

## **Agenda 3a**

Minutes of the **Open Spaces Committee** held in the Council Chamber, North Street, Ilminster on Tuesday 28 November 2017 at 7.30pm

### **Present:**

Chairman: Cllr S Shepherd

Councillors: D Belobaba, J Dewick, J Fagan, J Fowler, M James, V Keitch, I Mackillop, A Shearman, R Swann and T Walker.

### **In Attendance:**

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

### **OS129. Apologies for Absence.**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P Burton who was unable to attend the meeting.

### **OS130. Declarations of Interest.**

No declarations of interest were made in respect of any item on the agenda.

### **OS131. Minutes.**

- a) The draft minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2017 were presented for confirmation.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2017 be confirmed as a correct record.
- (ii) to note the Office Action List

Issues discussed during consideration of the office action list included:

- it is hoped the public consultation regarding West Crescent Play Area will take place in January 2018.

### **OS132. Police Report.**

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

### **OS133. Open Spaces Team Report.**

The written report of the Open Spaces Wardens had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Wardens highlighted the following:

- All the grass areas have been cut when the weather permits
- The offensive graffiti from the play areas has been cleared as much as possible; it has been difficult to find any cleaner that completely removes the graffiti, from talking to other Councils a recommended product / supplier has been identified which is understood to be expensive and training to use it will be required. The graffiti has been reported to the police as criminal damage
- The temporary toilets haven't been picked up due to the ground conditions and it is the hirers responsibility to make sure that the ground conditions are suitable for delivery and collection
- Work plans include cleaning the "Welcome to Ilminster" signs, paint the bed of the snake mower and general tidying, cleaning and maintenance of the Wardens' Workshop

Issues raised by Councillors during this agenda item included:

- The ramp by the temporary toilets is made up with dumpy bags so should be straightforward to dismantle
- Congratulations to both the Open Spaces Wardens for passing their chainsaw course
- There has been a huge amount of offensive graffiti on the former Horlicks site

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

**OS134. Request to use Recreation Ground on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018.**

Consideration was given to a request from The Ilminster Midsummer Experience Committee to use the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018 for the Sunday activities similar to previous years.

Discussion during consideration of this agenda item included:

- The Midsummer Experience has been successfully organising activities on the Recreation Ground for one Sunday in June for a number of consecutive years
- The Midsummer Experience event brings lots of people to the town

**RESOLVED**

- (i) That permission is given to The Ilminster Midsummer Experience Committee to use the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground for events on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018; the activities to be similar to those of the Midsummer Experience in previous years.
- (ii) That the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to approve future similar requests from The Ilminster Midsummer Experience Committee and that the Scheme of Delegations is amended accordingly.

**OS135. Request to use Britten's Field on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2018.**

Consideration was given to the request from Ilminster Sports Club Limited to use Britten's Field for Bonfire Night 2018 and closing access to the Field from 1500hrs to ensure the safety of the public.

Discussion during consideration of this agenda item included:

- The Field is closed at 1500hrs to enable movement of the fireworks and other equipment and minimise any danger to members of the public
- The suggestion has been made to some Councillors that Britten's Field is a public open space and therefore should always be fully open to the public
- Approximately 1200 people attended the 2017 bonfire event
- The event organisation / management has been improving each year the event has been running and the organising team have shown themselves to be capable and trustworthy
- The vast majority of local people enjoy the event
- Members of the public who approach Councillors with concerns or saying the event should not be held should be advised to put their concerns in writing and send them to the Town Council office so that the issues can be addressed formally
- At least 2 weeks before the event the organisers supply the Town Council with the event health and safety risk assessment and layout plan, which is shared with the Open Spaces Committee Chair & Vice-Chair and Mayor and Deputy Mayor
- The bonfire afternoon / evening has grown and become a very successful annual community event; it is incumbent upon the Town Council to encourage and support community events and activities

**RESOLVED**

- (i) that Ilminster Sorts Club Ltd be given permission to use Britten's Field on 4 November 2018 for a bonfire / firework event with public access to the field being closed from 1500hrs.
- (ii) That the Town Clerk be given delegated authority to approve future similar requests from Ilminster Sports Club Ltd and that the Scheme of Delegations is amended accordingly.

