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To:

Members of the Amenities Committee
and remainder of the Council for information

AGAME111

30 May 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

A Meeting of the **AMENITIES COMMITTEE** will be held at **The Grove, 25 St John's Street, Hythe on Monday next, 5 June 2006** at 8.00pm, when your attendance is requested.

Yours faithfully

Clerk to the Council

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To sign the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 April 2006.
3. To note any declaration of interest made by Members in connection with an Agenda item. The nature of the interest must be specified.
4. Public Participation Period.
5. Vandalism Report – 23 March to 22 May 2006.
6. Oaklands Way Pond – To note information about anti-social behaviour (Minute 452/05).
7. Bowling Green – To discuss the viability of providing a bowling green within the Parish (Minute 453/05).
8. Ewart Recreation Ground – Progress report on the new play area (Minute 454/05).
9. Challenger Way Play Area (Minute 393/05).

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10. Hosepipe Ban – To discuss a plan of action if a hosepipe ban is imposed.
 - a) Floral Displays and Hanging Baskets.
 - b) Allotments.
11. Youth Shelter (Min. 336/05).
12. Local Authority Byelaws in England : A Discussion Paper.
13. The Hire of the Parish Hall – request for concessionary rate.
14. Allotments – Metrication.
15. Any other urgent business concerning the committee.

HYTHE AND DIBDEN PARISH COUNCIL

AGENDA NOTES

AMENITIES COMMITTEE – 5 June 2006

Item 5 **Vandalism Report – 23 March 2006 to 22 May 2006**

The following is a list of vandalism suffered by the Parish Council for the period shown.

Forest Front

Part of a fence was damaged allowing motorbikes to access the area. Temporary repairs were made and whilst awaiting parts the locks that secured the temporary repair were removed.

The repairs are now complete and stronger padlocks have been fitted.

A fence by the turning circle was damaged this has since been replaced.

Cost to the Council, which includes the replacement locks and parts but excludes manpower costs is £210.00

The total cost of vandalism to the Council for the period shown is £210.00. The total cost for this financial year is £ 210.00 compared with £120.00 at the same time last year.

Item 6 **Oaklands Way Pond – To note information about anti social behaviour (Min 452/05 refers**

At a previous meeting, Members were informed about the problem with groups of young people who are congregating at Oaklands Way Pond and causing a nuisance.

A meeting was set for Tuesday 4 April at 10am at the Pond with representatives from the Police, Handy Trust, ACSO's, the Parish Council and the local resident who helps to maintain the pond were in attendance. At this meeting it was decided that this Council should plant shrubs in strategic places.

The meeting was followed by a follow up meeting held at The Grove on Tuesday 16 May 2006.

The meeting held on 16 May was positive. Measures to deal with the problems appeared to be having an effect and the groups of young people gathering at the pond have dispersed for the time being. It was agreed to remain alert and to ensure that all of the agencies involved in the issue are informed of any recurrence of anti social behaviour.

The ACSO's and the Police will continue to patrol the area.

Item 7 **Bowling Green – To discuss the viability of providing a bowling green within the Parish (Min 453/05 refers)**

At the meeting of the Amenities Committee held on 3 April 2006, it was agreed to seek the cost of a professional survey so that the provision of a bowling green could be discussed further.

The provision of a bowling green within the Parish has been on the Council's "wish list" for many years and preliminary investigations into the costs involved in the provision of basic bowling greens were given at the previous meeting.

Members are reminded that to have a bowling green would involve a considerable financial commitment both for the initial provision and long term maintenance and staffing of the facility therefore careful consideration must be given to this. It is

recommended that, if this facility is a serious intention, a consultation to determine the need for such a facility should be undertaken by an independent organisation that is skilled in this type of market research.

Investigations into the cost of conducting a comprehensive survey reveal that in order to complete a useful survey, 800 addresses would be selected on a random basis from the list of properties in the parish with 400 interviews being conducted with the head of household or their spouse/partner. The cost of the questionnaire design, fieldwork, data processing and reporting would cost around £12,000. The market research company advised that people may well claim that they would use a bowling green but in reality they may not actually do so.

Members are asked to discuss whether the provision of a bowling green is a viable project and if so, whether to make request financial provision in the forthcoming budget.

Item 8 **Ewart Recreation Ground – Progress report on the new play area (Minute 454/05 refers)**

i) Construction of the new play area commenced on the 24 April 2005. The work has progressed well and the contractors are on schedule to handover the facility in time for the proposed official opening on the 16th June. An up to date progress report is maintained on the Parish Council's website.

ii) During the consultation process, several members of the public expressed some concern about whether the play area would have an impact on the number of cars that park in West Street.

A sign is to be erected at the stepped entrance onto Ewart Recreation Ground from West Street which will ask users of the rec to park their cars in the Brinton Lane car park.

