

Minutes of the **Open Spaces Committee** held in the Council Chamber, North Street, Ilminster on Tuesday 26 September 2017 at 7.30pm

**Present:**

Chairman: Cllr S Shepherd

Councillors: D Belobaba, P Burton, J Fagan, J Fowler, M James, A Shearman, R Swann and T Walker.

**In Attendance**

Officers: Miss J Norris (Town Clerk), Mrs D Salt (Administration Officer (Information)),  
Mr G Taylor (Open Spaces Warden) and Mr A Willis (Senior Open Spaces Warden)

**OS103. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors V Keitch and I McKillop, who were unable to attend the meeting.

**OS104. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**OS105. Minutes**

**RESOLVED**

- (i) that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 August 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.

**OS106. (Agenda 3b) Action List relating to the Open Spaces Committee**

The action list was considered and discussion included:

Installation of a motion light sensor inside the cemetery toilet.

**RESOLVED** that Cllr Burton would buy and fit the light and provide receipts to the Town Council for reimbursement.

**OS107. Police Report**

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

**OS108. Wharf Lane Rec Toilets – Progress Report**

An email with progress information from the Project Leader was circulated to Councillors. Discussion on this agenda item included:

- that the project leader had emailed a report late in the afternoon for the Open Spaces Committee.
- As the Project Leader was unable to attend the Committee it was suggested that arrangements were made for him to come into the Council Office at a date and time to be sent to all Councillors who would then have an opportunity to ask questions directly about the project.
- the estimated total of unauthorised expenditure was £4,000 but the overall expenditure is still within the contract sum
- it would be useful for Councillors to look at the contract before they meet with the Project Leader
- Questions might include:
  - What was the cost of the asbestos testing?
  - If the project overruns what are the implications and cost?

**RESOLVED** that

- (i) the Town Clerk would arrange for the Project Leader to come into the office for him to answer questions from councillors.

- (ii) Councillors unable to attend could the session with the Project Leader should email their questions to the Town Clerk so the questions can be asked on their behalf.

#### **OS109. Wharf Lane Rec Toilets – Cleaning Arrangements**

The cleaning arrangements for the Wharf Lane Toilets were considered.

Issues discussed during consideration of this agenda item included:

- the current specification for frequency of cleaning and the locking/ unlocking times in place was deemed appropriate
- important to advertise the availability of the contract as widely as possible.
- The potential for the cleaning to be done in-house.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) A quotation document would be prepared and advertised for a potential contract to start early in 2018
- (ii) Costings to be prepared for the cleaning of the toilets to be done in-house

#### **OS110. Warden's Report**

The Senior Open Spaces Warden reported recent open spaces activities in Ilminster.

Highlights of the report included:

- All grass amenity areas have continued to be cut.
- One-to-One development meetings were carried out by the Senior Open Spaces Warden.
- Offensive graffiti was removed from the Wharf Lane skate park on two separate occasions.
- New dog waste bins have been installed at Wharf Lane, Britdens Field and the Ridge Path.
- Contractors have begun to clad the section of the breeze block wall at the Wardens' workshop.
- A memorial bench at the Cemetery has been repaired and refurbished.
- The Burma Star garden has been weeded and pruned.
- A large hornets' nest has been found on Herne Hill (on the morning of the meeting); the Senior Warden will urgently be trying to identify if they are Asian hornets as this is a notifiable species as it is an invasive non-native species from Asia as they pose a threat to native species of bees.

Discussion on the Warden's report included:

- Rumours of drug paraphernalia being found in the and around the open spaces; the Senior Warden said he intended to implement a new procedure with immediate effect to keep a log of all drug related finds on Town Council land and report the find to 101
- The devastation that Asian Hornets can cause

#### **OS111. Financial Comparison**

Information about the Open Spaces Committee, income, expenditure and commitments compared with the 2017/18 budget was presented for information.

Discussions on this agenda item included:

- Cemetery income –
- The Town Clerk is currently processing 2 definite requests to buy back burial space, there is also a further tentative enquiry; the cost will be the current Exclusive Right of Burial price less £50 which is the current transfer fee.
- Line 2000-1 the Town Clerk will be working with Cllr Fagan to identify if there are any viable business models for the tuck shop so that the information can be presented to Councillors for consideration

### **OS112. Installing a path alongside the Football Pitch**

The installation of a footpath from the tarmacked footpath from Canal Way past The Archie Gooch Pavilion to The Incline, running parallel to the Canal was considered.

