

ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the **OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Ilminster on Tuesday 5th March 2013 at 19:30hrs.

Present

Chairman: Cllr C Goodall

Councillors: Cllr P Burton, Cllr A Lawson, Cllr D Miller, Cllr J Pallister, Cllr A Shearman, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr J Sothern and Cllr E J Taylor.

In Attendance

Officers: Mrs M Clayton (Senior Administrator), Mr A Jones (Senior Warden), Miss J Norris (Town Clerk), Mrs M Shelley (Deputy Town Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Austin, Swann, Vijeh and Whaites

2. Declarations of Interest

The declarations of Interest given in the table below were made.

Name	Minute No	Agenda Item	Type of Interest	Nature of Interest
Cllr Shearman	05.03.13	8	Personal	Relative on the scouts committee
Cllr Goodall	05.03.13	10	Personal	Connection with the Royal British Legion
Cllr Taylor	05.03.13	10	Personal	Connection with the Royal British Legion
Cllr Pallister	05.03.13	12	Personal	Chairperson of Sport Club
Cllr Shearman	05.03.13	14	Personal	School Governor
Cllr Taylor	05.03.13	14	Personal	School Governor

3. Minutes of the previous Open Spaces Committee Meeting

RESOLVED to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 31st January 2013 as a correct record subject to the references with regard to the Brittens field gateway in both the minutes (no 11) and the action list being amended to read "...scalpings and 3mm to dust"

4. Ilminster Midsummer Experience Presentation.

A presentation was made by Michael Fry Foley to show the proposal of events for the Ilminster Midsummer Experience, to be held in June 2013

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5. Grass Seeding and Drainage of the Recreation Ground.

The Town Clerk updated the committee on the subject of grass seeding and drainage at the recreation ground.

The update included the following:

- The Town Clerk praised the Open Spaces Wardens for the work they have recently done to improve the appearance and condition of the recreation ground.
- Five companies have been sent details of the work that is required to be carried out, but only two companies have sent back quotes. The office staff will chase up the other companies for their quotes and the Town Clerk will report back at the next Open Spaces committee meeting

6. Use of Recreation Ground.

(a) The committee were asked to consider Ilminster Midsummer Experience's request to use the recreation ground in June.

Topics discussed during the consideration of this item were as follows:

- Concerns were raised over vehicles using the recreation ground, as the present condition of the site would result in vehicles foundered in the mud and further damage being caused to the ground.
- If the drainage and seeding work has been completed by June, the ground will need to rest and therefore cannot be used.
- The drainage and seeding work will be carried out as soon as all the quotations have been received and approved and as soon as there is the suitable window of fine weather to get the work completed.
- Work is due to start on the demolition of the football stand, which would also present a problem if it is still ongoing at the time of the event.
- Plan B may be for the classic car display to be held in Brittiens Field, if the entrance is safe and wide enough to use.
- From the plan supplied by Mr Fry Foley, concerns were raised that the Classic Car display is too near the skate park.
- Concerns were raised over the noise of some events interfering with other events that are being held at the same time.
- The Fun Run at Herne Hill would be feasible if the ground and weather conditions are suitable to hold the event safely.
- Suggestions were made that the ground is monitored on a weekly basis and the conditions reported back to the Ilminster Midsummer Experience so that they can make alternative arrangements for a venue if the ground is unsuitable for use.
- It was suggested that the Council inform Ilminster Midsummer Experience of the issues they have discussed and that it may be beneficial for them to look for alternative venues, in case the recreation ground is unavailable. One suggestion was the new doctors' surgery.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Council would accept the request made by Ilminster Midsummer Experience to use the recreation ground, but any use will be subject to the following:

- (i) Any work that has been done or needs to be done regarding drainage and reseeded.

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- (ii) The condition of the ground.
- (iii) The weather forecast in week preceding the event.

(b) The committee were asked to consider the request from Marshalls to use the recreation ground for the fair in June and October 2013.

Topics discussed during the consideration of this item were as follows:

- For the same reasons as above, the fair would not be able to use the recreation ground in June
- Brittens Field would be an alternative venue if the vehicles fit through the entrance way.
- The Deputy Clerk has spoken with Mr Marshall. He would be able to get the vehicles through the gate, but the caravans for their living quarters would also have to be on this site.
- The Deputy Clerk has asked Mr Marshall to supply the Council with a plan of where the rides and caravans intend to be set up in Britten Field as there are some concerns that the rides in October are much bigger.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

- (i) that subject to a satisfactory plan being received the Funfair be offered Britten's Field for June .
- (ii) that the location for October is considered again when the schedule for the work to the Rec is known

7. Wardens Report

Discussions regarding the Open Spaces Warden's report included the following:

- Due to complaints by local residents of The Mead, the security light facing the cricket ground has been changed for a less stark illumination at an extra cost of £50.
- Local residents have reported that there are fallen trees and branches at Herne Hill which are a safety hazard.
- The guttering will be replaced (it has been purchased) on the toilet block now that the fascia boards have been repaired.

