



DRAFT Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee
Held on 30th January 2023 at 7.30pm in The Parish Office

Present: Cllr T Simkin (in the Chair) Cllr G Gregory, Cllr Greatrex, Cllr K Ingram, Cllr G Symons, Cllr A Mills, Cllr M Holmes and Jayne Cooper

Public Open Forum - no members of the public were in attendance.

1. To receive apologies and record absences

Apologies were received and accepted from the Cllr D Webb and Cllr G Buckless . It was noted that Cllr J Tomkinson was unwell and was not expected to attend the meeting.

2. To record any declarations of interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 24th October 2022.

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

4. To consider any matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

- Electrical work on library ramp had been completed.
- Trees overhanging properties in Stacey Gardens belong to Staffordshire County Council not the Parish Council therefore no action is required by GPC.
- A meeting with a tree specialist was agreed to inspect trees at The Chippy Jumps to determine whether they were causing interference with the signal from the mobile phone mast. It had been concluded that no immediate action was necessary. Advice received was to monitor the trees that are growing around mast when they are "in leaf" to determine if the signal worsens.
- The Clerk had communicated with a parishioner who had made enquiries about purchasing part or all of The Wold. Council to resume discussions whether or not to sell part or all of The Wold.
- The Council's solicitor had been requested to register Hen & Chicken Lane with The Land Registry.
- Repairs at parks - the Handyman would commence repairs in the next month.
- Memorial Bench and memorial plaques requests - parishioners had been informed of Council's decisions.

5. To discuss maintenance requirements

Bus stop on Brookhouse Road - there had been further vandalism (side panel kicked out) therefore it was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed that as a result of spiralling maintenance costs, the bus shelter would be removed completely. Details to be posted on the council's Facebook site explaining the reasons. Cllr Greatrex and Cllr Holmes offered to oversee the removal and disposal of the shelter.

Climbing frame - it was reported that the platform on the smaller climbing frame had been vandalised and is in need of replacement. It was agreed the Clerk should report this to the police, obtain a crime number and if possible, make a claim on the Council's insurance. Otherwise the cost of replacement would have to be found from the maintenance budget.

The metal seat on the MUGA shelter had split and is in need of repair or more likely, replacement. Cllr Greatrex to inspect and obtain a quote from a local firm to make a new seat.

The Acres - Councillors acknowledged that the three cuts of meadow grass, carried out in the autumn 2022, had made a positive visual impact and it was felt could be repeated throughout the growing season rather than leave uncut. This would help manage the docks and other weeds. There was some discussion about leaving some areas uncut for biodiversity reasons. The Clerk was asked to liaise with the Council's appointed contractor to determine whether he has the equipment to cut the Acres (meadow space) and if so obtain a quotation. A verbal quotation had been received from the contractor who cut the meadow area in the autumn - this was noted. Further discussion to be held at the next meeting.

6. To discuss action required in the Spring/Summer

Committee members had received an updated list of action required in the coming months which was noted.

It was agreed that no action is to be taken in replacing the fencing around The Wold until Council had discussed whether or not it was desirable to sell it.

The following jobs were agreed and should, if possible, be carried out in the spring of 2023:

- Cleaning of benches and picnic tables on The Acres
- Replacement of rotten bollards on Village Green
- Replacement of instruction panels on the outdoor gym equipment
- Line painting on the MUGA
- Several minor maintenance jobs as detailed in the most recent ROSPA report
- Purchase a jubilee notice board for the High Street (funds already received)

Noticeboards - a rolling programme of repair and replacement was agreed as follows:

- Platinum Jubilee notice board (funds already received) to be located opposite Royal Oak
- King's Coronation notice board (subject to funding) to be located on High Street
- Prince William commemorative notice board currently on High Street to be relocated to Village Green
- Village Green notice board to replace the notice board in Bromstead (will need some maintenance beforehand). Bromstead noticeboard to be disposed of.
- Decision to be made what do to with existing board at Royal Oak that would need some repair.
- Knightley, Outwoods, Moreton, Wharf Rd and Play area notice boards board are all in good order - just need annual maintenance.

7. To confirm arrangements for allotment renewals for 2023/24

As previously agreed, allotment fees for the year 2023/24 would be £40 for a full plot and £20 for a half plot plus water usage costs. Renewal letters would be sent out in the next month.

8. To consider any Health and Safety matters

The maintenance and inspection contract offered by Kompan had been discussed by the Health and Safety Committee and it had been decided that the contract did not fulfil the council's needs or represent good value for money. It had been agreed by H&S committee that inspection of the play and outdoor gym equipment and environment would be carried out once in January and then every month from April to October inclusive. Councillor Greatrex said he would carry out an inspection for January and then one in April, before leaving the council as a councillor in May. Committee members noted that from May 2023, Councillor Greatrex had offered to be a non-council member of the Open Spaces Committee and continue to carry out inspections which was welcomed.

9. To consider any Policy or Risk Assessment reviews

Tree Policy - committee members approved the draft tree policy as received. Council would be asked to formally approve the policy at the next full council meeting.

Further work is required in particular to zone all parish council owned trees to determine the frequency of inspections as detailed in the policy. Some zoning work had been carried out by a former councillor and useful information is contained within the inspection report (2022) both of which would assist in mapping out trees as required.

It was noted that tree inspections are outstanding at the Burial Ground, Village Green and The Wold. The Clerk would arrange this as soon as possible.

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

The next meeting would be held on 27th March at 7.30pm. The Clerk tendered her apologies.

Meeting closed at 8.40pm