



Minutes of the Meeting of the Operations Committee Held on Wednesday 21st June 2017 at 8pm In the Community Office

Present:

Councillors:

Bob West (BW)
Ian Hill (IH)
Roger Beattie (RB)
Tony Williamson (TW)
Tom Bindoff (TB)

Co-opted Member:

Jenny Wilkinson (JW)

Officer:

Kristina Tynan (KT)

68/17 Apologies for Absence

Terry Jackson, Fiona Paterson, Fergus Lapage, Rachel Huckvale

69/17 Minutes of the Meeting held on 27th May 2017 which were accepted by Council on the 13/6/2017 to be agreed as a correct record

Resolved: That these minutes are a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chair of this meeting.

70/17 Declarations of Interest

There were none notified.

71/17 Election of Vice-Chairman

Deferred to the next meeting.

72/17 Matters arising

There were none other than agenda items.

73/17 Update on Outstanding /Completed Issues

1. Unofficial path to Watcome Road in the corner of the Hill Road Car Park – **On-going**

2. Car Park Cleaning of this area – **on the list for the Community Payback Team.**

3. Painting of Community Office – **We have asked the Community Payback Team to do this. Bob Thomas will paint the ceiling.**

Diane Major (CPT) – will be arranging for the team to do the two jobs above soon. It was asked that they also be asked to scrape out the cobbles by the public conveniences. BW and KT will co-

ordinate the materials etc which will be needed for the jobs.

4. Car Park hatching opposite disabled bays – **Bob Thomas will do this in dry weather.**

5. Noticeboard on Charity Shop – **KT said that she had spoken to the Manager regarding this and they will be managing the notices on the board free of charge to residents.**

6. Update of Paddock Play Area Official Opening and Jo Cox Event held on 17/6/2017 - RH had sent the following report. *'It was fabulous, there were lots of people there and it showcased Watlington at its best. I want to thank the Tait family who came up with the original idea and ran the drinks and cakes table like pros, as well as thanking some of our very generous donors:*

- *Two very generous cash donations from residents meant we could hire a bouncy castle, mini race cars, giant jenga, croquet and giant connect 4.*
- *Cake donations from huge numbers of residents meant we had cakes a-plenty at the event and extra to deliver up to the care home.*
- *100 bottles of water and squash donations from the Co-Op kept us all vaguely cool and hydrated in the sweltering heat!*

Thank you to everyone else who helped too. It really was a great (if hot) day'.

Thanks were given to Rachel Huckvale and the Tait family for organising this event and also to Di Young for officially opening 'Teddy's Play Area' on behalf of the Backhouse family.

7. Defibrillator Training – **KT will organise this for September/October.**

8. Blood Donor Locations – **KT has contacted them and they have stated that they no longer have mobile units. The nearest locations to Watlington are Chinnor and Benson.**

74/17 Highway/Footpath/Tree Issues

1. **Trees in Watlington**

a) **Eighties Trees** – note from Tim Horton was attached to the agenda. TB reported that he has arranged to meet with Robert Barber (our Tree Warden) and look at these. He will report back to the next meeting. He also stated that the Environment Group have in the past put together a record of all trees in the Parish. KT will have a look for this report.

b) **Charter for Trees** –this was attached to the agenda. TB said that he thought that there was no need to sign up to this at the present as we are very lucky to have Robert Barber who is very experienced on our tree issues

2. **Footpaths**

a) **Footpath from War Memorial to Saunders Close** - TB referred to the correspondence letter letter No 1 below from OCC. This footpath will now be a designated footpath. It was thought that this should be officially named 'Black Horse Alley'. KT will ask SODC to put up a sign for the alley.

75/17 Open Spaces

1. Recreation Ground /Sports Field

a) **Dog Fouling** – We have received the following comments from the Football Club.

'We had a committee meeting on Monday and discussed this issue.

As previously discussed this is a very difficult issue, with all dog owners (of which there are many) strongly opposing any strict limitations on dogs at the playing fields. There are many dog owners within the football club membership too, so it is difficult to find solutions that will keep everyone happy. The football club do not want to be seen as the initiators of new rules that will make a lot of dog owners unhappy.

Having said that, this really is a serious health and safety issue and it would not be right to take no action at all.

We have agreed for the time being that at the very least what we can do is put up signs asking for owners to be considerate when bringing their dogs there. I am happy to design a sign in conjunction with the cricket club to reinforce this point. I think a couple of large professional signs on the main fence to the field, stating that these are Playing Fields and they should be respected etc will go some way to hopefully changing the mentality that it is not a free for all and that it is NOT OK to allow dogs to run around without any control over them. And it is certainly not acceptable to leave dog mess. We would like to work with WPC in arranging these.

Given consideration, as far as I can see the main options and pros/cons in this debate are:

- 1) Total dog ban – if properly enforced could eliminate problem completely, but hard to enforce at present and would upset a lot of people in the absence of other places for them to walk their dog, particularly for people who are less mobile. There is a habit of using the Rec for this and in the long-term we should look to offer alternative locations, to protect the only sports pitches in the town*
- 2) Dogs on leads – hard to enforce, although more dog owners may be able to live with this option*
- 3) New perimeter barrier – Could eliminate problem but is costly and permission would be required. May also be unpopular aesthetically. Potential good long-term solution and will also keep out rabbits.*
- 4) New signage – smaller costs and may not be completely effective but worth trying to raise awareness and show that we are trying to protect our pitches and our sports*
- 5) Do nothing – possibly the preference of many, but there are major issues to be addressed so inaction is not really an option*

If the amount of dog fouling can be halved even, that would be a measure of success here. I know it tends to get worse in the winter and the darker months though.

