



MOUSEHOLD HEATH CONSERVATORS

2.40pm-5.00pm

12 September 2008

Present: Councillor Bradford (Chair), Councillor Bearman (Vice-Chair), Mr M.Bryant, Mr C.Southgate, Mr M. Davies, Mr D.Cannon and Councillors Banham, Lay and S.Little.

Also Present: Councillor Alan Waters and several members of the public were also in attendance

In Attendance Bob Cronk, Head of Community Services and Simon Meek, Green Spaces Manager

Apologies: Ms M.Parker and Councillors Brociek-Coulton and Divers

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

BMX Bikers

On behalf of the Mousehold Heath Defenders, Gill Webb asked what progress had been made in finding the BMX bikers an alternative site.

The Chair advised that the issue would be discussed at item 8 on the agenda.

Litter Bins

On behalf of the Mousehold Heath Defenders, Gill Webb asked that as it had been agreed in the Management Plan that there should be more litter bins on the Heath, how long it would be before they were in place.

The Green Spaces Manager advised that the Management Sub-Group was reviewing the existing location of the bins to identify if more bins were required as this was the action in the Management Plan. The Mousehold Wardens were advising of any litter hotspots.

RESOLVED to ask the Green Spaces Manager to report back with an update at a future meeting of the Committee.

Traffic Calming on Gurney Road

On behalf of the Mousehold Heath Defenders, Gill Webb asked that as the traffic problems along Gurney Road would become more acute when the approved development of White House Farm and the proposed Eco-Town at Rackheath went ahead, could the Conservators act on having traffic calming put in place. This problem was also addressed in the Management Plan.

The Head of Community Services said that any comments on the development proposals and wider Growth work should be fed through to the Planning Service, and if it specifically related to highways issues to the Transportation Team to be incorporated into the Growth Agenda consultation.

RESOLVED to ask the Head of Community Services to provide an update on the situation at the next meeting of the Committee.

Winter Solstice

On behalf of the Mousehold Heath Defenders, Gill Webb requested permission to celebrate the Winter Solstice on 21 December 2008 by dressing the oak tree situated on the Flower Meadow using only natural decoration.

RESOLVED to refer the request to the Management Sub-Group for consideration prior to the December meeting of the Conservators.

Mousehold Fun-Day

Pat Siano expressed her concerns about parking arrangements for stall holders and ownership and insurance responsibility.

The Chair thanked Pat Siano for her comments and advised that the matter would be discussed at item 9 on the agenda.

Bushes on Britannia Road

Councillor Jenny Lay said that the bushes on Britannia Road were overhanging the road and needed to be cut back.

RESOLVED to ask the Green Spaces Manager to arrange for the area to be inspected and raise an order for any necessary work to be undertaken.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2008 subject to: -

- (1). that it be noted that Gill Webb had asked the public questions about the Warden's Mobile Telephone Numbers, BMX Bikers and Litter/Dog Bins on behalf of the Mousehold Heath Defenders.
- (2). the second sentence in the second paragraph relating to the public question on Litter/Dog Bins be amended to read that "a member stated that at the last meeting the general consensus had been that more bins should be located on the Heath".

3. MANAGEMENT SUB-GROUP

The Green Spaces Manager presented the report and updated Members on the work undertaken by the Management Sub-Group.

On behalf of the Mousehold Heath Defenders, Gill Webb advised that the work on the Vinegar Pond would be carried out this year. They would be provided with firm costings and figures for the complete job the following week.

In response to a member's question, Gill Webb advised that the Reed Sweet-grass and the soil would be removed and a clay liner laid, so everything possible was done to eradicate the problem of spreading spores before any wildlife returned.

Malcolm Bryant advised that volunteers working on the project had so far worked a total of 1316 hours and asked the Committee if they would consider making a donation to the Mousehold Fund. Members and officers discussed whether the Committee had the power to give an organisation a grant and what process would have to be followed within the Council's remit.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1). note the report.
- (2). thank the Mousehold Heath Defenders for all of their hard work on the Vinegar Pond Project.
- (3). ask the Management Sub-Group to approve the final piece of work to the Vinegar Pond subject to budget.
- (4). consider a possible donation to the Mousehold Fund for the work on the Vinegar Pond at the next meeting of the Committee.

4. FLYTIPPING ON VALLEY DRIVE

Councillor Alan Waters, Ward Councillor for Crome Ward attended the meeting to present this item.

Members viewed photographic evidence of the flytipping and were advised the location and the items that had been flytipped. CityCare would need to collect the flytipping as it was too large to litter pick and the area would require a full clean-up as some of the flytipping had been there for years. He also stated that there was a need for the public to be educated on the penalties for flytipping.

Discussion between members and Councillor Waters ensued about how the clean-up could be carried out as joint venture between the Mousehold Heath Defenders and the Council, any contractual obligations of CityCare and where flytipping was also on other areas of the Heath. The Head of Community Services said that part of the educative process could be through Environmental Health and the Mousehold Wardens by door knocking and encouraging people to contact the Council to report flytippers.

