



MOUSEHOLD HEATH CONSERVATORS

2.30pm-4.50pm

13 June 2008

Present: Councillor Bradford (in the Chair following election), Mr M.Bryant, Mr C.Southgate, Councillors Bearman, Brociek-Coulton, Lay and S.Little.

Also Present: Bob Cronk, Head of Community Services
Simon Meek, Green Spaces Manager
Several members of the public were also in attendance

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Bradford as Chair for the ensuing Civic Year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Bearman as Vice-Chair for the ensuing Civic Year.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Mousehold Wardens Mobile Telephone Numbers

Gill Webb, of the Mousehold Heath Defenders, asked if a decision had been made since the meeting on 25 April 2008 as to whether mobile telephone numbers of the Mousehold Wardens could be provided to the Defenders for emergency use.

The Green Spaces Manager referred to the answer provided in his report 'Review of Actions and Matters Arising'. He added that a dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour telephone line (ASB Hotline) for reporting issues to the Safer Neighbourhood Team was already in operation which enabled the caller to queue jump so their call was prioritised.

RESOLVED to note the position.

BMX Bikers

Gill Webb asked if a decision had been made for a new venue off Mousehold Heath for BMX riders and if so/or in any case would zero tolerance and the Byelaws be enforced as they were encroaching further onto Mousehold.

The Green Spaces Manager advised that a discussion had taken place at the Management Sub-Group in regards to a piece of land next to Britannia Road and the woodland that possibly could be used to accommodate the BMX riders.

He stated that it was not a legal requirement to have the Byelaws displayed. The wardens regularly patrolled the Heath and kept logs of any activity, although no calls received by the Safer Neighbourhood Team's Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Hotline had been recorded for this issue. People should be encouraged to use the ASB Hotline to report any incidents which would help build a stronger case. He explained how at the Safer Neighbourhood Action Panel (SNAP) meetings, the 3 main issues that are voted for by the public are then treated as a priority so police resources can be used effectively.

A discussion then ensued between members in regards to the suggested location and possible alternative locations that the BMX riders could use.

RESOLVED to ask the Green Spaces Manager report back to a future meeting to update the Conservators on this issue.

Byelaws

Gill Webb asked when the Byelaws would be displayed around Mousehold Heath.

The Green Spaces Manager advised that the manner in which the Byelaws would be displayed was being considered. The concerns were that if the signs were over displayed that people would ignore them. This would be reviewed over the coming year.

RESOLVED to refer the request to the Management Sub-Group for initial consideration.

Litter/Dog Bins

Gill Webb asked what decision had been made with regards to more litter/dog bins on Mousehold Heath.

The Green Spaces Manager advised that the location of these bins would be reviewed. A member stated that at the last meeting the general consensus had been that more bins should be located in the middle of the heath and in the car parks.

RESOLVED to refer the request to the Management Sub-Group for initial consideration.

Tree Felling at Mottram Memorial

Paul Scruton commented that the tree felling at the Mottram Memorial had not been a great success and circulated a photograph to demonstrate.

RESOLVED to visit the area at the next Itinerant.

Geophysical Survey Request

Paul Scruton requested if he could arrange a geophysical survey on the hill top next to Zaks Restaurant.

Mr Scruton answered questions about what the survey would entail and the reasons for it.

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

Wood Felled on Heath

Paul Scruton asked what was to happen to the wood felled on the Heath by CityCare or Private Contractors. He asked whether the wood could be offered for use to charitable historic building organisations and non profit making organisations before it was cut into unusable sections.

The Green Spaces Manager advised that Health and Safety issues would have to be considered in the felling and extraction of timber. The Head of Community Services said that the use of any useable timber would be considered on a case by case basis.

RESOLVED to note the position.

Mousehold Management Plan/Chemicals

Paul Scruton asked if the final draft of the Mousehold Management Plan would be circulated to be read by the general public and interested organisations and whether the Management Plan gave Council officers the right to use chemicals.

The Green Spaces Manager advised Mr Scruton that the revised Management Plan had been put onto the Council website prior to the meeting and that hard copies were available. The Management Plan referred to the Council's use of herbicides at Mousehold Heath in Section 6.4 of the document.

RESOLVED to note the position.

Wardens use of Rangers House

Paul Scruton referred to the minutes of the Sub-Committee and pointed out that no mention had been made of the offer for the wardens to use the Ranger House.

The Head of Community Services advised as per the discussion at the Sub-Committee that they would be looking at all options and the greater presence of wardens on the Heath as a whole.

RESOLVED to note the position.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED to:-

(1.) Agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2008 subject to the following amendments being made on Page 2 of the minutes as follows:-

- That the public question on the Gurney Road Car Park being amended to reflect the fact that Pat Siano was not suggesting car parking on the Heath although suggested using the football pitch for additional

parking, and would like to see the Pitch and Putt business to allow car parking. The words "on Council land" should be substituted for the words "on the Heath" in the last sentence to this item.

