

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF
OTTERBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL**

1867

Bianchi Room, Otterbourne Village Hall, 16 February 2010 at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr Oldham (Chairman); Hudson; Barton-Briddon; Andrews; Tabor; Clerk

In attendance: County Cllr C Bailey; District Cllr E Bell; Ms J Brett, Operations Performance Manager LHT; Mr R Emery, Top of the Hill Cricket Club; Mr M Warne, Chairman Conservation Group; Otterbourne Cricket Club: Mr A Nicholls, Welfare Officer, Coach and Co-ordinator; Mr M O'Brian, Club Chairman; 18 Parishioners.

1. Welcome and Opening Comments by Chairman

Cllr Oldham welcomed everyone to the Meeting. Three letters had also been received from Parishioners unable to attend and these had been copied to all Councillors.

2. Declaration of Interest

Recreation Ground: Cllr Oldham advised that his property backed onto the Recreation Ground, although the remaining length of lease did not make this a matter of concern.

3. Cricket Ground Proposal

a) Introduction – Cllr Oldham

The Top of the Hill Cricket Club had played junior cricket on the Elderfield ground for the past 25 years. Two years ago the Club had merged with the Eastleigh and Otterbourne Cricket Club to become the Otterbourne Cricket Club.

45 juniors and 3 senior teams also played at the Southern Water (SW) ground, although there was concern regarding the continuance of this site due to increasing security measures. The proposal would be to create a new and much improved cricket ground at the rear of Elderfield to serve Otterbourne Cricket Club. The Club would then concentrate on this ground but the SW pitch would still be used.

Langley House Trust (LHT) had offered to lease their ground to the Parish Council for a peppercorn rent. The Parish Council would then sub-lease the ground to the Otterbourne Cricket Club for a nominal rent.

Improvements to the ground would include a separate entrance to the site reinstating the use of an old field gate off Kiln Lane. A car park to the right hand side of the entrance would be created and a pavilion with changing and toilet facilities constructed.

The Parish Council had checked with WCC Planning Department and the proposal was in accordance with the SE Plan for Open Spaces Development. The lines of sight to the access would require checking. A permissive footpath along the first part of Kiln Lane was being investigated with the Methodist Church who owned the LHT site.

The Cricket Club would be responsible for the development of the new ground and facilities. The Parish Council would cover the legal costs of setting up the leases and any cost associated with the footpath..

b) Presentation on Otterbourne Cricket Club – Mr A Nicholls

The Club comprised junior teams for the under 9's, under 11's, under 13's and under 15's. It was a vibrant, healthy Club promoting a safe, effective, child friendly sport giving the opportunity for children to gain in both personal development and in being part of a team. The Club was open to and encouraged all abilities. It welcomed both boys and girls. Input from coaches and parents was voluntary. Supporting staff undertook CRB checking and

ECB qualifications for coaching development. Training in the winter months took place in Thornden School. Much success had been gained by the Club and individuals at local level and Winchester District. Some members had continued to Hampshire level. In addition to the juniors, the Club fielded three senior teams which played in the Hampshire Leagues.

c) Public Discussion

- Q Regarding how many children in the Club came from Otterbourne.
Mr Nicholls: Last year numbers were 15, it was expected this would increase. Children from 10 local schools were in the catchment area for the Club.
- Q Regarding safety of the children playing at Elderfield.
Ms Brett: The Audit from the Ministry of Justice had been implemented and tighter restrictions for acceptance of residents were in place including the use of a police and probation panel.
Cllr Oldham: The Top of the Hill Cricket Club had played at the ground for the past 25 years without any known incident.
Mr Nicholls: Younger children were accompanied/collected by a parent/guardian. Older children generally left in groups and an adult remained at the ground until everyone had left.
- Q Regarding responsibility for maintaining the square at the site.
Cllr Oldham: To date this had been maintained by Top of the Hill Club, but in the future it would be maintained by Otterbourne Cricket Club.
- Q Regarding the amount of use of the ground and whether this will increase.
Mr Nicholls: The amount of use by juniors would increase from that previously under Top of the Hill Cricket Club. The Southern Water ground would continue in use for some time for some senior play, but the intention would be to develop a much improved ground over the years on the Elderfield site for the Club's use.
- Q Regarding the division of the ground on the site.
Cllr Oldham: The proposal would be to use the field part of the site up to, but not including, the back of the greenhouses and the newly planted Orchard.
- Q A map of the site would be helpful to show the extent of the proposals.
- Q Regarding the amount of current traffic along Kiln Lane, the speed of traffic, future traffic generated and the possibility of introducing traffic calming measures.
Cllr Oldham: It is possible that the 30 mph limit could be extended.
Cllr Hudson: Expressed concern that although more opportunity to play cricket was an excellent idea, Kiln Lane was one of the last remnants of the rural areas surrounding Otterbourne. The concept was one of expansion and therefore the increase in traffic and environmental considerations were very important. Concern was that if the Club did well, as did the Football Club at Oakwood Park, then traffic and development concerns would increase. At present the Parish Council was trying to defend development proposals further down Kiln Lane, but this proposal would lead to increased development on this part of the lane.