Discussions on this agenda item included:

- The cost and effectiveness of providing a temporary surface
- The football pitch is 100-110m long
- The length of path as described on the agenda is in the region of 200m
- people are funnelled alongside the football pitch and therefore it gets quite muddy; before the respect line was installed people spread out much more quickly.
- current costs for a 1.2m wide path which would include scraping off the top soil, putting down a geo texture terrain, a layer of 150mm stone, then self-binding gravel and timber edging are approximately £70 per running metre
- The Town Council would require the path to be 2m wide wherever possible which based on the costing above would equate to £140 per running metre
- If tarmac paths were required the cost would increase by approximately 50%.
- something needs to be done as a temporary measure before the winter weather really sets in
- there is no section 106 money for paths it is only available for play equipment
- Self-binding edging more in keeping with the location
- As well as being a path for people walking in the area it could be used as part of a running route
- rubber matting or old industrial quarry conveyor belts could be used to provide a walkway

The Senior Open Spaces Warden said that the OS team had discussed constructing a temporary board walk using old pallets, resin and chicken wire.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) that the Open Spaces team would construct a trial temporary board walk along the lines they had suggested and place it on the first part of the path and monitor its effectiveness and report any problems.
- (ii) The feasibility of sourcing and using industrial quarry conveyor belts will be investigated.

### **OS113. Lost Property Policy**

Consideration was given as to how the Town Council deals with lost property that is found on Town Council land.

Discussions on this agenda item included:

- Length of time that items should be kept
- Means of advertising items that have been found
- Disposal methods
- If item in good condition the Town Council could sell the item
- A record of what has been found, the disposal method, and what money was realised could be presented to the Open Spaces Committee on a quarterly basis

**RESOLVED** that a lost property policy is drafted to include:

- Items to be kept for a minimum of two weeks.
- If items in poor condition then dispose of as appropriate.
- If items in good condition try and sell by a suitable method e.g. preloved or gumtree.
- Items are to be dealt with expediently as the Town Council has limited storage space.
- Items are to be logged and it is to be recorded what happened to the item.

- The lost property log will be available for councillors to view on a quarterly basis.

#### **OS114. Open Spaces Review Group**

The Terms of Reference for the Open Spaces Review Group were considered  
Discussions on this agenda item included:

- A Recreation Ground Users Group used to exist
- Open Spaces Review Group recommended to be disbanded which will be taken forward to the Town Council
- Rec Ground Users Group should try and find an individual outside the Council to chair the group.
- There is no need to specify dog walkers as one of the members of the public as there are other groups of people who use the rec who are not specifically mentioned

#### **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL**

- (i) That the Open Spaces Review Group and its sub groups are formally dissolved as their main tasks have been undertaken and the specific outputs provided
- (ii) that a Recreation Ground Users Group is set up with Terms of Reference as attached at appendix A

#### **OS115. Original Licence Granted to the Football Club for the Pitch, Grandstand Changing Rooms, etc**

Consideration was given to writing to the Football Club formally releasing them from any maintenance obligations regarding the former grandstand, the land on which it was erected and the paths which served it.

Discussions on this agenda item included:

- the need to formally release the Football Club from their obligations under the previous licence
- The concrete benches are used when matches are played on the second pitch

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) that the football club are released from their obligations regarding the former grandstand, the land on which it was erected and the paths which served it (as stated on the previous licence).
- (ii) A letter is sent to the Football Club to advise them of (i) above.

#### **OS116. Hedging along the link bank from the Recreation Ground to Britten's Field.**

Consideration was given to planting a hedge between the top of the Canal and the pathed way into Britten's Field.

Discussions on this agenda item included:

- Putting a hedge in could encourage more anti-social behaviour as it reduces clear visibility
- The hedge would form a natural barrier

**RESOLVED** that a hedge is planted between the top of the Canal and the pathed way into Britten's Field.

The meeting closed at 20:45hrs