The Green Spaces Manager advised that Paul Holley, Natural Areas Officer was due to meet with Emily Capps, Environmental Protection Officer on 17 September 2008 to do a study of the area. Once the clean-up had been done, a leaflet drop would be carried out and the area monitored.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1). note the report.

- (2). thank Councillor Waters for the report.
- (3). ask the Green Spaces Manager report back with an update at the next meeting of the Committee.

5. QUARTERLEY BUDGET REPORT

The Head of Community Services presented the report and updated members on the position on Budget Monitoring for the Mousehold Heath Conservators 2007/08.

In response to a member's question, the Green Spaces Manager advised that the rent review for Zak's Restaurant for October 2007 had been missed but the Asset and City Management Team were due to meet the tenant when the review would be backdated.

The Chair asked if it was possible for the Committee to view the lease as it may be possible to use the building for another purpose. The Head of Community Services advised that he would raise the issue with Asset and City Management as the lease could include a Landlord/Tenant confidentiality clause.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1). note the report.
- (2). refer the rent review and lease of Zak's Restaurant to the Management Sub-Group for discussion.

6. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

The Green Spaces Manager presented the report and updated members on a recent survey, management work and events carried out at the Heath. He said that the findings would not be as comprehensive without the input of the volunteers and other individuals who had contributed.

A member said the effort and work carried out on the Heath should be celebrated and publicised outside of the Committee. Discussion took place on the various ways of doing this including publishing articles in the Citizen Magazine, Tenants Talk Magazine or producing a detailed annual report.

It was also suggested that a comprehensive booklet could be produced in the future that could be distributed to schools and libraries and sold on stalls at various events. The Head of Community Services said it would be useful to investigate what happened elsewhere and how other Authorities recorded changes and progress of their green spaces.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1). thank the volunteers and individuals who had contributed to the Annual Work Programme.
- (2). ask the Natural Areas Officer to investigate how other Authorities record changes and progress of their green spaces and report back a future meeting of the Committee.

7. MOUNTAIN BIKING ACTIVITY ON MOUSEHOLD HEATH

The Green Spaces Manager presented the report and updated members on the situation regarding the illegal use of the Heath by mountain bikers.

The Green Spaces Manager referred to a map contained in the report that highlighted the areas on the Heath that the bikers already used and the proposed area for a new cycling facility situated behind Borrowdale Drive, an area of land owned by Norwich City Council. A consultation would be carried out to establish how acceptable this proposal would be and Mr Giles Drake-Brockman from the Forestry Commission would be providing assistance with the project.

Discussion ensued in regards to the proposed area including access rights to the Heath. Councillor Lay expressed her concern that the bikers could use Mons Avenue, a private road, for access causing more damage to the road and possible accidents and asked if there was a way of shutting the road off. The Green Spaces Manager advised that this could be looked at as part of the consultation. Members also discussed the possibility of alternative locations by widening the search area into the Broadland District Council area.

The Chair said that young people in the area should be involved in the consultation and that the Council's Communications Department could publicise it. The Head of Community Services suggested using a website mechanism such as Facebook or Bebo to attract young people's attention or approaching the local body preparing for the 2012 Olympics.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1). note the report
- (2). ask the Green Spaces Manager report back with an update at the next meeting of the Committee.

8. MOUSEHOLD HEATH FUN DAY 2009

The Chair presented this item on behalf of Councillor Brociek-Coulton who had sent her apologies due to illness and invited Pat Siano to return to her public question.

Pat Siano said that she was concerned about the parking arrangements for the people who had stalls on the Heath as they should be able to park their vehicles directly behind the stalls. She also asked who would be taking overall responsibility for the Fun-Day and the insurance arrangements.

On behalf of the Mousehold Heath Defenders, Gill Webb circulated an update advising members of news and progress made by the Mousehold Heath Defenders on the Fun-Day and also addressing any queries they had in the running of the event.

Discussion ensued as to the ownership of the Fun-Day and the insurance obligations of the Conservators, the Council, the Defenders and other organisations. The Events Team at the Council had been involved in past fetes and events on the Heath and a meeting with the Events Team Manager would be taking place to discuss the 2009 Fun-Day. The Head of Community Services said that any further suggestions and

comments should be passed to Councillor Brociek-Coulton and the Management Sub-Group for consideration.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1). note the report
- (2). note the request for vehicle access for the stall holders on the Fun-Day
- (3). refer the issues raised to the Management Sub-Group for discussion.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bandstand Roof

Malcolm Bryant said that the roof of the Bandstand required an inspection for repair works to be done. The Head of Community Services urged the Committee to report any repair works or other problems seen on the Heath to the Neighbourhood Wardens in the future as soon as possible to ensure there were no delays on any repairs being ordered.

RESOLVED to ask the Green Spaces Manager to arrange for the Bandstand to be inspected and order any necessary works.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED to note the date of the next meeting of 5 December 2008.

CHAIR