One other thing that could help would be the acquisition of a ‘poover’. Football volunteers may be willing to use this more readily than have to go round picking up dog mess, so it could become a little easier to live with. It is worth investigating costs and buying one on a trial.’

The above points raised were discussed. KT will investigate the costs of signs and will liaise with Keith Woolfson on wording. KT will also look into the cost of a standard sign.

RB and KT will investigate whether it is possible to rent a poover so we could see if this would be useful.

b) MUGA Proposal for Recreation Ground – RB is continuing to investigate this and has now received some quotes.

c) CCTV on Pavilion/Recreation Area – Chris Allen is looking at prices for doing this. KT will ask him for any information he has collected.

d) Cutting of verge entrance and Hedge on Sports Field – quote was attached to the Agenda from Owain Devey. Berinsfield has also been asked for a quote. The photos taken by Roger Beattie were also considered. After discussion it was agreed that the hedge cannot be cut until September and the net put up by the Football Club makes it difficult to cut the grass between the net and the hedge. It was agreed that we do not commission this work at this time. It was agreed that this be discussed in the October meeting.

RB said that he has concerns about the football pitches not being cared for. He has asked for their remedial plan for works on the pitches.

e) Half Pipe – TW said that he has spoken with a skateboarder about the half pipe and they are concerned about the studs becoming raised and not holding the surface together. BW said that he has

spoken to the Company who did the work previously on this equipment that they did not install it correctly. There could be a liability issue and BW said that their installation would never have worked and he will contact them again regarding this issue.

f) Ditch area on entrance to Recreation Ground – It was noted that there is a lot of rubbish in this area and that it could do with a good cut back. It was agreed that we ask the Community Payback Team to do this. It was noted that they only work on Mondays. TW and IH said that they could be available if any supervision is needed.

3) Other Areas

a. Triangle on Cuxham Road – Discussion of use of this space.

There was much discussion on this and the quote for the removal of the trees and clearance of this area was noted. It was noted that the adjoining resident has taken out the hedge. The option of selling it to the neighbour was also raised, following their letter to formally ask the Council to consider selling this land to them. BW suggested that Council could sell a part of it and keep a strip to put a bench on. TB said that open spaces in the town are very important and that we should take out the trees and regularly maintain it especially as more houses will be built on the Britwell Road side and this would be a good place to be able to stop on the way to and from the centre.

It was agreed to discuss this again at the next meeting and it was hoped that more information would be available. IH will speak to Nick Greaves about the land value.

b. Grass Cutting around gates and roundabout – RB said that Berinsfield have not cut the area around the gates to the town or the Cuxham Road roundabout. KT will send them an email regarding this.

c. Signs for Paddock – dogs on lead – KT to order these.

76/17 Property

1. Car Park

There were no issues raised for discussion.

2. Public Conveniences

a) Updating of the facilities – Trident have been commissioned. – SODC has responded. This has been emailed to Members. Anna Badcock is dealing with the SODC issue and KT will chase her up on this.

3. Parish Office

a) New Chairs for the Office – It was noted that there have been some chairs for sale from village halls. KT said that there were 8 red comfortable chairs for sale at the moment and she will get in touch with them regarding this. BW said that he felt it did not matter if chairs were different colours.

77/17 General Issues

a) Hearing Loops in WPC Buildings- TW is investigating this. KT reported that she has had an anonymous donation of £200 to use towards the installation on one in the Community Office.

b) Discussion of having more parking spaces on the High Street – The Committee stated that there would be nowhere to put any more spaces in the High Street.

TB said that there is an issue of people parking up by the Town Hall/Co-op and leaving their engines on which is not helping with the air pollution. He said if members see this happening to take a photo of

the vehicle. He said he waits until the person returns to the car and explains the situation to them.

c) **SODC Deep Clean –September** – Discussion of specific areas we would like to ask them to clean. Agreed to have a list for the next meeting.

d) **Annual Meeting Survey Results** – This was attached to the agenda. These were noted. IH said that regarding the question about dogs on the Sports Field, when this question was put on the Watlington Town Noticeboard Facebook page the results were very different.

78/17 Correspondence

1. **OCC – Definitive Map Modification Order** – Saunders Close to Chapel Street Footpath is now a definitive footpath- **Noted.**

2. KW – Cuxham Triangle and dangerous turn from Cuxham Road to Pyrton Lane – this was attached to the agenda.

79/17 Future Issues for Discussion/Implementation

1. **Sports Field Hedge Cutting** - October

2 **Enforcement of 2 Hour Bays** – When recommendations are received from the NP Infrastructure Report.

3. **Recycling Bins for the Town** – At an appropriate time.

80/17 Any Other Business

Operation Committee Terms of Reference – TB stated that there is an error in the draft terms. KT will correct these.

Walkabout – It was agreed to have one in July. BW/TB will organise date and time with KT.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.05PM