

Agenda No 3a

Minutes of the **Open Spaces Committee** held in the Council Chamber, North Street, Ilminster on Tuesday 25 October 2016 at 7.30pm

Present:

Chairman: Cllr S Shepherd

Councillors: D Belobaba, R Drayton, J Fagan, J Fowler, M James, D Kinder, I Mackillop, A Shearman, J Sothern and R Swann

In Attendance

Officers: Mr Ryan Gold (Senior Open Spaces Warden), Miss J Norris (Town Clerk), Mrs D Speed (Deputy Town Clerk)

5 members of the public attended the meeting.

The Chair suggested that Agenda Item 8 Developing a Dog Policy, be brought forward to be discussed at the beginning of the meeting and Councillors agreed.

OS37. Apologies for absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burton, Keitch and Walker who were unable to attend the meeting.

OS38. Declarations of Interest.

The declarations of interest outlined in the table below were made:

Name	Agenda Item	Minute No	Interest	Nature of Interest	Action
Cllr Shepherd	Agenda No 12, To consider the appointment of a consultant to lead the Wharf Lane Public Toilet Re-Instatement	OS47	Personal	Knows 1 of the contractors	Spoke and voted
Joy Norris, Town Clerk	Agenda No 8 Developing a Dog Policy	OS40	Personal and Prejudicial	Has active interest in dog related matters	Left the room whilst the item was under consideration

OS39. Minutes.

RESOLVED

- (i) to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2016 as a correct record.

19:35hrs The Chairman took the meeting out of formal session

Speaker 1 Ms S Moore – said that she believed there were collectively more dog walkers than sports people who used Britten's Field and everyone gets on well. Many people come into Ilminster to walk their dogs and this in turn brings trade into the town. For people who live alone

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particularly walking the dog provides a form of social life. Britten's Field and the Rec are the only places that people with mobility difficulties can walk with their dogs.

Badger faeces on the Rec and Britten's Field cause a much a problem as well as dog faeces.

More noise from football facility on Friday & Saturday nights

19:38hrs The Chairman took the meeting back into formal session.

OS40 Developing a Dog Policy

Note – the Town Clerk left the meeting

The Councillors considered how to consult the public to gain information on suggestions to be included in a dog policy for Open Spaces owned and/or managed by the Town Council. It was brought to the Councillors attention that from 2017 Dog Policies will no longer be recognised and will be part of the Public Space Protection Orders.

Methods of consultation suggested;

1. Social media i.e. Facebook.
2. Local press i.e. Chard and Ilminster
3. Town Council website and Council Noticeboards
4. Other noticeboards in the town i.e. Meeting House, Cycle path.
5. Set up a stall in the Market House possibly on a Saturday to meet the public and discuss the dog policies direct.
6. Various groups of Councillors to talk to dog walkers and other users of the Council's Open Spaces. A rota would need to be agreed so various times of the day are covered.
7. Meet with users of the Open Spaces individually i.e. Sports clubs, dog walkers, mobile scooter users, users of children's area.
8. A summary of a statement from the Council with a sheet for comments to be displayed in local businesses in the Town
9. . Also local veterinary practices and pet shops to try to catch opinions from people who use the Council's Open Spaces but do not live in the town.

19.50hrs The Chairman took the meeting out of formal session to take opinion from members of the public

Comments from the public included;

- the majority of dog walkers already keep their dogs on leads and pick up after their dogs.
- People living outside the Town also come to use the Town's Open Spaces and then use local businesses.

19.55hrs The Chairman took the meeting back into formal session

The Council to issue a press release on public consultation on dog policy

20:00hrs Town Clerk returned

OS 41 Minutes (cont)

RESOLVED

- (i) to note the office Action Plan relating to the Town Council Meetings.

Issues raised during consideration of the action plan included:

- provisional date for the asbestos survey of the grandstand
- provisional date for the cricket pavilion survey

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OS42. Police Report

There was no police report and no policing matters were raised or reported.

OS43. Wardens Report.

Councillors received the report from the Senior Open Spaces Warden about recent open spaces activities in Ilminster. Work that has been done included:

- Winter planting of the roughs and Minster flowerbed
- Still cutting grass but it is growing more slowly now
- tree on Herne Hill that had fallen across path had been cut into smaller lengths
- Clearing at Cleeves Close
- Refurbished 2 benches on Britten's Field
- Started to clear look out point area
- Cleared most of the bluebell area
- Coppicing hazel
- Children were seen unbolting / unscrewing steps to the grandstand so the Open Spaces Team made safe
- Report of motorbike on Herne Hill which destroyed a kissing gate and railings, the latter have been repaired.

Issues raised during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Width of paths on Herne Hill are the width of the flail and have been for a number of years
- Cemetery is looking good – The Chairman has had positive comments from members of the public
- Easier to cut grass on the Rec now railings are down – but there is a small problem with the raised ground where the railings were situated

OS44. Financial Comparison

The meeting received information about the Open Spaces Committee income, expenditure and commitments compared with the 2016/17 budget.

Issues raised during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Any requests for information for the Councillor Workshop on 12 November could be emailed or telephoned to the office
- Rents will be invoiced once the new lease and licence arrangements are in place.

OS45. Budget 2017/18

The Committee gave initial consideration to the 2017/18 budget

Issues raised during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Income from the Cemetery Lodge – will be different to the budget estimate for the year due to the tenant moving out whilst the works are undertaken
- Insurance
- Income from the Cemetery will be different to the budget estimate for the year due to the situation regarding lack of land for new burial plots.

OS46. Look Out Point

The Committee considered what action, if any should be taken regarding construction of the lookout point.

Issues raised during consideration of this agenda item included:

- The Open Spaces Team have started to clear the area
- Provision of a "purpose built" area will require funding
- The view can be seen from the existing seat and path so is a Look out point needed?

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- Originally seen as a recycling exercise
- Will having a look out point encourage people to go up Herne Hill?
- Need to make sure whatever is done is safe
- Will be difficult to have vehicular access for any construction work

RESOLVED that the Look Out Point project is not actively pursued due to financial constraints

OS47. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED to take agenda item 10 Removal of Soil and Stone from the Cemetery without members of the public and press present due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

OS48. Removal of Soil and Stone from the Cemetery

The Committee considered whether or not to accept a quotation for work to remove soil and stone from the cemetery

Issues raised during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Stone is a valuable resource
- The need to make a decision and get this task actioned

RESOLVED

- (i) To accept the quotation of £1450 to clear the stone and spoil off site
- (ii) That with immediate effect fresh spoil should be deposited by the gate in the western corner

OS49. To Consider The Appointment of a Consultant to Lead the Wharf Lane Public Toilet Re-Instatement

The Loss Adjuster requires the Town Council to appoint a consultant to lead the Wharf Lane Public toilet re-instatement.

Issues raised during consideration of this agenda item included:

- The project will not necessarily be like for like
- The current remit of the working group is make recommendations regarding the future layout of the toilet block (OS33)
- Jurisprudence as this is an insurance matter
- the need to obtain value for money

RESOLVED

- (i) to amend the remit of the toilet working group remit to include interviewing the consultants and making recommendations regarding the appointment
- (ii) that consultants B C and F are invited to attend for interview
- (iii) that the Town Clerk is given delegated power to appoint the consultant after receiving the recommendations of the toilet working group.

The meeting closed at 21:15hrs.