Members are asked to consider whether there is a need for this access. If so, consideration could be given to set aside funding in order that the access can be renovated to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.

Item 9 **Challenger Way Play Area (Minute 393/05 refers)**

Discussions regarding the provision of a new play area have continued with officers from New Forest District Council.

The land off of Challenger Way has been earmarked for development. At present one planning application has been submitted for part of the site and it is believed that a second developer is close to submitting an application to develop the remainder of the site. As part of the application an area has been set aside for the provision of play facilities.

There is the possibility that developer's contributions could be used to provide some of the play equipment. Discussions are taking place with New Forest District Council's Leisure Services Department about the possibility of submitting a bid to access money already gained by the District Council from the National Lottery.

During a recent site visit with officers from the District Council it was noticed that children had built a den in the wooded part of the site. Although the structure was of a high standard there were some concerns regarding its safety. As a result New Forest District Council is arranging to have the den removed. In order to explain to the children why their den is to be removed, letters have been sent to all residents of Cosworth Drive by the Parish Council. The content of the letter praises the children's ingenuity and requests that the children who built the structure and any other children from the area work with the relevant authorities in producing ideas for the new play facility. To date 30 children have volunteered their services. Candy Huxham (Handy Trust) is involved and progress is encouraging.

Members are requested to note the progress.

Item 10 **Hosepipe Ban** – To discuss a plan of action if a hosepipe ban is imposed

a) Floral Displays and Hanging Baskets

Each year the Council provides summer floral displays and hanging baskets. The plants were ordered in the early part of the year and have been delivered.

There is a possibility that there will be a hosepipe ban this summer and Members are asked to consider and decide on what course of action to take should the ban be imposed.

Some options to consider are:-

Plant as usual and if the hosepipe ban is introduced

- i) the plants in the hanging baskets can be replanted into existing flower beds and let nature take its course.
- ii) leave the plants in the hanging baskets and let nature take its course.

b) Allotments

Many allotment tenants have asked whether a hosepipe ban will affect the use of the taps at the allotments.

Clause 6 of the Allotment Rules and Conditions states:- "The tenant may connect a hosepipe to any water tap provided and will disconnect it immediately if another tenant needs access to the tap. This rule will be revoked if there is a drought or if the use of hosepipes is abused."

Members are asked to decide what action is to be taken in relation to the use of the taps at the allotments if there is a hosepipe ban.

Item 11 **Youth Shelter (Minute 336/05 refers)**

Members are reminded that it was decided not to have a youth shelter within the perimeter of the new play area at Ewart Recreation Ground and discussions were ongoing with the HANDY Trust and the police to ascertain a suitable location for the youth shelter.

Hythe Skate and Ride has been successful in securing funding for a youth shelter to be sited within the Hythe skate park and this is to be installed soon.

Members are asked to decide whether they feel it necessary to pursue the provision of another youth shelter in the vicinity or whether to keep the provision on hold until interested parties suggest a more suitable location for discussion.

Members are reminded that an initial survey of neighbouring residents and staff working nearby showed concern about anti-social behaviour and personal safety.

Item 12 **Local Authority Byelaws in England : A Discussion Paper**

The ODPM has sent a discussion paper regarding the local authority byelaws (letter attached). Comments were requested to be sent before June, however the deadline has been extended because the white paper will not now be published until later in the year.

Bearing in mind that the business of this committee is usually of high volume it is recommended that a Working Party be formed to discuss the document and make a response.

Item 13 **The Hire of the Parish Hall** – request for concessionary rate

A regular user of the Parish Hall, who has bookings for Wednesday and Friday evenings, has requested that a retrospective concessionary hire fee be granted for a charity fund raising event that was held on 1 April 2006.

It is the Council's policy that an application for grant aid be submitted for such events however, this case is not that straightforward.

The hirer has been very accommodating and has cancelled her regular bookings on occasion to allow other bookings such as the cinema, Waterside Arts events and The Spiritualist Church.

Members are asked to consider granting a concessionary hire fee for the event held on 1 April 2006 as an act of goodwill.

Item 14 **Allotments**

In order to bring the administration of the Council's allotments into line with current legislation, the fee levied on allotments has to be metric. Square metres are to replace rods.

It was decided to re-measure all of the plots to ensure that the information on our records was correct. The new measurements, of many plots, do not correspond with the recorded information.

Legal advice has been gained from NALC on this issue and it is recommended that a Working Party be set up to agree a plan of action to resolve the issues relating to the discrepancy.

In the meantime, to assure tenants that the matter is being dealt with, it is recommended that a letter be sent to all allotment tenants informing them that the allotments are "going metric" and that some issues relating to the size of some plots has been identified and will be addressed as soon as possible.

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