Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee Meeting

Held on 17th January 2022 at 7.30pm in the Grosvenor Centre.

Present: Cllr T Simkin (in the chair), Cllr G Gregory, Cllr R Greatrex, Cllr K Ingram (in his capacity as Chair of Resources), Mike Deegan and Jayne Cooper, Clerk/RFO

Public Open Forum - None present

1. **To receive apologies and record absences**
   Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr J Tomkinson, Cllr D Webb, Cllr M Holmes and Cllr G Symons.

2. **To record any declarations of interest**
   M Deegan declared an interest as an allotment holder.

3. **To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 13th December 2021**
   The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. **To consider any matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda**
   - The bench located in Knightley Churchyard had been collected and placed in storage at the Grosvenor Centre ready for refurbishment.
   - Bollards had been put across the open entrance on the Village Green. A retractable bollard needs to be purchased to allow access for adjacent landowner.
   - The BKV team had planted more memorial trees on the village green and along the back of the bungalows. It was felt the posts with memorial plaques are too far forward and may obstruct access for farm vehicles.
   - The bund created on land off Station Road is yet to be reported to the Environment Agency.
   - It had not been possible to access the silt trap to ascertain a price for clearing it as the ground is too wet. This job to be carried over to 2022/23.
   - A press release for the new playground is needed. Clerk to ask Cllr Booth.

5. **To review the list of outstanding jobs as detailed in the Clerk's report to Council on 10th January and agree an action plan.**

   The list of outstanding jobs was reviewed alongside quotes/estimates received for some of the more urgent jobs:

Knightley bus stop repairs – this had been delayed because of the pandemic and contractors not being available however it was agreed repair work should now be carried out. It is likely the initial quote of £471 received in 2020 would be increased as costs of materials had risen. It is likely that the repairs to both bus shelters in Knightley would cost approximately £1000. Cllr Greatrex to meet with contractor and report back to the Clerk.

Tree survey and inspection. The Clerk had made several enquiries with contractors. One contractor had responded. He inspects trees for other local parish councils as well Stafford Borough Council. The estimate received verbally was between £450 and £650 for a full inspection of all parish council owned trees with a follow up report. This was accepted and it was agreed should be carried out as soon as possible. Cllr Greatrex offered to meet with the contractor to discuss the job requirements.

Allotment Hedge - The Clerk had obtained a quote of £120 to cut the hedge between the boardwalk and allotment track. There was difference of opinion whether it should be cut or laid as previously discussed. A former Cllr had tried to obtain quotes from hedge laying firms to no avail however M Deegan had sent other contacts to the Clerk to follow up. It was agreed that the Clerk should try and obtain quotes for hedge laying in the autumn of 2022 and if this was not possible, that the hedge is cut and tidied this year and plans are made for laying it next year. This was seconded with 3 voting in favour and 1 voting against.

Noticeboards - It was agreed that the jubilee fund should be used to purchase a new notice board with a commemorative header. All other notice boards are in need of repair or replacement.

Trip hazard on boardwalk – this should be repaired as soon as possible and funded from the maintenance budget.

Anti-dog fouling signs - more signs to be purchased to replace those that had worn or broken. Cost to be met from maintenance budget. Cllr Webb to ascertain costs.

Bollards on village green – cost to be met from maintenance budget.

6. To carry out the annual review of the Terms of Reference.

It was agreed to add the words "or as necessary" following "meetings will be held quarterly". Subject to this change the Terms of Reference were agreed. Consideration to be given to changing the name of the Open Spaces Committee to Estates Committee as the committee look after more than open spaces with many council assets and facilities in its remit to maintain.

7. To agree the date and time of the next meeting

4th April 2022 at 7.30pm.

To exclude members of the press and public whilst confidential information is discussed

7. To agree budget requirements for 2022/23

A quotation had been received to replace some of the worn safety surface at Brookhouse Road play park. This would be incorporated into budget requests for 2022/23.

A quote to make repairs to the allotment road had been received for £4100. It is likely this would increase in April as costs of materials are rising. It was felt sensile to ask Council to consider using money from council reserves and agree to this job being carried out as it is deemed a health and safety matter, in the next two months therefore would not need to be incorporated in the 2022/23 budget.

It was noted there is £3000 left open spaces budget for 2021/22 therefore the jobs listed above in agenda item 5 are to be arranged and costs met from the remaining funds available.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm