

Minutes of an Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on Thursday 20th July 2017 at 6pm in the Civic Centre Eckington

Attendance

Councillors: - C.A. Gare; K Deffley, E Fisher; C. Hunt and L. Kirton

Others: - Clerk R. Bullimore;
4 Members of the public

OS 65/17 Appointment of Chair
RESOLVED Councillor Gare was nominated and duly appointed as Chair of the Open Spaces Committee.

OS 66/17 Appointment of Vice Chair
RESOLVED Councillor Kirton was nominated and duly appointed as Vice Chair of the Open Spaces Committee.

OS 67/17 Apologies
RESOLVED to note apologies received from Councillors B Ridgway and J Ridgway. John Green Cemetery Supervisor (Holiday)

OS 68/17 Members of the Public
A member of the public asked if the Council would consider allowing them to purchase a bench for siting in the cemetery. Her 90-year-old nan with limited mobility would like to be able to sit next to her son's grave whilst her family tend the grave.

OS 69/17 Minutes
Minutes 52/17 – 64/17 of an Open Spaces Committee Meeting held 20th April 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record subject to Minute 60/17 the Blue grit allocation is available to all elderly and vulnerable people not just people in social housing. It was agreed that £200 would be allocated for the planting up of the new flower beds at the cemetery and Councillor Kirton will provide advice to the cemetery staff on the type of plants.

The Chair signed the Minutes.

OS 70/17 Open Spaces Committee Terms of Reference
RECOMMEND amendments to the terms of reference. a) To remove the power to decide. b) to remove the power to spend.

OS 71/17 Cemetery
a) Councillor Gare read the Cemetery Report: All pebbles and surrounds have been removed from the ashes plot on the new section, a gate has been fitted to one of the soil heaps the other two will be fitted shortly, six new flower beds have been planted up, the present burial area is estimated to be full by December 2017, the remainder of the beech saplings will be planted in January, the new pathway will be installed in February, unsightly plots will be tidied up, he is struggling to purchase top soil, the gates for the skip compound are made and require painting then they will be fitted.
RECOMMEND the newly planted flower beds to be watered regularly.

- b) Cemetery Inspection – Cuttings from a shrub have been left to rot at the side of a head stone which is not acceptable. The beech hedge and flower beds need watering. The ashes plot near the parking bays needs levelling. The other ashes plot needs weeding. There are a lot of inappropriate planting and artefacts on plots, the cemetery policy must be actioned. The hedges adjoining the cemetery need a good cut and should always be kept looking tidy. The soil bays have still not been gated or disguised, bins should be in good condition, emptied every day and the area around and under must be cleared. Paths and edges of roadways should be weeded, cleared / blown or sprayed as appropriate. The chapel of ease could look better if the area around was tidied, weeded and kept cleaner looking. The new beds are not planted up properly or raised and seem to have crept along the road. The skip compound is a disgrace and has been for too long, it now needs a rebuild through neglect. Steps should be taken to stop outside dumping use of the skip. The area around has odd bits of rubbish which have no place and could easily be tidied up. It is illegal to have an open fire or burn rubbish openly on a commercial site (the cemetery is) at any time. RESOLVED Clerk to set work targets and timescales for the work to be carried out.
- c) The Clerk and Councillors, Gare, Hunt and Kirton have visited Ulley Wild Burial cemetery. The cemetery is very popular, a footpath the wide enough for a vehicle has been mown through the area. Trees, shrubs and stones mark the burial sites. It looked very nice but it seemed over populated with trees and shrubs. RECOMMEND a wild burial site is created at Eckington cemetery. Expert advice to be sought for a design with recommendations on the variety and number of trees and shrubs.
- d) Cemetery Fees – RECOMMEND no burial fees for children up to the age of 16. Clerk to ask the RFO if the range of fees can be consolidated and agenda for the September Council meeting for approval.
- e) RECOMMEND the cemetery rules and regulations to be amended to allow people to maintain their grave and ashes plots and to allow appropriate items and plants. Notices to be placed on neglected plots informing the owners that all items will be removed and the area will be turfed over if the plot is not maintained to an acceptable standard. RECOMMEND applications to install benches are considered on their individual merit.
- f) A three-tiered fountain donated by a local business is to be split up into three sections and sited within the cemetery. The sections to be planted up with seasonal plants.
- g) Next cemetery inspection to take place Monday 4th September. Committee Members to recommend where to site the three sections of the water fountain.

