

Minutes of a meeting of the Parks Committee
Held on 13 February 2012

Present:- Cllrs. W. Jefferson, A.J. Markley, G. Wilkinson & S. Graham.
Also Wendy Jameson (Town Clerk) & Ken Wannop.

007 **Apologies**

Cllr. M. Snaith.

008 **Declaration of Interest**

Cllr. Markley - County Council, Allerdale Borough Council, school & Markley transport.

009 **Exclusion of Press & Public**

There were no Press or Public present at the meeting.

010 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2011 were approved by the Parks Committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

011 **Use of The Green**

It was proposed that a charge of £100 be made for the first day, plus £50 for each additional day for the use of the Green for events such as Solway Crafters which would not include the Vintage Rally, Beer Festival, Kite Festival etc. This charge would also cover the cost of electricity used up to a max of £20. Any other one off events such as a Circus for example, would be considered individually. Electricity consumption needs to be monitored, with meter readings taken before and after each event. Major events may need to be charged for electricity which will be at the Council's discretion. This will be the first year that the Town Council will be responsible for paying the electricity bills for the Green and the costs need to be covered. The number of caravans needs to be restricted to a maximum of 4 vehicles for security purposes for the Craft tent (not incl. Vintage Rally, Beer Festival etc).

012 **Solway Community Technology College - Grounds Maintenance**

On 30 January, a letter was sent to the Council by Lois Baird, Head of Solway Community Technology College asking that the Town Council reconsider their quote for the grounds maintenance. Then, on 8 February a letter was received from Denise Scott, Chair of Governors, to say that the contract with the Town Council was terminated. It is with disappointment that, before the Council could consider their quote, the decision had already been taken to terminate the contract. It will put severe pressure on the Town Council's budget, as the workload is going to reduce. The letter of 8 February states that the present contract will end on 31 March 2012 but the contract actually started on 1 February 2011, which was for 12 months and therefore technically, the contract has now finished. The first letter is full of inaccuracies but there is no point in replying to it, as it is clearly overtaken by the letter of 8 February. Reply to be sent to the school.

013 **Handyman's Report**

The gang mowers are away getting refurbished and other machinery is getting maintained. Friends of the Green will be involved with the planting of the new Town

garden. The fencing around the grounds maintenance depot will be going all round the depot. Equipment for water splash will need somewhere to be stored over the winter months but it will not be a problem for another 9 months. It was suggested that a 30ft container would be useful for storage. Peter Holliday came to see Ken re: gorse bushes up Skinburness Road and thought he was going to cut the gorse bushes right back but Ken has told him hold off for now. Normally they would be cut down to 5-6 ft tall and then cut back 3 years later. It would take approx 4 days to do at £25 per hour. They cannot be touched after February due to birds nesting. Natural England pay for the gorse bushes to be maintained on the golf banks. It was agreed that the gorse bushes should be left until the end of the year. Letter to be put in Buzz, to say that the Council have listened to the community and work is planned be done in the winter time. Matter to be brought back to next Council meeting. Letter to be sent to Natural England.

014 Green Project

At a recent site meeting it was reported that everything is on schedule. There had been one or two problems re: Pagoda. A lot of wood was beyond redemption. Steel structure has been put in which will be clad with wood. Everything is in hand. Wood play equipment is in the Pines and being constructed. There have been some misgivings about the surface of the footpaths. In front of the Golf Hotel is going to be tarmac and chippings. Path up to the Pagoda and around play area is going to be surfaced with tarmac. This may be a problem in the winter, as they may be slippery. The footpath at the Rose garden is holding water. Path from the water works to the Promenade was slippery when in was frosty and may need tar chipped. If tar sprayed with 6mm of chippings on top, it would not be a problem. Footpaths are a major part of the Green and they need to be right. The Parks Committee expressed concerns about the finishes of the footpaths and the potential Health and Safety implications especially re: path up to the Pagoda and down to Promenade. Jason Dixey, project manager is speaking with the contractors and consultants. It was agreed that a letter be sent to Jason asking him to meet with the Parks Committee a.s.a.p. The sandstone flags recently uplifted by the County Council when replacing the old footpaths on part of Criffel Street are to be re-used underneath the picnic benches which may result in a cost saving. Chris Graham was getting details of the owners of any memorial benches on the Green. It was agreed that all seats with plaques need to be removed and stored. Any seats in a bad condition can then have the plaques removed and put onto a new seat. Contractors to take the seats up and Ken to arrange for them to be stored. Ken to give us a view on whether they are re-usable or not. Liase with Chris Graham regarding the list. There is currently a possible under spend of £150K. Possible extras were priced up i.e. a) granite setts along edge of footpaths on Green edge and leading to the water fountain etc, b) making the car park bigger, c) two new shelters and d) Victorian style street lights along Criffel Street. Lambert Gill will talk with Sundog energy re: solar panels to power the lights. Any future maintenance would come back to the Town Council, as the County Council would not adopt them. There could be provision for extra play equipment - instead transfer it to bike track area to be created in the grounds maintenance depot. The general view was that in the grounds maintenance depot was the best location for the track. There is scope for the re-distribution of the surplus. It was agreed that the committee needs to discuss with Jason what the surplus is likely to be and how it can be utilised. It was agreed that Jason and Bill Allison be invited to the next meeting. There were concerns that the other end of Skinburness is not getting any attention but the Town

Council will be doing some work to the gorse bushes. The shelter up Skinburness probably needs to be removed.

Signed..... Date.....