

**ILMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Minutes of a meeting of the **OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Ilminster on Tuesday 22nd April 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 J Pallister, Cllr A Shearman, Cllr S Shepherd, Cllr R Swann, Cllr L Vijeh and Cllr E Taylor.

In Attendance

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

Eleven members of the public attended this meeting and one member of the Press.

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

- A petition was handed over with approximately 1300 signatures opposing to the construction of permanent buildings and a car park on Britten's Field.
- Open Spaces staff were praised for the work carried out at Herne Hill to clear the Bluebell area.
- A complaint was made that the Council have given permission for Herne Hill to be used as a bike track. It was explained that the Council have not given any such permission but is aware of the problem and is in the process of dealing with this matter in a constructive manner. The Chair of Open Spaces agreed to meet the gentleman who raised this issue at Herne Hill on the 'ridge path' at 4.00pm on Wednesday 23rd April 2014.

90. Apologies for absence

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

91. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made by Councillors and Officers in respect of any item on the agenda.

Name	Minute No	Agenda Item	Type of Interest	Nature of Interest
Cllr Pallister		15	Personal	Cricket Club member -
Cllr Shepherd		15	Personal	Cricket Club member

92. Minutes.

RESOLVED

- a) that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.
- b) to note the action list relating to the Open Spaces committee.

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

- The area outside the Open Spaces Workshop will be discussed at the Recreation Review meeting on Thursday 24th April 2014 and the action list will then be updated

Chair's Initials

Iminster Town Council

- Concerns were raised that the surface water at end of Station Road has still not totally cleared. The County Councillor will chase this matter up with the County Council.
- Sub-Contractors have been clearing the drains and gullies at the top of Lister Hill, but have seemed to miss the one which is very blocked. The SCC Councillor understood that the usual practice was for contractors to contact the Town Council before they start the work so that a representative from the Council can go along with the contractors to show where the problems are.
- County Councillor Vjeh will liaise with Councillor Shearman to list the drains which need attention.
- Cycling on Herne Hill was an item raised at the Open Spaces meeting on 11th March 2014. The Mayor and the Open Spaces Chair are dealing with this matter and will report in due course

93. Warden's Report

The Committee received the report from the Senior Open Spaces Warden about recent open spaces activities in Iminster and future planned work

Discussions included the following:

- Concerns were raised that the football posts that have been moved from Britten's Field to the recreation ground alongside the skate park will cause damage to the ground over a period of time. The reason the post were moved to this location is to discourage children from kicking footballs up against the toilet block causing damage to the guttering and tiles.
- This matter will be discussed at the Rec Review meeting on Thursday.
- The Committee was updated on the drainage work at the recreation ground. The ground has been left very lumpy which will need to be rolled out. Members of the public have commented that the area needs flattening.

94. Herne Hill Management Plan

The Committee was asked to consider and the draft Herne Hill Management Plan and agree in principle to its contents.

Discussions included the following:

- More emphasis is needed on how Herne Hill is natural area of outstanding beauty for the town and is a key feature.
- Appendices 1 to 5 is information that has been provided by outside representatives who sit on the Herne Hill Advisory Group.
- The plan needs to include Herne Hill's importance to the town and how it needs to be protected.
- The Management Plan is being drawn up to show how the 'hill' is going to be managed.
- Widening of the pathways will improve equality of access
- The gate at the 'Ridge path' was removed to improve equality of access.
- The Council's new volunteering policy which is being written up at the moment will include work on Herne Hill.
- Concerns were raised over badger damage to the 'Hill' and other locations in the town.

RESOLVED that the draft Herne Hill Management Plan is agreed in principle with the inclusion of information on:

- a) How the 'Hill' is an area of outstanding nature beauty
- b) The importance of the 'Hill' to the town
- c) How the 'Hill' will be protected.

Chair's Initials

Iminster Town Council

95. Financial Comparison and Virement

The Committee received information about the Open Spaces expenditure and commitments to date when compared with the 2013/14 budget.

Items discussed regarding this item included the following:

- The income on budget heading 412/2 is a grant from the County Council for flooding issues.
- The brass discs that have been purchased are for numbering the benches.

