

Friends of Palewell Common & Fields

Minutes of Meeting held on 23rd January 2013 at 5.30 p.m.

Present: Andy Sutch (Chairman), David Evans, Rikki Marks, Bernard Adams, Janet Bostock, Angela Howorth.

Apologies for Absence: Jacqui Pattison, Dhun Kenny.

The Chairman welcomed Janet Bostock, a new Committee Member, to her first meeting.

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th November 2012 and Matters Arising:

The Minutes were approved. The following issues were raised for further discussion and action.

i) **DK** (who could not attend the meeting) had sent an e-mail to **AS** voicing concern at the intrusive heavy green netting that the Council had erected to protect boules players from possible stray golf balls, she was concerned at the long term use of such netting which would spoil the 'naturalness' of the common. **RM** said that the original netting was a very pale and less intrusive grey.

AS will follow this up.

ii) **RM** said the parking of large numbers of white vans in local roads continued to be a concern. **AS** will speak to the Council. (**AS** spoke to LBRuT and CPZ policy is to be raised with the Leader w/c 4th February.)

6. Boules Update: **BA** outlined the preferred option of moving the pistes to the Beverley Brook site by the playground, the site would be 12 metres x 12 metres for three new pistes. **BA** said that we could do much of the work ourselves. He outlined the costs.

A picket fencing barrier would be very expensive, Michael Powell, who had helped with the current site, suggested putting fencing on one side only and planting hedges on the other three sides. The cost of one fence would be about £350, scalping and drainage c£400 plus the cost of surfacing. Hedging would cost about £1,000, it might be that the Council would provide the hedgerow plants.

RM did not think that all the funds should come from FoPC. **AS** said that it was very possible that Sport Richmond might contribute, **AS** has a figure of £500. Other possibilities were to involve U3A and MESS. **DE** was concerned that we do not have sufficient funds for a new site. By adding one to the existing site the cost would be under £500 and the safety issue is covered by the netting installed. If the site is moved the costs would be considerable. **JB** said that if the public have free use of the pistes there is more reason for the Council to contribute to the costs.

The options to be discussed at the next meeting.

3. Financial Update: **DE** informed the Committee that the current Balance in the Bank is £1,726.89.

RM raised the question of Insurance. **AS** said there may be an alternative namely, London Wide Friends Insurance, which he was looking into. The cost of insuring the Opening event had been £200.00. **RM** said that BTCV and SW London Group have third party liability, possibly only £100, **AS** would confirm what was available from the London Friends of Parks Group following a meeting on 4th February. **DE** said that the AGM would be an additional cost to be budgeted for. Membership is increasing so resources are rising gradually.

4. Palewell Management Contracts Update: AS informed the committee that the Tennis contract had been let to 'Will to Win' who have the franchise for a number of Local Authority tennis facilities such as Hyde Park and Chiswick, but he understood that they were quite expensive. The courts at Palewell Common require significant investment. They have taken all tennis in the Borough. AS will try to meet with Steve Riley who has the contract.

The Grounds maintenance contract has been let by Richmond Council to Continental Landscapes with whom we are seeking a meeting. In response to a question from RM, AS will check whether woodland maintenance is specified. Peter Dunning's golf contract has been extended until the end of March. AS is trying to meet with David Allister to ensure that they are able to come to the next Committee meeting. He will invite him to report to the AGM on the exact situation regarding golf, tennis and ground maintenance. AS will invite the new contractors to attend the AGM and make a presentation.

5. Beverley Brook: As part of Government cuts the Catchment Management Fund has been cut completely however plans for any future developments will be discussed at a meeting on 13th February to be attended by DE. The Agenda for the meeting will cover: clerical resources, frequency of meetings, current and future projects and other funding. LBRuT are also involved with Thames 21 and the Environment Agency. DE had read the report, there are a number of relatively cheap things that can be done plus expensive proposals such as digging out concrete culverts. Little is likely to be done at the Common end of Beverley Brook because of the bat habitat. DE will report back after the meeting.

7. Woodland Planting and further plans: RM said that following on from the successful volunteers' day in November she had in December, with help from her husband, planted a number of wild bluebells in the cleared glade. RM and JB had had discussions with Tasha Hunter who had given them some helpful ideas. They hope to be able to get rid of the Ash seedlings. RM and JB will plan dates with Simon of BCTV hopefully one in early March, perhaps the 6th/7th. JB said that the possibility of hedging by the tennis courts had been suggested for which we would need tools and Simon and his volunteers. Hedging needs to be done before the end of March otherwise it is October.

8. Cricket Update: AS had had good discussions with both Richmond Cricket Club and Sheen Cricket Club and with the school, he is meeting Richmond Park Academy on Monday at 7.30 p.m, and also meeting Richmond and Sheen next week and Middlesex. AS proposed that the existing square be upgraded and that we consider the possibility of putting a synthetic square between two of the football pitches. A number of the committee are not in favour of a second pitch. This matter to be discussed further at the next committee meeting.

9. Any Other Business and AGM Arrangements: The 15th May was proposed as a possible date for the AGM. AH to check date with All Saints Church Hall and AS to check with potential guests and speakers.

JB raised the possibility of organising woodland walks, the committee are in favour.

AS informed the committee that he will not stand as Chairman next year due to personal commitments, he also felt it important that we find somebody who lived closer to the Common.

Date of Next Meeting: 6th March, 2013.