OS 72/17 Allotments

There are nine people on the waiting list.

The Clerk and Councillors B Ridgway, Hunt and Gare have carried out an inspection of the allotments. Eviction letter to be sent to one Marsh Lane tenant, one tenant on School Street and four tenants at Landsbury Road. To recommend one tenant on School Street to give up half of his plot.

Water meters have been fitted to all the plots on School Street for the tenants

requiring water. Tenants will be charged £5 per annum to cover the cost of minor repairs. Clerk to inform tenants that they are responsible for the water meters and to recommend that they protect them from frost damage by wrapping them in bubble wrap or building a wooden box around them. The eucalyptus tree on School Street has been removed.

Severn Trent Water has connected the water supply at Marsh Lane. Tenants have agreed to pay a contractor to dig the trench to enable a water pipe to be laid to the plots who have requested water.

To approve a tenant's request to erect an 8' x 6' shed and a chicken coop for 6-8 chickens on a plot at Landsbury Road.

The four kittens at Ducksett Lane has been rehomed.

OS 73/17 Play Areas

The Committee considered quotations and funding options for the installation of two cradle swings and other pieces of equipment at Ridgeway and Darcy Road play areas. RECOMMEND accept the quote and option of applying for funding from Awards for All. Clerk to get a quote for new play equipment at Ash Crescent.

Play groups and schools to receive flyers to promote the play areas within the parish. Clerk to obtain quotes for sign posts to direct people to the play areas.

Committee consider a resident's request for the trees at Marsh Lane playing field to be reduced. Clerk to ask the District Council to inspect the trees.

There have been reports received about antisocial behaviour at Marsh Lane playing field. RESOLVED to monitor the situation.

The NEDDC picnic area and fishing pond at Ford is looking neglected. RECOMMEND the Parish Council contacts the District Council to ask if they would interested in working in partnership with the Parish Council, local groups and schools to apply for funding to upgrade the area.

Clerk informed the Committee that the Golden Ball field has not been cut by the District Council for eight weeks. Clerk to monitor throughout the season and to request a refund for any work in the maintenance contract that has not been carried out.

RECOMMEND accept a quote from a private contractor to cut the field next to Ida's Road play area. Work to start in spring 2018.

RESOLVED to note the Council has received a £3,215.14 credit note from the District Council for omitting to mark out the pitches or erecting the goal posts at Landsbury Road play area during 2016/17.

Councillor Deffley informed the Committee that he has been unable to find a supplier who make a graffiti wall.

Clerk informed the Committee that the District Council got the paint and the equipment at Emmet Carr Lane, Ida's Road and Ridgeway will painted this season.

OS 74/17 War Memorials

Clerk to get quotations to attach insets to the faces of the war memorial at Marsh Lane.

OS 75/17 Dog and Litter Bins

Parish Council handyman to empty the litter bins on the play areas weekly.

The litter bin outside the fancy dress shop on Market Street, Eckington is not being emptied on a Friday or Saturday. Hence the bin is overflowing during the weekend. Clerk to ask the District Council to include the bin in their maintenance schedule every Friday afternoon.

OS 76/17 Public Right of Way Footpaths

The footpaths in the parish are not being maintained. Suggest the Clerk puts a map of the footpaths in the noticeboard and a sign informing people how to report an issue and asking them to report any issues to the County Council.

Councillor Kirton informed the Committee that the County Council are trying to set up an agreement with Sitwell Estates to deal with a mass of issues instead of setting up individual agreements for every issue.

OS 77/17 Blue Bin Policy

Blue Bin Policy to be amended to offer grit to all elderly and vulnerable residents living in the parish of Eckington and to explain how people can be referred. Councillors Dye and Roberts have agreed to deliver the grit.

OS 78/17 Bus Shelters

Committee consider a quotation to fit new glass panels in the bus shelter at Birkhil estate. Clerk to ask for a quote to fit metal meshing.