The report was noted.

96. Cemetery Wall Maintenance

The Committee was asked to consider the quotes for completing the remaining maintenance work to the cemetery wall and to decide on a schedule for this work

Discussion on this topic included the following:

- The priority of the order in which the work needs to be carried out is how it has been listed on the report.
- There are no savings for doing it all the work at once
- The neighbours of the cemetery will be informed what the schedule of work will be.
- The work will be funded from Reserves/Renewals and Provisions
- If the work is completed in one go it will stop the walls deteriorating further.

RESOLVED that all the maintenance work to the cemetery walls is completed and this work will be funded from the cemetery walls reserves fund and the seat and bins reserves fund.

97. Town Signs

Members were asked to consider the replacement of the five town signs at a cost not exceeding £395.00 + vat.

Items discussed during the consideration of this item included the following:

- The signs will be made from aluminium which is the same material as the existing signs
- The pictorial design will be unchanged from the existing signs

RESOLVED

- (i) that the five town signs are purchased at a cost not exceeding £395.00 + vat and
- (ii) funding for the purchase is from the town signs reserves/ renewals and provision fund.

98. Recreation ground fees

The Committee was asked to set the fees for the Funfair to use the recreation ground during 2014/15.

Issues discussed included the following:

- The fees for the Funfair to attend at Chard are much higher than this Council
- A small rise for inflation would be acceptable, as a large increase at this stage could result in Iminster losing the Funfair.
- For future meetings it would be beneficial if there is a clear policy to show how we increase the fees.

Chair's Initials

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RESOLVED that the fees for the Funfair are increased to £395 for June 2014 and to £385 for October 2014, and a refundable deposit is required for the amount of £400.

99 Iminster Experience - Gravity Go Carts

This item was not discussed as the Iminster Experience will no longer be running this event in June 2014.

100. Drains and Road Gullies

This item was discussed at the start of the meeting under matters relating to the open spaces action list

101. Permission to use the recreation ground.

The Committee was asked to consider granting permission for Mr Hughes to use the recreation ground for fitness classes.

Discussions on this topic included the following

- The previous request to hold a boot camp did not commence officially, as there was not enough interest, however the Committee was advised that several classes did take place. The Town Clerk will look into this matter.
- This request is to hold one session per week for one hour
- The Committee were satisfied with the terms and conditions that were set up before.
- The Town Clerk will make arrangements to meet Mr Hughes on the recreation ground to establish which area he would like to use.
- The sessions would need to be monitored, to make sure the conditions are respected - Councillor Swann volunteered to undertake this.

RESOLVED that subject to the Town Clerk having delegated authority to meet Mr Hughes and agree to the area in which these classes will take place permission is granted for Mr Hughes to hold a fitness class on the recreation ground, once a week, for one hour, under the original terms and conditions previously agreed by Council for fitness classes.

102. Skate park surface

This item was not discussed as information had not been received from the Outreach Leader of Iminster and Chard.

103. The Exclusion of Press and Public

The Committee agreed that agenda item 15, should be discussed without members of the public and press present, due to confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Members of the press and public left the room.

104 Open Spaces Work.

The Committee was asked to consider the following:

- a) Service standards
- b) Task frequencies
- c) Staffing structure - and to make a recommendation to the Resources Committee.

A Gantt chart compiled by the Senior Open Spaces Warden was distributed at the meeting. The Committee praise the Senior Warden for the hard work that has gone into producing this chart.

After discussing this topic in detail the following recommendation was made.

Chair's Initials

Iminster Town Council

RESOLVED to RECOMMEND to the Resources Committee that

- (i) The Council offers the current apprentice a full time permanent position, with a 3 scale point grading
- (ii) Should the need arise, e.g. staff absence, staff vacancy, agency staff will be taken on using the SSDC agency arrangement
- (iii) The Council actively seeks to recruit a new apprentice in June

RESOLVED

- (i) that the standards of work, as attached to these minutes as Appendix 1 be adopted for Open Spaces work
- (ii) that as part of the Open Spaces walkabout examples of good work standards and bad work standards are shown

The Meeting closed at 9.50pm

Chair's signature and date
