

**ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL  
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Minutes of a meeting of the **OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Ilminster on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at 19:30hrs

**Present:**

Chairman: Cllr C Goodall

Councillors: Cllr P Burton, Cllr V Higgins, Cllr V Keitch, Cllr A Lawson, Cllr D Miller, Cllr R Neave, Cllr A Shearman, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr S Storey, Cllr R Swann and Cllr E Taylor.

**In Attendance**

Officers: Mr A Jones (Senior Open Spaces Warden), Miss J Norris (Town Clerk)

1 member of the public attended this meeting

The Chairman welcomed the member of the public

**140. Suspension of Standing Orders**

The Committee were asked to suspend standing order 1m, which relates to photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings as a new legislation allows members of the public the right to record a meeting.

**RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Order 1m.

**141. Apologies for absence.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Austin, Higgins, Sothern and Taylor.

**142. Declarations of Interest.**

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

<b>Name</b>	<b>Minute No</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Type of Interest</b>	<b>Nature of Interest</b>
Cllr J Pallister	149	Ground Conditions on the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground	Personal	Cllr Pallister is an unpaid groundsman for the Cricket Club and one of the areas to be discussed is the access way to the Cricket Club store (rented from the Town Council)

**143. Minutes.**

**RESOLVED**

(i) To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on **26<sup>th</sup> August 2014** as a correct record.

(ii) To note the action list relating to the Open Spaces committee

Items brought to the attention of the committee included the following:

- Fitness classes on the Rec are being advertised on the internet for both Tuesdays and Thursdays

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## Ilminster Town Council Open Spaces Committee 30 September 2014 Minutes

### 144. Wardens Report.

The report from the Senior Open Spaces Warden about recent open spaces activities in Ilminster was considered.

Issues discussed during this agenda item included:

- Benches and bin: the Town Council currently has approximately
  - 20 dog bins,
  - 29 litter bins (including 5 at the cemetery)
  - 33 benches / seats,
  - 2 picnic tables
  - 5 benches at cemetery
  - 8 seats in the town

There are 5 new seats in store to go out as replacements and 3 metal ones in for repairs. A complete list of bins, seats and benches is in preparation and will be sent to councillors when complete.

- Positive feedback from visitors to the town about the open spaces has been received by volunteers at the kiosk
- Hedges are overgrowing the cycle route
- Arrangements have been made regarding cutting and collecting the grass on the slope between Britten's Field and the Ridge Path to Herne Hill but the timescale is not known
- Sections of Herne Hill paths and the sloping area off The Mead need to be rotated and sown with grass seed
- The provision of a light in the play area was discussed as an anti-social behaviour measure
- Lights may also be able to incorporate a camera

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) To note the report
- (ii) That a letter be sent to Sustrans regarding the dangers posed by the overgrown hedges along the cycle route
- (iii) That the Play and Paths Sub Group (of the Open Spaces Review) be asked to consider incorporating lighting in the plans for the play area.

### 145. Police Report

A police report was provided for Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2014 and there was no further report for this meeting

### 146. Herne Hill - Marshy Area and Accessibility

The Committee considered an opportunity to improve a marshy area of land and accessibility

The Chairman explained that there is one remaining marsh area Herne Hill and that this could be preserved and enhanced by creating a balancing area and planted with appropriate plants. If this work was to be done it would also provide a short section of raised pathway which would improve accessibility to the Hill.

Items discussed during consideration for this item included:

- The importance of maintaining a wet / marshy area on the hill
- That any planting would be suitable native species

#### **RESOLVED**

- (i) that the project to enhance and preserve the marshy area, including the creation of a short raised path is approved

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## Ilminster Town Council Open Spaces Committee 30 September 2014 Minutes

- (ii) That the project referred to in (i) above must be undertaken within existing budget for Herne Hill.

### 147. Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)

The Committee considered the next steps with regard to the potential provision of a MUGA. The Chairman summarised the current position explaining that South Somerset District Council (SSDC) are holding £35,000 of s106 money allocated for a MUGA in Ilminster. The time limit for the money to be spent is fast approaching and there has already been one time extension.

