

**Minutes of the Maresfield Recreation Ground Committee Meeting  
held on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 7.15pm in the MRG Pavilion**

**Present:** Cllr Alan Strevens (Chair); John Mason; Cllr Mrs Laura Stevens-Smith; Cllr Rob Taylor; Malcolm Smith; Tracy Allen; Maureen Turner; Lesley Skibinska; Greg Roberts; Russell Horscroft; Charlie Wilkinson; Clerk T Allen.

- 1 Public session** – No members of the public were present.
- 2 Apologies for absence.** Cllr Martin Craddock, Graham Prince, Colin Clarke  
Cllr Ken Ogden; Robert Smith.
- 3 Declarations of interest** – Charlie Wilkinson as Chairman of Stepping Stones Pre-School.  
Cllr Rob Taylor as a member of the Maresfield Fete Committee.
- 4 Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017 - It was resolved** to adopt the minutes as a true record.
- 5 Matters arising from these minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda** – None.
- 6 Financial report** – The circulated accounts reports were received; Mr Mason reported a loss of £3,676.02 and highlighted the main income and expenditure items for the 2016/17 financial year, noting that the accounts will now be sent for audit.  
It was **resolved** that, as the account funds build-up, a contingency/reserves policy will be looked at in detail.  
The Clerk reported that the Council's accounting system was now ready for MRGC accounting purposes.  
Following a proposal by Cllr Taylor, it was unanimously **resolved** that the ground hire fee for this year's village fete will be £100.00.
- 7 Subscriptions and fees for 2017/18** - Following a proposal by Mr Mason, it was unanimously **resolved** that subscriptions will increase by £2.00 and that fees per match will increase by £1.00 per session.  
Mr Horscroft reported that the Dynamos were currently being sponsored by ESCC, part of which includes the offer of using its services at MRG where possible. It was **resolved** to create a 'wish list' for Mr Horscroft to send to ESCC; **ACTION:** All to send items for this list to the Clerk.
- 8 Clubs Reports:-**
  - 8.1 Football** – Mr Mason reported that the MFC season had now finished, noting a dramatic decrease in the number of senior players, resulting in only one team being fielded for the 2017/18 season. It was noted that, currently, there were no other teams wishing to use the ground on a regular basis, although there may be some ad-hoc bookings throughout the season.
  - 8.2 Dynamos** – Mr Horscroft & Ms Wilkinson covered the following points:-
    - Exciting growth to c. 90 members signed-on, in nine teams.
    - Occasional problems with Bowls Club members driving past during training/matches; both clubs to liaise and put in place amicable safety measures.

**8.3 Cricket** – Mr Smith covered the following points:-

- First friendly of the season played on 23<sup>rd</sup> April; second friendly to be played on 30<sup>th</sup> April, with league matches commencing the following weekend.
- Sussex vs. Middlesex Ladies match held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April.
- Issue with Dynamos players coming inside of boundary and damaging playing surface, which creates a safety hazard where a ball could 'jump' into a fielder's face. Agreed arrangements for last year were that, outside of the Senior FC season, no studs to be worn by football players and that they should remain outside of the cricket boundary. Mr Horscroft noted that staying outside of the boundary was too restrictive for Dynamos players. Both clubs to liaise and put in place amicable measures; e.g. use of multi-surface/astro boots/trainers, with no studs at all allowed on the cricket square/wicket.

**8.4 Stool Ball** – Ms Skibinska & Ms Allen covered the following points:-

- The Newick Club is running indoor training sessions in Uckfield.
- Practice is in-hand for the new season, with several new players acquired.
- The Club is linked-in with 'Active Uckfield'.
- A new East Division mini-league has been created.
- There are a number of large holes in the playing surface, mostly from past cricket wickets. Mr Smith to arrange for these to be filled-in. Ms Wilkinson to provide plastic football training markers, to see if these would make suitable covers for the holes that must be left in-place.

**8.5 Bowls** – Mr Roberts covered the following points:-

- Green preparations were going very well.
- Landscaping improvements are in-hand.
- An open day was held recently, from which it is hoped to acquire a few new members.
- The first match of the season is on the 29<sup>th</sup> April.

**9 Trees and boundary matters:-**

**9.1 New chain link fence to the rear of the children's play area** – The quotes from SJ fencing were discussed. It was **resolved** to recommend to the Parish Council that the quote for the installation of the matching green mesh fencing to rear of the play area be approved; this is on the grounds of safety and security.

**9.2 Planting of new trees adjacent to Park Farm Drive** - Mr Smith reported that he had heard nothing further regarding the planting of the 'Spike' Stobart memorial tree and would continue to chase this up.  
Mr Mason stated that a quote of c. £900.00 had been received from English Woodland for seven 2m scarlet oak trees, including guards, ties and planting. It was noted that the Conservation Group may possibly provide funding for this; Mr Mason to speak to Sheila Cumming.

**9.3 Children climbing on trees** – The Clerk noted the following advice received from the Council's insurers:-

- The safety of children climbing the trees is not a Council/MRGC responsibility; it is the parents' responsibility to mitigate the dangers to their children and to address their behaviour.
- The policing of children climbing the trees is not a Council/MRGC responsibility.
- Tree surveys should continue out, with repairs/removals carried out as required.
- This subject could be covered in parish newsletters, etc.

- An 'at your own risk' statement could be included in any signage at the entrance to the ground.
- Trees are not play equipment!

It was noted that there is a nuisance element to this matter as well. It was **resolved** that some of the lower branches on some trees can be removed to prevent climbing.

**10 Pavilion matters** – Mr Mason reported on the recent surveys, servicing and maintenance that had been carried out.

**11 Ground matters – Resolved** that the football goal at the rear of the ground to be taken out and put into storage by Mr Smith, on safety grounds.

Cllr Taylor reported on his survey of the ground and the possibility of making some improvements to parking by slightly moving the cricket boundary/squares. It was noted that this option had been considered in the recent past and was not pursued for the following reasons:-

- The current position of the cricket boundary/squares gives the best strips and the MCC would be reluctant to change.
- Any such change would be costly.
- The Charity Commission/Fields in Trust would not support giving up any of the playing surface for parking purposes.

It was **resolved** that emergency access areas need to be better defined and related signage provided; requirement to be added to the ESCC' wish list' (see Item 7.).

**11.1 Hire of MRG by 'The Forest Vet' for a dog show on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2017 –**

Unfortunately there is a scheduled cricket home game on this day; later in the year may be possible and this show could be linked into next year's fete.

**12 Play area matters** – The Clerk reported on the recent vandalism of the picnic table donated by the Conservation Group. **Resolved** that, once the new fencing is installed at the rear of the play area and new signage is to hand, the play area will be locked overnight (7pm-7am).

**13 New notice board** – All clubs to provide their contact details (via the Clerk) to enable Cllr Taylor to complete and install the replacement sign. Cllr Mrs Stevens-Smith, Cllr Taylor and the Clerk to design an additional entrance sign to cover ground rules/regulations/advice to users, etc.

**14 Communications and web site** – The Clerk stated that the social media strategy is developing and that the web site is to be populated with updated pictures; work on the home page has been completed and all other pages will now be updated and improved.

**15 Date of next meeting – Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2017.**

*There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:05.*