

Minutes of a meeting of the **OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Ilminster on Tuesday 28 June 2016 at 19.30 hrs

Present:

Chairman: Cllr S Shepherd
Councillors: P Burton, R Drayton, J Fagan, J Fowler, V Keitch, D Kinder (from 8.10pm), A Shearman, J. Sothern, R Swann and T Walker

In Attendance

Officers: Mr Ryan Gold (Senior Open Spaces Warden), Miss J Norris (Town Clerk), Mrs T Loveless (Administration Officer)

Scarecrow Competition Presentation

Prior to the start of the formal Committee meeting, the Mayor presented the Certificates and prizes to the winners of 2016 Scarecrow Competition.

- 1st Prize – Cygnets Pre-school
- 2nd Prize – Greenfylde CofE First School
- 3rd Prize – Hannah Knight

No members of the public attended the meeting.

OS1 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Albin and Kinder.

OS2 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

OS3 Minutes

RESOLVED

- (i) That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th May 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.
- (ii) To note the action list relating to the Open Spaces Committee.

Issues raised during consideration of the action list included:

- Item 13 Wardens' Workshop Entrance – A drain inspection company has been to site and will be providing a report with a DVD. At the site visit 2 problems were raised a) there is a broken pipe between the 2 manholes; b) this area is used for washing the machinery and there is a possibility that oil from the machinery could get into the watercourse preventative measures will be investigated e.g shingle area outside the garage door or a grid laid into the concrete area with a filter.

OS4 Police Report

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

OS5 Wardens Report

The report from the Senior Open Spaces Warden about recent open spaces activities in Ilminster was considered.

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Items discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Vandalism at Winterhay Lane – damage to the safety matting in the swing area.
- The additional picnic bench for Winterhay Lane has and will be installed shortly; It has been designed so that wheelchairs or prams and pushchairs can be right next to the table.
- The installation of the slide and remaining play equipment at Winterhay Lane is scheduled for completion for the end of the July.
- The seat being purchased in memory of Mr Hurford for location on the Rec will be installed as soon as all the parts are available
- The office received a complaint regarding some paths at Herne Hill being overgrown, the Open Spaces team have been working on the hill to cut and clear hedges away from paths.
- The duckweed cleared from the canal by anglers has been removed from the path

RESOLVED to note the report.

OS6 Cremation Plots

The committee considered 2 requests to inter ashes into existing plots. These cases were being brought to committee for decision as neither were straightforward situations.

Case 1 – Plot N003

The plot records show there have been 5 interments in this plot– 2 burials and 3 sets of ashes; The Town Council's Cemetery Guidelines (2011) state "*2 burials are allowed in each grave and up to 3 sets of ashes (top, centre and foot of grave space – where records allow)*"

RESOLVED not to allow any further interments in plot N003

Case 2 – Plot N005

Records show that the plot was originally bought in 1888 by George Pittman who also appears to have bought a number of other plots in the same area over a period of a time. The computerised record for plot N 005 has details of 1 interment - Phyllis Mary Turner (nee Dwelly) (although the records do indicate it is interment No 2); this interment was January 1986 and the paper register of burials states "head of grave cremated remains" The memorial on plot N 005 is for a number of people - with a family name of Pittman or Dwelly

RESOLVED to allow an ashes interment in plot N005 and if for any reason that is unsuitable in either plot N006 or N013.

OS7 Cemetery Maintenance - Grass Cutting and Weed Control

The committee reviewed the regime for grass cutting and weed control
Items discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Concerns about the length of the grass in the lower third of the cemetery and also on the banks; The Senior Warden said he would add this to the work list as it was approx 1 month since it was last cut.
- Grass cutting is taking the vast majority of the time that the Open Spaces team are in work – approx timings are:

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- Cricket outfield – 4 hours weekly,
- Altering heights on grass cutting machinery 1 hour
- Cleaning machinery – at least ½ hour per week
- Brittens Field – 3-4 hours once a week
- Recreation field – 1 day's work
- Winterhay Lane – half a day
- Cemetery – 2 days minimum (to include the bank below the “chapel” area would be a further 2 days work for strimming)
- Apprentice will hopefully soon be appointed
- Focus on areas that the public are aware of and see
- Look at an option of a volunteer to assist with the cricket outfield

OS8 Additional Open Spaces Land

The committee put forward their suggestions for the usage of land around Herne Hill which would increase public amenities and protect Herne Hill.

Items discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- If we wish to acquire land from the County Council we would have to prepare a plan with ideas for use
- Possible use in connection with external groups e.g Wildlife Trust etc
- Potential orchards of native trees,
- Protection from housing development
- Extension of Herne Hill
- A cemetery incorporating walks and / or cycleways to access Herne Hill and other areas, that could include some of the above e.g orchards etc
- Possible use of s106 agreements to provide physical access,

RESOLVED that the Mayor and Cllr Drayton have further meetings with the District Council Officers and report back to the Town Council regarding requirements for the site.

OS9 Financial Comparison

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

Items discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Item 2000/1 Tuck Shop – shows zero income as it had not been opened prior to the end date of the report.
- Volunteers are required to staff the tuck shop
- Goods not sold by the “use by” date is sold by a volunteer who passes any monies raised to the Council

RESOLVED to note the report

The meeting closed at 8.50pm