

**Friends of West Park Meeting  
Thursday 21st July 2016**

Meeting started, 6.30pm.

**Apologies:** Cllr Sue Richmond, Jackie Buckingham.

**Present:** Andrew Buckingham, Pippa Smaling, Marleen, Tony Cooper, Rob George, Sharon Denham, Ron Denham, Peter Anthony, Terry Jones.

**Matters Arising.**

PA: dog walkers not bothered about dog bins, just want plenty around the park; are the missing ones being replaced? PS: no more bins being put in due to budget constraints. AB: if we paid for extra bins would the Council be willing to empty them? PA: discussed that some should be removed or moved. RG: change to waste bins from dog bins. **[Action PS: ask Council to clarify if they will empty the bins if we move them] [Action PA: recommend bin locations]**

AB: haven't yet put the leaflet on the website. Will action. **[Action AB]**

PS: Richmond Close gate on track bed to be chicane instead. RG: should be referred to Street Scene to recommend to them that they replace gate with chicane in the interests of reducing Council's maintenance costs. PS: spoke to supplier who did not believe it would work, but would check with dimensions (re mobility scooter) and respond. TC: not strictly on Park land so money cannot be spent. **[Action PS: check with supplier]**

AB: SUDS drainage, investigating annual maintenance of. TC: found the pipe, could open it up and jet it. PS: Council is investigating the gully clearer. RG: this is a Council issue as the landowner, due to liability is flood waters ingress dwellings; sustainable drainage function is highways. RG: not a Levy issue. **[Action PS: check gully clearance]**

AB: PA's question about frozen paths; Nick Leeming was to be contacted. TC, RG: Nick Leeming was consulted and cleared it. PA: queried wet weather performance injuring dogs. TC: path spec is to Council's recommendation. RG: standard product Calcium Limestone used around the world.

**Site Maintenance.**

AB: Sue Richmond submitted a query from a resident about wire fences. PA: (described location) people are using it as a cut-through and trampling the fence down. TC: outside of the boundary. PA: the entrance was done and that's for people outside of Levy payers. TC:

wire fencing is the old Darchem fencing; plan was to open everything up originally and have no fence with the railway line, but residents made it clear they didn't want that and therefore timber fences were put in to visually in-fill; but the long length of mesh was just left as-is; the verges are adopted by the Council as highway but the Council dispute adopting walls even though they are on Council land; therefore fencing should be covered in that; although if challenged the Council are likely to state that they would just take the fences out - which is not what residents want; planners want it open, residents want it closed, not within the Park boundary and therefore can't use Levy. RG: a councillor managed to get a fence erected. AB: suggest PA to speak to Sue Richmond. [No formal Group action as outside of Park]

PS: grass cutting continues; path edges on small paths.

TC: have identified sight lines which need re-opening so that each sculpture can be seen from the respective tors. PS has identified. **[Action PS: begin arranging tree clearance]**

PS: fencing at play area dipping pond done. Old Playbuilders sign removed and artwork being created for new noticeboard. Need to discuss location of flagpole. Green Flag has been re-awarded for this year following a mystery shop.

TC: bulb planting scheme has been passed to Nick Leeming

PA: bridge over the stream by Timothy Hackworth has a loose board; along the stream is untidy and overgrown; tarmac path is also overgrown. TC: tarmac path is highways; 10m corridor (5m either side of centre of beck) is Levy paid; outside of that is highways. PA: people who cleared it last left the vegetation there rather than taking it away. RG: so we should ask for it to be taken away. PA: tidied some of it himself using a strimmer. TC: triangles of land are adopted so highways. PA: beck under the path towards the BAPL compound has rubbish in it too. TC: BAPL can clear that. PS: willow trees on Locomotion Lane side and going to be reduced to stop them getting in the way of a resident. TC: does PS team do the beck corridor at the moment? PS: as and when. TC: what about post-September after Council budget cuts? PS: unknown. TC: we can ask that works are done and action them, but no guarantee that they will be done post-September. RG: Street Scene possibly will not have the capacity to address these issues, and may not yet realise that. **[Action PS: request for clearing West Beck corridor; loose board on bridge]**  
**[Action TS: clear beck next to compound]**

## **Events.**

PS: bikeathon pulled; St T's Santa Run moved to town centre. Halloween an option but time from PS limited. TC: cancel event and await feedback from residents following previous year's strong showing.

PS: group of Cubs put bird food out; are going to put bird feeders out once they've made them.

## **Community Feedback.**

SD: don't have a dog, have walked through and very happy, like the area, look over the bridge, Park is like a heathland but pleasant; to think there's a possibility it won't be kept is a shame. RG: it will be kept. RG: Levy guarantees a level; South Park has similar guarantee due to presence in Council but all other parks have no guarantee; West Park has the Levy which gives security. TC: Levy was set as safeguard against funding being withdrawn which would lead to the development failing.

## **Feedback from Steering Group.**

No Steering Group meetings took place in the intervening period.

## **AOB.**

Discussion on withdrawal of Council facilities post-September.

TC: Spring 2017 will deliver a shock. PA: can we do it via volunteers to help PS? RG: supervisory time probably not available. RD: train people to supervise? [...] RG: liability etc. PA: finish early Friday, could help a little? RG: 700-800 person-days worth of maintenance time currently, 4 people 2 days per week; level of volunteers required to do this is very high; probably most likely as an add-on. RG: Street Scene are still committed to do the grass cutting of the larger parts of the Park. PS: Council don't cut beyond 15 degree angle. RG: contractor "Les" might do a few days per week on contract; will have to pay VAT though. TC: needs to go to Steering to see what Council could provide, and who could provide other services. RG: company that currently provides volunteers could possibly come out 2 days per week. TC: need to talk to Council because they provide the trucks; do we need an extraordinary meeting earlier than Steering Group. RG: if less than £10k then there is a possibility of the Council letting a private contractor do it and Steering approves it, but this means losing volunteer help e.g. existing team. TC: need to ask the question of Council via Ian Thompson; Levy is set up as a fallback to protect against this so should be possible to do it; is the proposal to fund some Ranger service time as well though? RG: figure quoted was £15k which was some of RG, some of PS, some of "John's" time for him and his volunteers. TC: therefore the question to the Friends is: is £15k worth it to fund the Council to continue this level of service (AB: if that proves to be possible)? RG: be clear to ask specifics about keeping key staff on, rather than just providing a bare minimum level of service. PA: can we put a cap on it. RG: need to specify what we want; need to specify at a

detailed level i.e. “John’s” team of a volunteer leader and a number of volunteers in a van; currently quoting two thirds of what it costs the Council to run that team but believe it could be cheaper. TC: £15k is a good price. RG: be a shame to see a proportion of the Levy going on maintenance; will look at what John Reed costs. TC: could you do a spec on what John Reed does? **[Action RG: cost up JR and do a spec on current level of maintenance]**  
**[Action TC: arrange extraordinary Steering Group meeting]**

RG: propose extend the orchard.

AB: propose move meeting start time to 6pm. **[Action PS]**

AB: thank Rob George for his kind dedication and public service to this group and this project.

Meeting ended 8pm.

**Date of Next Meeting:** 6pm, Thursday 20th Oct 2016.