



## **Friends of Moneyhole**

### **Meeting minutes**

7:00 – 9:20 pm, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010

<http://www.welwynhatfield.co.uk/moneyhole>

<b>Present:</b>
TK Choo (FoM), Cllrs D. Bennett, R. Trigg
Local Residents and Attendees (20)
Apologies: C Rigby, N Marshall, P Edmonson, C Cooper, S Johnson, S Seager, R Spender, D Norton, E Willox, J Shaw, M Monroe, W Monk, D Varney, K Nugget, A Carr, N Higgs
No representatives of Finesse or PFC in attendance.

The Minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record. There were no matters arising.

1) Expansion to Panshanger Residents Association.

Discussion among group re merits of RA. Agreement among all that it would be a good idea, but would take more time/resource than FoM currently has. Vote was taken and decision made to keep FoM as is for now. However the RA idea can be developed in the background to be discussed again at a future date. Point made that Haldens/Panshanger political boundary may be problematic, but physical location should trump shifting ward boundaries.

2) Events

a) **National Pet Month Fete** Saturday 10 April 10 – 3 pm Nicky Higgs the dog & animal warden is organising a mini fete to promote responsible pet ownership (more info at <http://www.nationalpetmonth.org.uk>). FoM have agreed to help. PFC will kindly allow the public to use the Pavilion toilets and to offer light refreshments for sale. Dogs for the Disabled will have a stall. Residents and other groups are invited.

b) **Picnic in the Park** Saturday 03 July 10 – This is the annual informal picnic in the park where residents are invited to bring their own picnic, rugs/seating. Everyone is welcome.

3) Dog related issues

The RSPCA will supply some plastic dog mess bags for free. (the National Pet Month fete). WHBC will fit two new dog bins in the park and Finesse has agreed to empty them.

Dog attacks: Reports of dogs attacking wildlife in the park and of dogs being in packs too large for their owners to control. Professional dog walkers use the park to walk more dogs off the lead than they can control. Possible dangers to children also observed raising safety concerns. The Dog Control Order, similar to the one at Cuffley, requested last year was deferred pending an educational exercise on responsible dog ownership. This was done in July 09. Note: DEFRA Information about what a DCO does is now on the FoM website.

**ACTION 1:** Cllr Trigg is to report back the council's current position regarding a possible DCO for the next meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> March.

4) New bins and benches

The park now has five new benches and 10 rubbish bins at locations around the park. A sixth bench is still to be installed and location coordinates have been given to Finesse (TL 26947 BNG 12493). These benches are welcomed as they give less able residents somewhere to sit as they walk around the outer reaches of the park.

5) Remedial work on the nature trail

This continued again this week. Finesse supplied one person to deliver the chippings. The rest of the team was from the community payback scheme or volunteers. The exercise managed by TK.

6) Felling of some large perimeter trees

The October 09 exercise was to remove saplings from choking the established trees.

Several residents asked:

- a) Why the large trees were chopped down?
- b) Where did the timber go, was it sold?
- c) Why are the saplings not removed as intended?
- d) What are Finesse's plans for further felling?
- e) Can Finesse consult FoM and residents before the next exercise?

**ACTION 2:** Cllr Trigg agreed to find the answers, and report back on the 26<sup>th</sup> March FoM meeting.

7) Football pitch locations.

Several residents have observed that football pitches have encroached on park space in recent years, also leading to increasing noise as they are located on the housing side of the park. Why are residents, park users and council planners not consulted?

**ACTION 3:** Cllr Trigg agreed to find the answers, and report back on the 26<sup>th</sup> March FoM meeting.

8) Car Park resurfacing

Andy Carr took a vote at 01 May 09 FoM meeting and the resurfacing was agreed to be done prior to the start of the football season in September 2009. Cllr Bennett now stated it could not have been agreed because it was not in the Finesse capital program.

**ACTION 4:** Cllr Bennett to find out where resurfacing is on the Finesse roadmap by speaking to Finesse senior management. To report back by next meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

9) Tennis area

Residents are dismayed at PFC decision to stop the rebuilding of the tennis court wall without wider consultation. Question raised: Who has the authority to remove an existing tennis facility used by the community for many years? Finesse website still claims there is a floodlit tennis court at the park when there is not. See: <http://www.finesseleisure.com/default.asp?step=2&id=35>

**ACTION 5:** Cllr Trigg agreed to find out and report back to the next meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> March.

10) PFC pavilion lease details.

Several residents again asked when the lease expires. Councillors stated that the lease is valid even though it is yet to be signed. Councillors also stated that the lease cannot be made public through the Freedom of Information route. Questions asked by residents about how a lease came to exist in perpetuity and how this situation was allowed to transpire.

Cllr Bennett stated Mr Banissy from PFC does not respond to emails, so he has not been able to complete his previous action of arranging a meeting with PFC and councillors to find out how the facilities might be shared in the future. It was suggested that a phone call or personal visit might be a useful approach.

**ACTION 6:** Cllr Bennett to contact PFC, schedule a meeting and to report back on progress at the next meeting.

**ACTION 7:** Cllr Trigg agreed to find out, and report back, with the expiration date of the lease for the next meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> March.

11) Green Belt research questionnaire

Ms. Luck attended to ask residents to fill out brief questionnaire concerning the future use of green belt land in the area, for her LSE research project. Questions to be sent out by email and hardcopies were available at the end of the meeting. FoM offered to pass her results on to WHBC.

12) Barrier proposal

A report is being prepared on the proposal and will go forward to the Social Overview committee meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> March at 7:30 (Campus West). This report will inform a committee decision and a 'free vote' may be taken on the proposal. Both councillors present appeared to disagree on the next steps and whether it would then go to cabinet for a decision. The report will be made available to view a week before the meeting and the public can ask questions at the start of that meeting. The report will be posted on the FoM website as soon as it's released.

Apart from Cllr Bennett, who supports the petition 'in principle', Cllr Trigg is uncommitted pending the report. The community chest funding cannot support ongoing maintenance costs. Residents made the point that it could cost as little as £10 a week and should be bundled into the overall costs for the councils' car parks maintenance programme. The rising barrier, unlike the councils' car parks with barrier arms, is also more robust and less prone to vandalism.

Cllr Trigg commented that the cost of the barrier is more likely to be around £22,000, which is around £10,000 more than the official estimate supplied by a major parking management company. A reason for this difference was not offered. The Councillors were told that the victims of the car park disturbances should be their prime concern, rather than being bogged down by the procedures and process.

**ACTION 8:** Cllr Bennett will set up a meeting with all parties (FoM, Finesse, WHBC, PFC) for as soon as possible after the meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup>, and before any final decision is made, to discuss potential solutions. Date of this meeting to be confirmed ASAP.

**ACTION 9:** Cllr Trigg will take the time to personally listen to residents concerns and report them back to Social Overview meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> March, they could also form part of the report for that meeting. FoM offer assistance to facilitate this.

**ACTION 10:** Residents are to lobby the SOSC Committee members prior to 25<sup>th</sup> March meeting.

**AOB:**

Councillor Bennett said he agreed with the FoM letter in last weeks Welwyn Times about the residents' expectation of all councillors to step up to the mark in representing residents interests and Finesse Leisure absence at FoM meetings for over 6 months now.

FoM would like to thank Jan Brand for the use of the hall. A donation of £15 was made to Barndicott Social Fund after the meeting.

Next meeting date and venue : **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at Barndicott Hall**

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