**OS136. Rec Users Group.**

Consideration was given to the items or topics on which the Committee would welcome the input of the User Group.

Discussion during consideration of this agenda item included:

- A meeting of the new group needs to be set up
- The Town Council has agreed the Terms Of Reference for the User Group which includes the broad membership
- The User Group reports / makes recommendations to the Open Spaces Committee so the Committee can guide the User group workplan
- Currently the terms of reference include 3 members of the public sitting on the user Group; if following advertisement there are more than 3 volunteers the Town Council could amend the Terms of Reference by increasing the numbers of members of the public on the user Group or there could be an interview process
- The 3 Councillor members of the User Group will be decided by the full Town Council
- Applications for grants will be needed towards the costs of the paths and play areas
- A request for S106 money for the skatepark module has been made and will be dealt with when the South Somerset District Council Play and Leisure Team has capacity
- There may be other limited S106 money available for the play areas
- Views may differ as to whether the priority is the children's play area or paths
- The town's open spaces may be an important element of the Neighbourhood Plan but the detail of their lay out and design and management is complementary to the neighbourhood Plan rather than integral to it
- The Town Council has previously agreed the lay out of the paths
- The Town Council has agreed a sketch plan of the play areas for consultation – the results of that consultation need to be reported to the Town Council and the sketch plan approved as a working document so that the component parts can be prioritised and costed

**RESOLVED**

- (i) To recommend to Council that the sketch plan of the play area be approved as a working plan.
- (ii) That an "advert" is published for members of the public to sit on the Rec Users Group.
- (iii) That the Users Group is asked to consider and make recommendations about the phasing of the paths and play area.

**OS137. Herne Hill Advisory Group Recommendations.**

Consideration was given to the recommendations that were received from the Herne Hill Advisory Group on 22 November 2017, pertaining to the Herne Hill Management Plan and an application to designate Herne Hill as a Local Nature Reserve.

Discussion during consideration of this agenda item included:

- Designation of Herne Hill as a Local Nature Reserve would be a consideration for planning applications impacting upon the area
- Some changes will be needed to the Herne Hill Management Plan to include information required by Natural England e.g. why the area should be designated as a Local Nature Reserve and for how long

- Enquiries have been made of South Somerset District Council as to the process that will need to be followed to obtain the designation and a response is awaited
- Obtaining the designation of Herne Hill as a Local Nature reserve is an action within the Town Council's Strategic Plan
- It has been possible to progress this designation due to the work of Zoe Smith who has been volunteering with the Town Council

**RESOLVED**

- (i) that the Herne Hill Management Plan is amended to meet the requirements of Natural England for designation of a Local Nature Reserve.
- (ii) That an application for designation of Herne Hill as a Local Nature Reserve is made.
- (iii) That the Town Council is requested to endorse the Committee's actions and decision to secure the designation of Herne Hill as a Local Nature Reserve.

**OS122. Financial Comparison.**

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

Discussions regarding this agenda item included:

- This is the most up to date record of financial transactions pertaining to the Committee
- Heading 774 Miscellaneous – the expenditure £54.00 is for the cemetery toilet door
- Heading 761 Cemetery Maintenance – although the situation has improved there are still moles digging in the Cemetery
- Heading 431 Claims– this refers to the insurance claim for the Wharf Lane Rec toilets
- Heading 556 – Play inspections the note “phone app” refers to the budget provision of an app for the wardens to assist with inspecting play equipment – further information is being sought and will be given consideration with the Open Spaces Wardens have completed their play inspection training
- Heading 561-15 Burma Star Garden there is a nominal budget of £100; nothing has been spent this year as yet but weed control measures e.g. bark mulch may be required in the spring

**OS128. Budget 2018/19.**

Consideration was given to 2018/19 budget and items that the Committee may wish to include.

Discussions regarding this agenda item included:

- More picnic tables in the Wharf Lane Rec would be good – there is provision for a picnic area in the sketch plan of the play area
- An outdoor fitness trail may be popular
- A path from The Shed to Canal Way would be appreciated

The meeting closed at 20.53hrs