



Ashtead Independents

Keep national party politics out of local government

ASHTEAD RECREATION GROUND UP-DATE (20 August 2018)

22nd August 2018 by admin

(1) CLEANING UP: It has now been established after talking with the managing director of the cleaning contractor that they did allocate resource on the Friday night who did in fact attend. He has, however, admitted that the instructions he provided were not, in hindsight, sufficiently specific. This resulted in them only doing a superficial clean of the grass pitches omitting the woods and bushes and other areas on that night. They have apologised. I understand that this contractor has not let MVDC down before, and has acted very quickly to clean up after other unauthorised encampments. I am confident lessons have been learnt.

(2) SECURITY: One of the concrete blocks at the Barnett Wood Lane entrance had been nudged slightly, so as a precautionary measure an MVDC van has been parked there as well. Three more blocks have been ordered, two to go on top of the existing to prevent dragging and one to block the Woodfield Lane entrance. This will permit a mower only, but it is acknowledged that the temporary no vehicular access could be a problem if there was an emergency on the Recreation ground. The blocks were to be placed later today or tomorrow morning. This precaution is also being taken at several other sites in the District at Kennel Lane, Lower Road, the Chrystie Recreation Ground, Cock Lane and Cannon Court. A block is also being placed down on the Woo Field opposite the Recreation ground and top soil is being delivered to vulnerable points with a view to creating a barrier and longer term building a bund. The new secure gates are on order but are not available from stock because of the high demand this summer from the supplier.

(3) INJUNCTION: Some residents have wondered why MVDC did not obtain a District-wide injunction from the High Court as Elmbridge BC has recently done. This is a lengthy and costly process and the order applies for just three months. This was obtained because Elmbridge had experienced a much larger number of unauthorised encampments (27 so far in 2018) and have reported a catalogue of concerns raised by residents and businesses over damage to public spaces, fly-tipping, human waste, anti-social behaviour and the daily disruption to people's lives and livelihoods caused by the encampments. This is a possibility that will continue to be considered by MVDC lawyers, but it was felt an injunction was unlikely to be granted this year as the District has not experienced the same level of disruption as the other authorities who have been successful in the High Court.

Cllr David L Hawksworth CBE

Leader, Ashtead Independents"



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CARAVAN INCURSION ON THE QE2 ASHTEAD RECREATION GROUND

19th August 2018 by admin

David Hawksworth said, at the public meeting organized on Tuesday 14 August 2018, that he had been impressed at the speed MVDC Officers had moved, starting late on Wednesday evening, to get the Notice of Direction to Leave by the following afternoon served on the Thursday morning, perform required welfare checks, and book a slot for a Court hearing on the following Monday. It was, however, not necessary to go to the Court as the Police decided to use their powers to remove the group after the deadline had been missed; this was the only instance the Police have done this in the District when groups needed to be moved on so we were particularly grateful for that intervention. He was very disappointed that the Council had been let down by the contractors engaged to clean up the human waste in particular, and he had insisted that that matter be investigated. In addition he pointed out that he understood from the St Michael's church clerk that the family of Michael Connors were distressed that the incursion had been linked to the coming funeral. Prior to this incursion, he had already authorised MVDC to initiate a programme of works to make its parks and open spaces more secure throughout the District, and that it was regrettable that this incident had occurred before new gates etc could be obtained and installed. As an interim measure concrete blocks had now been placed at the Barnett Wood Lane entrance, and a Council vehicle across the Woodfield Lane entrance. As this was a widespread problem in Surrey this year, a meeting between district and borough representatives and the police had been planned for next month to see what more might be done. He urged residents to contact their Independent Councillors if they had further concerns or issues to raise, and that their contact details were on the brochure being distributed to all Ashtead addresses this month.