8. Lighting Fires on Herne Hill

The Committee were asked to consider Ilminster Scouts Group's request for permission to light fires at Herne Hill.

Topics discussed during the consideration of this item were as follows:

- Concerns were raised that if we allow the Scout group to light fires under supervision, it may encourage others who are not supervised to copy.
- Concerns were raised as to how a fire would be tackled if it started on Herne Hill.
- An alternative site for the Scouts to use for fire lighting could be Cleeves Close as it was visible and had easier access

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Ilminster Scouts Group, under supervision, have permission to light fires at Herne Hill.

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9. Digging Cremation Plots and Pricing

The Committee were asked to consider if the Town Council should provide a service of digging cremation plots.

Topics discussed during the consideration of this item were as follows:

- The cremation plots would be dug, prepared and refilled by the Open Spaces Warden
- The initial reaction from local funeral directors to the Council undertaking the digging of cremation plots is positive
- It would give the Council more control over the cemetery.
- The estimated costs are: Initial outlay £182, staffing to dig plot £30 to £50 (dependent upon ground condition)
- The funeral directors have confirmed a charge of £50 would be appropriate.
- Concerns were raised with the extra work burden on the Open Spaces Wardens.
- On average, approximately 20 plots are dug a year.
- The Committee suggested closer monitoring of the grave digger's standard of work was required and any problems should be rectified by the grave digger.

RESOLVED

- (i) that the existing cemetery rules and regulations should be more robustly enforced
- (ii) that the Town Clerk reports back to the Committee in 3 months time advising of any continuing problems

10. Burma Star Garden

The Committee were asked to consider the Royal British Legion's request for the Town Council to take over the maintenance of the Burma Star garden on the corner of Winterhay Lane.

Topics discussed during the consideration of this item were as follows:

- Since the request, the wardens have measured up the site, and made a draft plan which would include low maintenance shrubs, a hard standing and a seat as a feature.
- This project is an ideal opportunity for the Open Spaces Apprentice to use as evidence towards his horticultural course.
- The Wardens would be able to maintain the site regularly, as they have to pass it to get to Winterhay Lane recreation ground.
- The Royal British Legion may make a contribution towards the costs of the remodelling.
- If the area is not taken back by the Town Council, it will end up as waste land.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the Town Council take over the maintenance of the Burma Star garden at Winterhay Lane

11. Financial Monitoring

The Committee received information regarding the Open Spaces expenditure and commitments to date, when compared with the 2012/13 budget.

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The Town Clerk explained that the format of the report is still being developed and will be further improved so that information is more easily understood. Councillors welcomed the report and made suggestions for further changes.

RESOLVED to note the financial monitoring report

12. Open Spaces Review Group

The Chair explained that the Review Group meeting had been cancelled due to there being no further information to report until individual consultation meetings had taken place with the various clubs.

The District Council had prepared a specification for a topographical survey of the land which the Town Clerk will be using to seeking quotations.

13. Herne Hill Advisory Group

The Town Clerk informed the committee that the Herne Hill Advisory Group had not met for a year. The meeting was originally scheduled as an item on this Open Spaces committee meeting but following discussion with the Committee Chair will now be held separately on Tuesday 12th March 2013. An update of discussions at Advisory Group's meeting will be given at the next Open Spaces Committee Meeting.

14. Summer Competitions

The committee discussed ideas for competitions that the Town Council can hold this summer.

The topics discussed included the following:

- The competitions that the Council held last year were the floral completion and the scarecrow competition.
- The floral competition had not attracted many entries for the last couple of years, and even though the Council changed the way gardens were nominated last year, it still did not achieve the results hoped for.
- It was suggested that the floral competition just be open to Greenfylde and Swanmead Schools.
- The town floral competition could be taken over by another club or organisation.
- The scarecrow competition is popular and has many entries.

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND

- (i) that the scarecrow competition is organised again to coincide with the Ilminster Experience events and
- (ii) that the only floral competitions organised by the Town Council will be those for Greenfylde and Swanmead Schools.

The meeting closed at 21:35hrs

Chair's signature and Date