Mr O'Brian: At present the maximum number of cars when the 1st 11 team plays on a Saturday at Southern Water between 1–7 pm was 15. It was expected that an increase in the number of cars would not be significant.

Q Regarding the use of the Public Car Park at Cranbourne Drive for most cars with only a couple of spaces on site for disabled access.

Mr O'Brian: There would be concern regarding crossing Main Road. A car park on site would be required.

Q Regarding site safety when closed to play.

Mr O'Brian: The entrance would be secured by a gate. Nothing of value would be left on site. The site would not be open for general recreational use by the public and this would be specified in the lease.

Cllr Oldham Height barriers might be required for extra security and to limit access when the gate was open.

Q Regarding the pavilion structure.

Mr O'Brian: This was open for negotiation. It was envisaged that a permanent structure would not be allowed by LHT. It would be a portacabin style, single storey and in-keeping with the area.

Cllr Oldham: Agreed that planning would require the portacabin to be in pavilion style rather than a building site portacabin.

Q Regarding clarification of use of the Cranbourne Drive public car park and direction of permissive path.

Cllr Oldham: The public car park could be used for overspill and local people would be encouraged to use it. The permissive path would start where the current footpath ended and cut inside the LHT boundary. It could not go all the way down to the proposed access gate, but would come out onto Kiln Lane after about 20 metres so that at least the bad bend could be avoided.

Q Regarding concern that if the car park and public access was not sealed then the public and dog walkers would wander in.

Cllr Oldham: LHT would not allow this. The car park would be gated as would any access from a walkway. It would be a closed site to general public use.

Q Regarding adult cricket being played on the site.

Mr O'Brian: The majority of the cricket would be junior and village cricket, but the site was larger than the SW site and had more potential. At present the 1st 11 team plus two other senior sides played at SW. The SW site would continue in use, but over time it was intended to develop the Elderfield ground into a decent cricket pitch for some senior teams to play on. Ideally 8 strips would be developed over the years to form a good home ground for the Otterbourne Cricket Club.

Two statements of support were received regarding the Elderfield ex-offenders residence.

4. **Recreation Ground**

a) Introduction – Cllr Oldham

Oakwood Park Recreation Ground had been held on lease from Southern Water for many years. The current lease started in 2005 and had a further 16 years to run with a renewable option for a further 21 years giving 37 years in total. The facilities on the ground: the youth equipment, play park and upgraded pavilion had been much improved. Southern Water had recently sold off many of the surrounding plots of land throughout the village. The cricket pitch and southern field had been held for possible expansion and although unlikely, it was possible that the recreation ground could also be used for this purpose. In 2008 Southern Water had approached the Parish Council to enquire whether it was interested in purchasing the freehold of the Recreation Ground. The Parish Council had commissioned a valuation report which determined a significant variation in the valuation between the two parties. The matter had not been taken forward until Southern Water had recently approached the Parish Council again.

b) Finances – Cllr Andrews

The Parish Council had some reserves earmarked for the purchase, but amounts were also earmarked for other projects. Public loan facilities had also been investigated. It had been determined that the land was designated under the Winchester District Open Space Strategy as recreational open space. It was therefore subject to the Recreational and Tourism policy of the Local Plan and it would be unlikely that any other form of use would be allowed for it. The first stage was to start negotiations and determine the value of the land.

c) Public Discussion

- Q Cllr Bailey advised that most villages owned their recreation grounds and it would be important to secure it for the village.
- Q Ex-Chairman Michael Warne advised that there were also bore holes and easements across the land which may affect other use.
- Q Cllr Hudson advised that one of the letters received placed this matter at greater importance than developing a new cricket ground.