, some confusion over the best policy for disposing of dog waste; the County Council and Lichfield District Council insisted that it be removed entirely by the dog-owner, while the Forestry Commission was content that it should be moved off footpaths, and he thought that there should be a standard policy consistently applied.

5. MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR GRASSED AREA OPPOSITE GENTLESHAW SCHOOL, NOW KNOWN AS "GENTLESHAW GREEN"

Cllr. Welch reported that he had now received a quotation from Adrian Bevan, of Living Landscapes, for improving the area in the vicinity of the notice-board.

This would involve clearing the site of the existing concrete and tarmac; creating a retained area using tanalised sleepers; creating two sleeper-planters ideal for the schoolchildren to plant; making two garden seats using tanalised sleepers, concreted into the ground; incorporating a new sign into the retained area together with the litter bin; edging the front of the retained area with stone sets; laying stone slabs in front of the seats and an information sign; laying formasol weed matting and spreading pea gravel of slate for a finish; and preparing the soil around half of the retained area and enriching it with soil conditioner, and planting beech whips to form a natural shelter around the seated area.

The cost of labour, plant hire and materials would be £2768. 00 if pea gravel were used or £3008. 00 if slate were used.

Maintenance would be comparatively low.

Cllr. Welch added that a fifty-per-cent grant would almost certainly be available from the Sustainable Development Fund, and he hoped that the work could be finished in June.

The next step would be to involve the school, and it was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Head Teacher asking for a meeting and requesting a choice of dates.

Cllr. Welch said that he also hoped to involve Natural England.

However, it was felt that a second quotation should be obtained, and Cllr. Taylor agreed to ask for a quotation from G Landscapes.

It was also agreed that Mr. Bevan should be asked to provide an artist's sketch which could be displayed on the notice-board so as to inform parishioners of the Parish Council's plans for the area.

6. TREE SURVEY

Cllr. Taylor reported that he had met Portia Howe, one of the District Council's Arboricultural Officers, who had been very informative and who had brought quite a lot of interesting and relevant literature to the meeting.

Cllr. Welch said that the weakness of the method by which Tree Preservation Orders were issued was that the surveys had tended to be carried out from the roadside, which meant that veteran trees located on farmland tended to have been overlooked.

In addition, the choice of some trees to be covered by TPOs, such as silver birch, had been surprising.

Cllr. Taylor agreed to retain the literature supplied by Ms. Howe and to make it available to anyone who wished to consult it.

He also agreed to check to see that those trees in Upper Longdon which currently appeared on the TPO map still existed, and Cllr. Nash said that he would do the same in Gentleshaw.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Cllr. Clarke outlined the reasons why he thought the Parish Council needed to carry out a risk management assessment and his proposals for a risk management policy.

He had been authorised by the Parish Council to prepare a first draft in conjunction with the Council's various committees and, to that end, was proposing to arrange a session with each of the Committee chairmen.

Cllr. Welch said that he thought that it was only a matter of time before insurance companies would ask clients if they had a risk management policy in place.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AT DISCRETION OF CHAIRMAN)

(i) The Clerk pointed out that discarded tarmac had been dumped on the part of Gentleshaw above Hollows Farm and to the side of Hollows Lodge.

He was instructed to write to the District Council's Land and Property Manager, drawing his attention to this offence.

(ii) Cllr. Juxon asked for the ties securing the trees on Longdon Green to be removed lest they should obstruct their growth.

Cllr. Welch said that he would attend to the matter.

(iii) Cllr. Welch drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that Longdon Hall was for sale, adding that the Committee needed to ensure that any new owner should be made aware of the need to preserve the orchards in the paddock in front of the Hall.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.