



# *Friends of Valley Gardens*

## **Harrogate's Award-Winning Park**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held Tuesday 8 April 2010**

**Present:** T Holleman, J Blayney, H McCallum, J Clark, R Johnston, P Kilburn, R Cooper, K Dawson, B Taylor, G Scurrah, A Jordon, G McCormick, D Edwards, S Leigh, P Leigh, T Sissons, M Barker, P Blayney, S Collier, P Collier, C Bowes, R Ponsford, A Ponsford, R Davies, M Holleman (please note that some members may not be listed if they did not sign the attendance sheet)

**1. Welcome and Introductions and thanks for attendance were given.**

**2. Apologies for absence**

M Bruce, J Huett, P Woffiden, N Heptinstall, I & J Gardner, T Zealand, H Andrew, J Jakes, D MacKenzie, D Moorhouse

**3. Minutes of the meeting held 25 February 2010**

Confirmed and signed as an accurate record.

**4. Matters Arising (that were not agenda items)**

Item 4 - a vote of thanks was given to Harrogate Borough Council Officers for their work given to setting up and supporting the group. Acknowledgement was also given to P Kilburn on his award of Employee of the Year.

**5. Constitution**

Proposed revisions to the original constitution circulated were approved with the following amendments:

**Item 2 Objectives**

Change vandalism to anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Amalgamate last two points to read:

To work with, and facilitate communications among, local authorities, organizations, voluntary groups, and the public to further the above objectives.

**Item 3 Membership**

Youth membership (age 13 – 19) this will also encourage more involvement from the younger groups.

Confirmed that Household membership allows one vote, separate votes require separate membership.

Membership amounts to be agreed at AGM when the constitution is reviewed.

Membership forms available from the website and the officers, standing order payments to be encouraged.

Annual payment to be added.

The group will consider applying for Charitable Status when funds allow.

## **Item 4 Meetings**

Agendas will be distributed 7 working days prior to a meeting.  
Councillors and Council Members will be permitted to vote as paid members.

## **Item 5 Officers**

Nominations required for youth representative.  
Parent representative – Rosemary Johnston nominated and seconded by P Blayney.  
Treasurer – Jim Clarke nominated and seconded by J Blayney.  
Terms of Office set out in order to avoid all officers being re-elected at the same time.

## **Item 8 Expenses of Administration & Application of Funds**

Financial year to be 1 January – 31 December.  
Cheques to be signed by two officers excluding the youth representative.

## **Item 9 Media**

Noted that the Ackrill Group has agreed to provide a section within Clubs and Societies.  
Confirmed that there are no restrictions on “blogs”.

## **Item 11 Winding Up**

Method for winding up discussed and agreed.  
Final sentence to read “selected by a majority of the Members and approved at the first SGM and confirmed at the second SGM.”

## **6. Ideas for Projects**

P Kilburn gave a brief history of Valley Gardens and how they have been developed. He explained the restoration plans, which included contemporary and strategic issues, and the aim of the restoration plans.

Proposals included:

- Improvements to buildings.
- Works to gardens, reopening footpaths and introducing bridges, vegetation, further work on the New Zealand Garden, Japanese Garden, and improved water features.
- Infrastructure measures including reintroduction of paths with improved park furniture, bins, and signage.
- Woodland management, security measures. Partnership with the Museum Service and to continue links with Harlow Carr Gardens.
- Modify and make the bandstand more open.
- Creation of an indoor winter garden.
- Improvements to the play area (now complete)

It was stressed that funds currently available are limited and additional funds need to be secured.

Patrick requested that consideration be given to focus areas that the group would like to undertake and that these ideas be submitted to officers.

It was also suggested that members have a “walk through the park” to identify points for further discussion.

Presentation slides to be included on website for members to view.

## **7. Communications**

The Chair introduced the newly designed website and advised how to maneuver around the site. Questions can be sent in or posted to the site for answers. It was agreed that P Kilburn’s presentation would be included. Any photographs may be submitted to the Chair for inclusion if appropriate, but not photographs that identify children.

A volunteer is required to write a regular newsletter and anyone interested should contact the Chair.

It was noted that you may obtain an MP3 player and phone from the Tourist Information Centre that will enable navigation of the Floral Trail around the park. Again, details are on the website. (Note: It was subsequently discovered that this is no longer possible. Listeners must use their own mobile phone and a fee is charged. An alternative is to download the entire Floral Trail tour to your own portable player.)

On 4 August there will be a National Play Day and we are permitted to promote FOVG on this day. Further details to follow. Other areas of interest for promotion activities were Harrogate Flower Show and the Allotment Show.

## **8. Skate Park Update**

P Kilburn provided a response to queries raised on funding of the Skate Park. The member who raised these queries was not present due to holiday and it was noted that details had been sent. The Chair confirmed that he would contact this member to ensure satisfaction to the response.

## **9. Police Update**

The police representative was not able to attend the meeting. No issues were raised by the members present.

## **10. Questions from the Community**

### **10.1 Metal Structures**

Noted that this is a 9 hole Disc Golf course. Costs will be recovered within 3 – 4 years. This facility was offered in order to provide new opportunities for activities and maximise the generation of income. It is predominately an Easter to Summer activity. Cost to be confirmed by P Kilburn (subsequently confirmed to be £2400). The group requested that they be consulted of any such future projects.

### **10.2 Mud**

HBC are aware that this is a problem especially in the play area. When the new play area was constructed, in order to meet deadlines, there was little time to get the grass established. Bounce proof matting was considered but, on the advice of play experts, it was decided not to put this in place.

- 10.3 Slide**  
Concerns have been raised regarding the steepness of the slide and the positioning of the steps. Again, advice was taken from play experts and it was confirmed that the play equipment meets all safety regulations and that standards have been met. Parents and children have their own responsibility to use equipment safely. The play area is a learning process for exploration and experiences.
- 10.4 Number of Swings**  
The number of swings provided was within the budget available. However, further baby swings have been ordered and should be in place by July. Numbers to be clarified by P Kilburn.
- 10.5 Toilets**  
It was confirmed that in order to provide aesthetic built toilets, a budget of approximately £80K would be required which would increase revenue costs. This is an aspiration that HBC are working towards.
- 11. Any Other Urgent Business**
- 11.1 Bank Account**  
Members approved the bank account that has been opened with HSBC Bank.
- 11.2 Membership**  
Membership and standing order forms were made available and can also be downloaded from the website. Members were asked to encourage friends and neighbours to join the group.
- 11.3 Benches**  
A guide to donated seats was made available.
- 11.4 Logo**  
It was agreed to use the Yorkshire Rose logo and that the group would be named FOVG.
- 12. Date of Next Meeting**  
Confirmed as Thursday 27 May 7 pm, Council Chamber, Council Offices, Crescent Gardens

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