(2.) Agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2008.

5. REVIEW OF ACTIONS AND MATTERS ARISING

The Green Spaces Manager presented the report.

In response to a question the Head of Community Services advised that although the wardens did not operate 24 hours a day, the Anti-Social Behaviour Hotline was available 24 hours a day. Any calls received out of hours would be logged and investigated once the wardens were back on duty if a warden response was appropriate. However, if an incident was reported that was deemed as an emergency then it would be referred immediately to the relevant emergency service.

In response to a question about the Mousehold Heath Fun Day, Councillor Brociek-Coulton advised that no exact date had been set as yet but would take place in July or August 2009 and may co-incide with a date when a band had already been booked to play at the Bandstand as that would save costs.

RESOLVED to:-

(1.) note the report.

(2.) consider further proposals for a Fun Day on Mousehold Heath in 2009 at the September meeting.

6. MOUSEHOLD HEATH MANAGEMENT PLAN – FINAL DRAFT

The Green Spaces Manager presented the report and outlined the amendments made since the last draft was circulated. The Green Spaces Manager and Head of Community Services answered questions about a number of issues

The Chair stated that although specified in Section 3.5 of the report, that he had not seen a bus service operating on Gurney Road.

In response to a question in relation to Section 4.9, the Head of Community Services advised that there was no official record to show when the Heath became a public open space and in regards to Section 4.10, that the Committee were able to review Byelaws but permission to revise had to come from the Secretary of State.

Discussion ensued in regards to Section 11 on traffic calming and the safety of pedestrians when accessing the Heath. The Head of Community Services advised that they would be liaising with highways staff and the police regarding these measures. Members also discussed the toilet facilities at the heath and in particular the signage.

Councillor Brociek-Coulton advised the Committee that representatives from 'Friends' of Norwich in Bloom would be meeting the Mousehold Defenders near the prison on the Heath on 11 July 2008 regarding the Small Cities Category of the Anglia in Bloom Competition.

Members agreed a number of minor amendments to the text including the following:-

- Deletion of the last two lines in the final paragraph under Section 4.2 (Rationale for Conservation Management).
- Addition of a further bullet point under Section 4.9 (Management of the Historic Environment) to say 'Promote further investigation of the landscape and archaeology with a view to its recognition and protection'.
- Amendment of the sub-heading 'Recommendations' under Section 6.2 to 'Statement of Intent'.

A discussion ensued about the various ways of distributing the report once it had been amended including a DVD option. In answer to a question the Head of Community Services advised that the report would have a Press Release. He also said that the report would be updated on an annual basis and any changes required would be advertised in a separate smaller publication.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1.) approve the plan subject to the amendments agreed at the meeting.
- (2.) refer issues about toilet facilities on the Heath to the next meeting of the Management Sub Group
- (3.) ask the Head of Community Services to investigate what bus routes operate to/from Gurney Road.
- (4.) thank the officers involved in producing the Plan for their hard work

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Annual Tree Inspection

Mr Bryant asked that a member of the Mousehold Heath Conservators should be present when the annual tree inspection took place and that any problems found should be dealt with immediately by officers.

Litter Picking

In answer to a member's complaint as to how the litter picking was operated, the Green Spaces manager advised that all complaints should be reported at the time to

Citycare which should be passed onto Contract Management as any failure on their part could result in a financial penalty.

British Trust Conservation Volunteers

It was reported that members of the British Trust Conservators Volunteers had been working on the Heath and officers had not notified the Conservators. The Chair

stated that it would be good practice and common courtesy for any outside organisations to advise of any impending visits.

8. QUARTERLY BUDGET REPORT

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

RESOLVED to note the report.

9. DATES OF MEETINGS 2008/09

RESOLVED to agree the dates of forthcoming meetings for the ensuing Civic Year as follows:-

- 12 September 2008
- 5 December 2008
- 13 March 2009
- 12 June 2009

10. MANAGEMENT SUB-GROUP

The Green Spaces Manager presented the report. Members pointed out that the word 'Invert' in Section 8A should be amended to 'Invertebrate' and that in Section 8C the wording 'bat boxes' be amended to 'bird boxes'.

The Chair asked the Committee if they were happy for the existing working group to continue and for Councillor Jenny Lay to be offered an additional place.

Members discussed the possible options of converting and adapting buildings on the Heath by Zaks Restaurant and the Pitch and Putt area including the Rangers House.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1.) to note the report subject to the amendments made at the meeting.
- (2.) ask that on future agendas the minutes of the Management Sub-Group be placed directly after the minutes from the Mousehold Heath Conservators.
- (3.) agree that Councillor Jenny Lay join the Management Sub-Group.
- (4.) consider the possibility of funding for the conversion and adaption of buildings near the Pitch and Putt area at the next meeting.

CHAIR