

ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Ilminster on Tuesday, 18 September, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

Present

Chairman: Cllr C Goodall

Councillors: Cllr J Pallister, Cllr S Sainsbury, Cllr A Shearman, Cllr J Sothern, Cllr R Swann, Cllr E J Taylor, and Cllr Whaites.

Officers: Mr A Jones, Miss N McIntosh, Miss J Norris, Mrs M Shelley

1. Minutes of the previous Open Spaces Committee Meeting

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on 10th July be approved and signed as a correct record.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Austin, Burton, Lawson, Miller, Shepherd and Vijeh.

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

Item b) - Audit of Sports Facilities

Cllr Goodall informed the Committee that the Audit is yet to be received.

Item c) - Market House

Cllr Goodall reported details of two architectural surveyors have been received; The Deputy Clerk will be in contact with them soon.

Item d) – Bus Stop Location

Cllr Goodall reported that she had attended a meeting with John Perrett, the County Transport Officer, and two officers from First Bus; Cllrs Taylor, Miller and Vijeh attended together with five members of the public. Several questions were asked and they were told that Reic-sur-Belon was designated as a double stop area and that they assumed that similarly now applied to Orchard Vale. They acknowledged that stopping outside Mrs Seeley's house was not appropriate and would investigate the use of the stop in Canal Way and also the situation in Orchard Vale.

Cllr Goodall reported the issue of buses not going through the town centre was also raised and they were informed that there was difficulty when turning into Silver Street. Combined with the congestion caused by parked cars this had driven the decision not to come into the town. It was pointed out that buses had stopped turning into Silver Street some time ago and the new enforcement of on street parking had reduced congestion. Local businesses were reporting a decline in business and without buses travelling through the town, residents to the north faced a long walk to the new surgery on Canal Way or an expensive taxi fare. The First Bus officers agreed to review the situation regarding buses travelling

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through the town and assured they would get back to the Town Council in a couple of weeks.

It was agreed that we would disseminate the resulting report/decision to the public who had attended.

5. Wardens Report

Mr Jones reported that since the last meeting on the 10 July 2012, the Wardens have continued with grass cutting when able, depending on the wet weather or reliability of the machinery. The Stiga had been in for repair and had been out of action a lot over the past few months and seemed to be coming to the end of its life; it had done over 1000 hours of hard work and the brochures only recommend the lifespan as 1000.

The mule had also been in for repair for three weeks, and is waiting for a part. New lights on the trailer have been fitted.

At the Cemetery the wardens re-erected the water butt shed and rubbish bin that was taken down to allow the soil by the wall to be removed.

Two benches had been broken due to vandalism, one had been replaced with an old metal one that has been refurbished, the other one we had to be removed and the concrete base was also removed.

The Cricket Club had a lot of their property vandalised. There had also been a lot of broken glass and rubbish along with a couple of small fires.

The tennis courts have had some repairs including a new net and some other small bits that were taken or broken.

At the Recreation Ground the crowns on trees around the Pavilion and along the Canal had been lifted to get the tractor and Gang mowers through, this saved lots of time with the Stiga not having to cut as much.

The new flail had been used a lot to cut the grass that is too long for the gang mower. All the paths at the Minster had been sprayed with algaecide, waiting to see the results.

Our side of the Canal Way hedge had been cut and the brush cleared away.

A noticeable amount of rubbish had been collected since the new Skate Park had been erected, as there are more people using the facilities now, there is now a need for two new bins and benches.

Cllr Sainsbury suggested erecting signs in the area to remind users to use rubbish facilities, and that ball games are prohibited in children's play area, and also suggested emailing schools to ask for support to guide children.

The Warden informed the Committee that the toilet block drains had blocked again; a plumber had been contacted to look at the problem.

The Wardens store shed had been painted.

Summer plants have been taken out ready for planting the winter bedding due in October. Herne Hill – Wardens have cut pathways, but it had been too wet to carry on with anymore work up there. The hedge on the ridge path has been trimmed.

The wardens had been successful in getting trees from the Woodland Trust and these should be delivered in November. This is to make a small copse of around 105 trees in the bottom corner of West Crescent.

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Mr Jones reported SSDC were again offering free Daffodil bulbs and would like the chance to get some to plant along the Canal bank.

Crewkerne Town Council had a demonstration of equipment e.g. slitter/roller/harrow brush all-in-one tractor mounted machine for sport and recreation grounds and Cllr Pallister and the Open Spaces Warden had been invited to attend.

6. Skate Park

Cllr Goodall reported that now that the young people are back at school, Hags have been contacted to ask when they will be doing the final snagging.

It was pointed out to them that until that had been done we would not be able to hold a formal launch. They had promised to get back to us shortly with a date.

Lighting the park has to be one of the next priorities, fresh quotations are being obtained to allow us to move forward. Work will be carried out with Street Space to raise money for these lights.

The other priority is the decoration of the park elements. The plan is to engage a graffiti artist to work with the youngsters to ensure that the work is of a high standard.