The SSDC Play Officer believes the best location for a MUGA on the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground would be to the south of the skatepark and at right angles to it; the Councillors were able to see this location marked out during the Open Spaces walkabout and they felt it would severely impact upon the site used by the fair. Councillors preferred the location parallel to the skatepark but staggered towards Canal Way. In his professional opinion, the SSDC Officer says that the location preferred by Town Councillors would be extremely detrimental to the children's play area and the overall masterplan for the Rec. Items discussed during consideration for this item included:

- Location - who has ultimate decision
- The SSDC Officer has extensive experience of planning, designing and the implementation of MUGA's
- The total cost of a MUGA project for the Rec has not been calculated
- Should the Town Council wish to have a MUGA it would need to provide match funding, the source of which could be grants
- Applying for grants is time consuming
- With all the other ongoing elements of the Rec review the time available to put into obtaining a MUGA would be limited
- Consideration could be given to approaching the Ilminster Education Foundation regarding putting a MUGA on their land
- During consultation of the plans for the Rec the headteacher of Greenfyld had expressed concern about having a MUGA close to the area that the school use
- There is a possibility of having future 106 money allocated for a MUGA

**RESOLVED to recommend to Council** that due to the restraints resulting from ongoing Open Spaces Review projects no further action is taken at the present time regarding the provision of a MUGA on the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground and that SSDC is informed accordingly.

### 148. Exclusion of the Press and Public

**RESOLVED** that agenda items 10 & 11 be considered without members of the public and press present, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

### 149. Ground Conditions on the Wharf Lane Recreation Ground

The Committee was asked to consider quotations obtained for a) widening the existing path between The Mead and the Warden's Workshop, b) outside the entrance to the Warden's Workshop (IEF side of the building) c) outside the storage shed rented to the Cricket Club.

Items discussed during consideration for this item included:

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## **Iminster Town Council Open Spaces Committee 30 September 2014 Minutes**

- Concrete in front of the Warden's Workshop would impact on the Cricket outfield
  - Concrete on a green area would have a detrimental visual impact
  - Stones or chippings would damage the current grass cutting equipment
  - The quotations are more expensive than anticipated
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- The need for the surface outside the Warden's Workshop and the Cricket Store to be capable of taking substantial weight

### **RESOLVED**

- (i) that the Open Spaces Team assisted by volunteers undertake the widening of the path from The Mead to the Wardens' Workshop using concrete
- (ii) that a working group comprising Councillors Burton, Pallister, Shepherd and Shearman draft a specification for surfacing to go outside the Wardens' Workshop and the Cricket Store and that specification is reported to a future meeting of the Committee for approval
- (iii) That when the specification has been approved estimates are sought
- (iv) That consideration is given to including a sum of money, based upon the estimates, in the 2015/16 budget

### **150. Cemetery**

#### **a) Standards of grave digging**

The Committee considered the current and future arrangements for digging of graves in Iminster cemetery. The Town Clerk explained that the inclusion of this item on the agenda had been prompted by a complaint from a person who had gone to the cemetery to tend a grave and been dismayed at the way in which a new grave had been dug and the impact on the surrounding burial plots.

The Committee were shown photographs of recent graves after digging and after burial. Items discussed during consideration for this item included:

- Contract is between undertaker & grave digger
- The Town Council works with the undertaker
- The Town Council does have rules for undertakers which includes standards of grave digging
- Burial plots should be treated with respect

**RESOLVED** that the undertakers who use the cemetery are informed that unless all the Town Council's criteria regarding grave digging are met they will not be able to use the cemetery

#### **b) Purchase of self-propelled rotary mower**

The Committee were informed that prices had been obtained for the purchase of a self-propelled rotary mower for use at the cemetery particularly in the cremation plot areas and a purchase would soon be made.

The meeting closed at 21:17hrs

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