



DRAFT Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee
Held on 5th June 2023 at 7.30pm in The Parish Office

Present: Cllr T Simkin (in the Chair), Cllr G Gregory, Cllr Webb, Cllr K Ingram, Cllr G Buckless,
Cllr A Mills and Jayne Cooper

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

1. To elect a Chair and Vice Chair

Cllr Simkin was elected Chair and Cllr Ingram elected Vice Chair

2. To receive apologies and record absences

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr G Symons and Mr R Greatrex

3. To record any declarations of interest.

There were no declarations of interest.

4. To receive and confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2023

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

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

There were no matters arising.

6. To discuss maintenance requirements

a) Work carried out by the Handyman and work schedule

Details of work carried out by the Handyman was reported. All work had been carried out to an excellent standard.

b) Inspections of open space areas - Allotments, Burial Ground, The Acres, Village Green, The Wold

Members of Open Spaces were each tasked with inspecting an area of open spaces and to report back findings to the Clerk.

c) Work on allotment roads (within the allotment site)

- A quote to be obtained from local contractor to carry out repairs to the allotment road.
- It was agreed that the allotment hedge should be cut back as complaints had been received that the hedge is encroaching onto vehicles when entering the allotment site.

d) Hay meadow on Acres

- It was noted that a local farmer had paid the council to cut and retain the hay from The Acres. A second cut would be carried out later in the summer.
- The Clerk to liaise with the BKV team leader regarding the wildflower meadow. If it is not possible to manage it correctly, it would be sensible to cut it so the wildflower area returns to grass that would be managed by the grass cutting contractor.

e) Final phase of tree maintenance following most recent inspection as well as communication from Innovation Group Environmental Services regarding a tree close to a residential property

The final phase of tree maintenance would commence at the end of June. Once complete, mapping of trees would need to be finalised. Former Councillor, Jordan Archer to return the tree tags. The contractor carrying out the tree work to be asked to fit the tags.

Details had been received about a property adjacent to the Acres that has suffered from subsidence. Environmental Services had investigated the matter and following that an Arboriculture investigation was carried out. Although a large willow on the Acres that belongs to the Parish Council had not contributed to the damage, the Arboriculturist's opinion is that it could influence the property in the future and therefore should be maintained at its current dimensions (report received in April 2023) by way of regular pruning. This was noted and the Clerk was asked to liaise with Rob Keyzor Tree Surgeons with a view to pruning regularly.

7. To discuss the possible sale of The Wold

Following an enquiry by a parishioner to purchase some of The Wold, the committee had reviewed the process of selling council owned land should Council decide on selling some or all of The Wold. Legal Topic Note 45, received from the National Association of Local Councils had been reviewed and the lengthy process noted. The Committee discussed the benefits of the sale mainly raising much needed funds for other projects. It was agreed to make a recommendation to Council to consider selling part or all of the land with restricted covenants on it that the land could not be purchased for development.

8. To consider any Health and Safety matters

The Handyman to make repairs to holes in some slats of the boardwalk, caused by vandalism.

9. To consider any Policy or Risk Assessment reviews

Risk Assessments carried out by R Greatrex to be reviewed and action taken accordingly.

10. To consider any correspondence including:

a) Invitation to be a member of CPRE

This to be passed to the Planning Committee to consider.

b) Letter from Keele University

A thank you letter had been received from Keele University for allowing students to visit the Acres and meet with the Clerk and Chair of Open Spaces to learn about how funding was secured and how the Acres project carried out in 2011/2012 was managed.

c) Request for memorial bench

It had previously been agreed that no further benches would be located on The Village Green or on The Acres. However, it was suggested that the new area in the Burial Ground be suggested.

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

To be held on 2nd October 2023 at 7.30pm