7. IEX

The Deputy Clerk reported that Mr Fry-Foley had commented that writing and numbers should not appear on the Town Council banner as they could only be read from one side. It was agreed that just the image of a torch should be on the banner.

The Deputy Clerk was asked to investigate what permissions were needed to fit a bracket to the building and to find out if LOCOG would allow an image of an Olympic torch to be used.

8. Recreation Areas

a) Update on Rec Review

Councillor Goodall informed the Committee that the review is on hold for the moment as there are a number of important issues that need to be dealt with in Open Spaces but she does expect to be able to report some movement at the next Open Spaces Meeting.

b) MUGA Report

Councillor Goodall reported that whilst the review is currently on hold one of the suggestions to come out of the review so far involves a MUGA. District funding is still available for this and they have agreed to extend the deadline. The proposal is to revert to the original plan and place the MUGA on the tennis courts closest to the Cricket Pavilion.

The proposal is that it should be a double MUGA. The suggestion has been made for a number of reasons:

- Using the pad that is already in place as a base for the MUGA will save money.
- Using a pad that is already in place means plans could go forward earlier than might have been expected.
- The present pitch provision is over used, abused even. The pitches are used for games and for practice and are given no time to recover.
- A double MUGA would create an alternative area for football practice and maybe could even be used for actual youth games.

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- The fence round the tennis courts is being damaged by youngsters using it as a goal area.
- The Section 106 money needs to be used or it will be lost, there is no requirement to match fund with council money.

Cllr Goodall asked the Committee if they would approve the request that the group be allowed to explore this idea and come back to the Council with costs and a list of possible funders.

It was RESOLVED that the Group should explore in more detail the possibility of developing a MUGA on the site of two of the existing tennis courts.

c) Football Stands

Cllr Pallister had requested that the southern end of the football stand be removed. He was originally considering removing the small shed but then thought it would make more sense to remove the dismantled stand and use the metal cladding to seal off the exposed southern end of the remaining stand.

Cllr Goodall reported there was a concern that there might be asbestos in the building.

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND that the southern end of the football stands be taken down and the cladding removed used to seal off the exposed area of the north stand subject to all health and safety precautions being taken

Cllr Pallister proposed, seconded by Cllr Swann.

9. Machinery Report

The Deputy Clerk reported the Stiga had broken down and been repaired on numerous occasions and had cost £1257.15 including the insurance claim, since April 2011 and was coming to end of its life.

The gang mowers are very time consuming to adjust and do not cut wet grass very well.

It was agreed that the review of machinery should be looked at alongside the work plan as part of the Recreation Grounds Review.

10. Street Furniture

The Deputy Clerk informed the committee that permission had been given to purchase 7 litter bins this year at a cost of £2624.44 but if 10 were purchased the Town Council would not be charged for the tenth bin. The total cost of 10 bins would be £3374.28 saving £374.092

Cllr Taylor proposed, seconded by Cllr Sainsbury

It was RESOLVED to RECOMMEND the purchase of 10 litter bins at a cost of £3374.28

11. Town Clerk's Report and Correspondence

SSDC were offering free bulbs again this year and it was agreed that these could be planted along the Canal bank and that Sunny Ile Pre-School could be asked to help plant the bulbs.

2. A 'Thank You' certificate had been received for the Olympic Torch Relay.
3. Julia Thorne had written to thank everyone for the card and voucher.

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4. A reminder had been received about the Police Station open afternoon on 30 September. Cllrs Swann and Pallister were interested in attending but needed to check their diaries. Cllr Goodall said she had booked a place as a District Councillor but was now unable to attend so one of them may be able to take her place.

5. Fields in Trust had written to say that affiliated membership to Fields in Trust is being reduced from £35 to £25 per annum.

6. A letter had been received from the Community Justice Panel asking for possible help with funding. The Deputy Clerk would reply to say that they would be sent a grant form in due course and to invite them to give a presentation to the Council.

12. Confidential Item

“That in the view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted it is advisable in the public interest, that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.”

13. Cemetery

a. Cllr Goodall reported that an e-mail had been received from Mr & Mrs Callister to say that they will be taking legal advice and requesting copies of photographs showing the tree roots and these had been sent.

Cllr Goodall asked if the Crewkerne Town Council Properties & Project Officer (as part of the agreed 10 hours trial) could be given the task of detailing repairs needed to reinstate the north west wall as he had the appropriate background to do this kind of work. He would be able to check the quotes and hopefully everything would then be in placed ready to start work as soon as agreement has been reached. The Committee agreed.

b. The Deputy Clerk read out quotes received for repairs to the south wall and the reinstatement of the wall to either side of the new gate. Cllr Sainsbury proposed, seconded by Cllr Pallister and
It was RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that the quote of £542 be accepted.

c. The Committee was shown photos of a tree which was growing through graves and head stones at the bottom of the cemetery. It was agreed that this tree could be taken down, but that the next of kin should be informed before the work was carried out.

The meeting closed at 9. Pm

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Signature

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Date