

Minutes for the **Open Spaces Committee** held online on Skype on Tuesday 10th
November 2020

Present:

Chair: Cllr M Gunn

Committee: Cllr F White, Cllr L Wilcock, Cllr B Hamilton and Cllr S Shepherd

In Attendance:

Officers: Cllr V Keitch, Cllr L Taylor, Cllr P Burton, Adam Barnett (Grounds Manager), Mrs J Earp (Deputy Town Clerk and RFO) and Mrs H White (Town Clerk)

Five members of the public present.

Speaker 1: Spoke about smoking in the recreation ground. It was advised it was not always the children but adults too. The speaker would like smoking to be banned. The speaker advised it wasn't setting a good example. Consideration should be given to banning smoking in the playground area.

Speaker 2: The speaker was keen on mountain biking and was focusing a career on it. As part of the speaker's degree they had completed a thesis on socio economic factors. In addition the speaker had been part of the introduction of a pump in track in Wales which had helped in the reduction of anti-social behaviours. To build the track the speaker had raised the funds from investors and grants. The speaker feel a pump track in the town will bring huge benefits. The speaker is willing to assist with the implementation, proving his expertise and knowledge going forward with a project for Ilminster.

Speaker 3: The speaker wanted to talk about a pump track in the town. The speaker had two boys who were keen cyclists but pump tracks could also be used for scooters, roller skates, skateboards and all kinds of other wheeled vehicles. The speaker said that the restriction on the byelaws meant there was nowhere for her children to cycle on grass in the town. The speaker has to take the children out of town to either Ham Hill, South Petherton or Taunton. There were other groups in the town that had to do the same. The Country is trying to encourage children to leave the TV and games systems to get out in the fresh air but Ilminster stops them from cycling on the open spaces. The speaker said a pump track would be a great asset.

Speaker 4: The speaker spoke about the skate park. The speaker said there was nothing for teenagers to use in the park apart from the skate park. It needed some work due to the general wear and tear. Would like Ilminster Town Council to look at repairing it. The speaker also mentioned that the skate park could be improved with a pump track.

Speaker 5: Cllr Taylor spoke about the Youth Committee and what a Youth Committee could do to benefit the town. Cllr Taylor referred to Agenda item 7 and 9. She said it was important to expand the facilities for the older teenagers in the town.



Speaker 6: The speaker wanted to talk about the climate and that there was an ecological emergency. Bristol has announced they want to be carbon neutral by 2030. The speaker stated that we are losing our bio diversity. The speaker wants Ilminster Town Council to work out how we as a town can work towards being carbon neutral. Also for the town to call an ecological emergency for the town. The speaker then went on to talk about the Somerset County Council's Climate Emergency Fund. There is a small window between 1st December and 12th January 2021 to put in an application for £10,000 for Powrmatic to implement their planting scheme which needs to be submitted by Ilminster Town Council. This project is to help towards becoming carbon neutral.

OS322 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Swann and Cllr V Higgins.

OS323 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made regarding any items on the Agenda.

OS324 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22nd September 2020 were considered.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2020 to be confirmed as a correct record.

OS325 Financial Monitoring

Consideration was given to the budget and expenditure figures produced. No comments.

OS326 Grounds Team Report

Consideration was given to the report prepared by the Grounds Manager. Discussion was had regarding the benches in the town. It was confirmed that the one by the tennis courts was being replaced. Another bench was at the garage for a welding repair to the feet.

OS327 Smoking ban on the playground

Consideration was given to whether smoking can be banned on the playgrounds.

The councillors agreed that it was a disgusting habit, especially when people smoked around the children's play area. It was confirmed that it could not be enforced. The law covers places indoors.

RESOLVED to purchase signs to try and discourage smoking in the children's play areas.



OS328

Skatepark

Consideration was given to the current state of the equipment and possible repairs.

It was mentioned that Higgs who installed the skatepark no longer provide maintenance. Maverick Skateparks had come to look at the skatepark. They advised it was quite a good skatepark. They also advised that some of the materials used in the construction could cause a problem with temperature changes, particularly the metal toe plates. They also advised that the touch points needed filling. An indication of a replacement value for the skatepark was given at between £100,000 to £600,000. Chas Hanson is a steel fabricator and maintains other skateparks across the Country. He has provided a quote to provide the repairs and also a new grind rail which the skaters would welcome. The skaters have also raised concerns about the paint on the ramps. It makes the ramps really slippery when wet and produces condensation. It also encourages small children to use it as a slide. The grounds team have advised that they can remove the paint with a jet wash and a solution that is used to remove graffiti.

A Councillor raised a question that the work had not gone out to tender for three quotes. It was recorded that only one skatepark maintenance company was found. Research had taken place across the Country and contact had been made to other Council's who have a skatepark and of the ones spoken to, they all the same person.

It was mentioned that the finger holes and cracks were a health and safety issue and if not repaired the Town Council would have to consider shutting the skatepark.

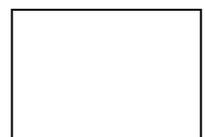
RESOLVED to remove the paint coating and to agree the maintenance quotation and installation of the new grind rail.

OS329

SCC Climate Emergency Fund Community Fund

Consideration was given to the application received from Powrmatic Woodland Creation Project. It was clear the Councillors were in favour of this project. It would help with bio diversity and would be good for the employee of the factory. One of the Councillors advised that it would be good to get some assurance that when the land was planted and the works completed that the land would be maintained as such.

RESOLVED to take to a full Town Council meeting to obtain the support of the Councillors.



OS330

Cycle track/Pump track

Consideration was given to a cycle track/pump track in the town. The footprint of the town would need to be looked at and the areas of open spaces that the Town Council own. If consideration was to be on Ilminster Town Council's land the Bye Laws would need to be revisited to remove the blocking of cycling on the area in which a pump track could be located. Speaker 2 offered their assistance.

RESOLVED to have an informal walk around with speaker 2 in the New Year to get their expert advice on a suitable location. The matter to then be revisited when the Bye Laws have been reviewed.

OS331

South Somerset District Council (SSDC) – Tree Giveaway

Consideration was given to SSDC's application for the Tree Giveaway. The process had been upgraded from previous applications. The Town Council need to specify exactly where the trees are to be planted. Discussion was had about the land along the Canal way fence line on Ilminster Educational Foundations land, along the path by the Tony Rice Pavilion and possibly along the canal. It was recommended that we speak to the Open Spaces team and obtain their advice.

RESOLVED to put in an application if a suitable location can be located on Herne Hill, along Canal Way or on the path by the Tony Rice Pavilion.

OS332

Britten's Field Usage

Consideration was given to the current usage of Britten's Field. General discussions were held about the space being used and making sure a sensible rent was being obtained for the spaces not privately rented to Ilminster Sports Club Limited.

OS333

Herne Hill

Information was provided regarding the donation of bat and bird boxes for Herne Hill. Thanks was given to the Councillor F White for the donation. Owl boxes are located on the Hill and the Open Spaces team will look at the best position to put these boxes.

Meeting closed 9:15pm

Chair Signature:

Date: