

**OLD CATTON PARISH COUNCIL , MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
RECREATION GROUNDS COMMITTEE
HELD AT 7.30 P.M. ON MONDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 2009,
AT THE PAVILION, CHURCH STREET**

PRESENT: Miss P Wilkin – Chairman
Mr J Arnott Mr C Green Mr B Leggett Mr B Palmer
Mr B Sabberton-Coe

Miss M Booty – Tennis Club
Mr K Brown and Mr P Fyans – Junior Football Club
Mr A Jones – ATV Bowls Club

APOLOGIES: Mr D Thompson, Mr J Dickerson – Wensum Bowls Club

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting.

7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 27.10.2008

The minutes, which had been adopted by the Council, were amended at minute 5.2. to read Multi Use Sports Hall. The minutes were then confirmed, and signed by the Chairman.

8. REPORTS OF THE SPORTS GROUPS

8.1. Tennis Club. Miss Booty reported that the club had enjoyed a good year with several new members. The Club was still dissatisfied with the new surface of the courts. It was noted that the contractors would be carrying out some further remedial work to the tennis courts and the MUGA.

8.2. ATV Bowls Club. Mr Jones said that the club, along with the Wensum Bowls Club, were looking forward to the new season. Mr Jones had organised an open day to try to recruit new players that would be held on 30th April.

9. CHURCH STREET RECREATION GROUND

9.1. New bowls hut. It was AGREED that the bowls clubs and cricket club should discuss the nature of a potential new hut and investigate grants.

9.2. Dates for football and cricket seasons. The dates were noted, there would be an additional week of play available at Lavare Park extending the season to include 26th April to ameliorate the loss of matches due to the recent poor weather.

10. LAVARE PARK

10.1. Potential extension to the park.

It was noted that probate had been granted to new Trustees and it was hoped that the S106 agreement would be signed in the near future enabling the land to be prepared and seeded to be ready for play in 2011.

11. FEES FOR 2009/10

The fees were noted. In answer to the question of why a fee was proposed for the first time for mini soccer the Clerk explained that it had been an oversight that a charge was not made in other years.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was AGREED to meet on 19th October 2009.

Miss Booty and Mr Jones left the meeting at 7.50 pm.

13. REPORT OF JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB

13.1. Mr Brown reported that the Club had 352 playing members, was the largest club in Norwich and the second largest club in Norfolk. The Club had recently renewed its Charter status and its inspection had been favourable.

14. CANCELLATION OF FOOTBALL TRAINING AND MATCHES

The Clerk had advised the Junior Football Club that the ground was not likely to be fit for play during the weekend of 24th and 25th January 2009. The Club had not trained but had played 4 matches at Church Street, resulting in considerable damage to the ground. It had not been possible to play during the subsequent three weekends. The Club had written expressing its displeasure.

The Club's officers outlined their problems and concerns –

- 14.1. There was great concern about completing fixtures by the end of the season. It was stated that 43 matches had been lost.

The Committee asked the Club to analyse the reasons for the losses as not all were due to cancellation by the Parish Council. It was noted that matches shown on the fixture lists were not always played. It was also noted that the offer of play during the Christmas holidays had not been taken up.

Sympathetic consideration would be given to requests for mid week matches when the evenings were light.

- 14.2. The under 6 and 7 age groups did not actually play any matches, their only football took place on a Saturday morning at training. The Club asked that this age group be treated separately and allowed to train on a Saturday when other training was not possible.

The Council would consider this request.

- 14.2. Timing of cancellation. It was felt that matches were cancelled prematurely before weather conditions were known.

It was AGREED that if matches or training were to be cancelled by the Parish Council this would be done by e-mail at 1.00 pm on a Friday.

14.3. The Club was not satisfied that play was cancelled for the right reasons. They felt it should be left to the referee to decide if play was safe, and disputed the validity of the clause in the hiring agreement that prohibited play when, in the event of bad weather, 'making play liable to result in damage to the playing surface' caused matches to be cancelled. The Club's officers pointed out that play in other places had not been subject to the same degree of recent cancellation; they felt it was acceptable for the pitches to become muddy. It was agreed that the condition of the pitches was better than in other places. The other venues were often not Recreation Grounds; matches were frequently played on school fields.

It was pointed out to the Club's officers that the Recreation Ground was used for other purposes as well as football and that the ground needed to be kept in reasonable condition for all users. The clause in the hiring agreement was Council policy and would need a change of policy for it to be altered.

14.4. Intensity of use. The club's officers stated that of the 7 months of the football season scheduling of matches only included 5 months play so that allowance was built in for bad weather or other cancellations.

14.5. The Club would be prepared to apply for grants to improve drainage if it was considered this would be beneficial. An independent report could be commissioned.

14.6. The Club was assured of the Council's support, in principle, for the Junior Football Club. However, it was felt that the number of teams playing had increased while the facilities at the two Recreation Grounds had not. The Council's efforts to obtain additional playing space on the land adjacent to Lavare Park demonstrated this support.

14.7. The Club was asked to play the pitches at the Recreation Ground evenly as one was damaged more than the other; this was agreed.

The Council would discuss all the points raised and report back to the Junior Football Club.

The Chairman thanked everybody for their attendance and closed the meeting at 8.55 pm.

Chairman, 19th October 2009