



Minutes of the Meeting of the Operations Committee Held on Wednesday 18th March 2015 At 11.00 am in the Community Office

Present:

Councillors:

Robert Barber – Vice-Chairman
Ian Hill
Tim Horton
Tony Williamson
Elizabeth Winton

Officer:

Kristina Tynan

In Attendance:

Keith Woolfson attended the meeting for the item on the Pavilion Car Park

Members of the Public

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27/15 Apologies for Absence
Bob West, Linda Nicholson, Neil Boddington

28/15 Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th February 2015 which were accepted by Council on the 10/3/2015 to be agreed as a correct record
Resolved: That these minutes were a correct record of this meeting and that they be signed by the Chairman.

29/15 Declarations of Interest
Agenda Item 7.ii and 7.v – TH declared a pecuniary interest in this as he is a member of Watlington in Bloom and the issue related to financial matters. He signed the 'Declaration of Interest' book and left the room for the vote on this item.

30/15 Matters arising
There were none other than agenda items.

31/15 Outstanding Issues
I) **Signs bent in Car Park** – Tom Bindoff has straightened the sign and it was agreed that a note be sent to him to thank him for doing this.

ii) **Traffic Survey at Christmas Common** – RB has marked up a plan showing potential locations that the equipment should be placed and KT will send this to OCC and request the speed survey to be done.

iii) **Posts on Christmas Common verge** –RB has marked up a plan and RB and KT will arrange for the posts to be installed.

iv) **Hedge and Scrub works – various locations-** Owain Devey has been commissioned to do these works and we have had an email from him with dates he will be doing the works. RB said that the bird nesting season has started and has taken professional advice. It was noted that the bird nesting season is from the 1st March – 1st September. TH said that in future we must prepare for winter work in the summer months and works should be an agenda item in June 2015.

Johnsons Alley Hedge

Resolved: That we hold off cutting this hedge until 1st September and ask Owain Devey to schedule it in for September. To ask him also to keep the price the same. However it was agreed to ask OD to cut the hedge around the light which is now covered.

Watcombe Road Hedge

RB said this hedge is quite thin and it should be possible to ensure there are no bird nests present before cutting this hedge.

Resolved: That we delegate RB to give the go ahead to have this hedge cut if he is happy that there are no nests present. It could be possibly cut on the 27th March. RB to liaise with OD.

RB stated that the work to the Willow hedge in the Paddock, Allotment hedge, removal of saplings at the back of the public conveniences and the hedge by the ½ pipe are all able to be cut at the present time but to ask OD to be careful when he proceeds with these works.

It was noted that OD did not include the hedge by the football lights in his quote. He has offered to clear the foliage around these lights at no extra expense.

Back of Public Conveniences – TH said that the earth in this location is now about 1m in height and it was suggested that we ask WiB if this is something that they would clear.

Hawthorne Tree by ½ pipe – TH said that there is an isolated Hawthorne in this location which needs some cutting back. RB said he discussed this with OD when on-site with him and it will be done.

32/15 OCC Issues update

1. **Pavement on Britwell Road beyond The Goggs** – The committee had looked at what OCC have done on this road. RB said that he looked at it and is completely perplexed about this. At the Full Council meeting Stephen Harrod said that he would ask Keith Stenning to look at this and it would be better to discuss this with them when they visit the site.

KT to email SH to ask him when the site meeting is taking place.

2. **Pound Close/Pyrton Lane issue** – KT had requested an update from OCC but has not received one to date. It was noted that 2 days after OCC cleared it water was running in the road again. OCC have a proposal to put some dye down to try to see what the problem is.

33/15 Open Spaces

a. Recreation Ground

i) **Dog Fouling Issues** - Stoop and Scoop/ Green Dog Walker Scheme/Dog Fouling Enforcement.- EL has asked about the enforcement aspect of this.

EL stated that she has looked at the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which states that Local Authorities have a duty of care to clear dog waste up. TH said this Act has very strong regulations for

District Councils to enforce on public land whether or not they own it and that we could approach SODC and ask for additional services to clear the recreation ground of dog mess.

WiB have done a lot of litter collection in this area and they collected 17 dog waste bags from the hedge line of the Sports Field. It was stated that this is worse than not picking up as the bags do not rot down. RB said that this is a big problem in lots of areas, people do not put the bags in dog bins. TH said that one possibility is to put another dog bin in this location, possibly in the Pyrton Lane/Shirburn Road area. TW said that if the bottom of the hedge was cleared it may be less likely to happen as the area would be more visible and the dog bags would be seen. It was thought that this would not be practicable. TH said that this hedge has got tremendously wide.

It was agreed that this be an agenda item for the April meeting and that some work on costings be done including the cost of installing another dog bin and the associated costs of emptying it (KT). The best location for a dog bin also to be considered.

ii) **Winter work on Pavilion beds by WiB** – A note had been received from WiB suggesting some planting in the pavilion beds, after consulting Rick Bennett of Babylon Plants as to what plants would work best in this shady location which would cost £102.75.

It was noted that WiB also plans on planting some bulbs in this location.

After discussion it was:

Resolved: That the plants from Babylon Plants are ordered at a cost of £102.75 as long as WiB are prepared to keep an eye on the plants and do any necessary maintenance to them.

iii) **Recreation Ground Car Park** – A scaled plan for existing and proposed car park spaces was attached to the agenda.

KW said that on a typical Saturday people have to park on the sports field as there is no room in the car park but said that some line marking of spaces in the car park would improve the situation. He also said the lack of lighting is a problem in the evening especially in the winter months with parents picking up children. The Football Club would like to have lights in each corner of the car park and they are also looking into relocating the container in the car park which is used by the Youth Club at the moment.

RB said that the planned provision of the extra spaces under the line of the trees - owned by the Parish Council and arguably the most significant line of trees that the Parish Council controls - appears to require the removal of a least 2 of those trees. Even if they were to remain any parking within their root zone would probably result in their slow demise due to compaction of the roots. There should be no parking anywhere under the tree canopy.

RB said he visited the site today and had a look at the entrance track from Shirburn Road and thought potentially that parking could be sited in the area to the left of the track on the bank before the ditch, if the bank was flattened. He thought feathered parking might be possible but the measurements would have to be checked. This would entail permission being given by Beechwood Estates and somewhere would have to be found to put the soil. RB said that lighting is a very sensitive issue, as we would not want to urbanise this area and cause light pollution however it was recognised that there is a problem to be addressed here especially in view of the increasing use of the car park after dark.

KW said that the Football Club have some floodlights in stock and perhaps it would be possible to use them and the lighting would only be used when the car park was in use.

TW said how much work to the car park could be done without affecting the roots of the trees? KW said that this can be re-looked at.

IH said that the car park surface is not uniform and would it be possible to mark up spaces with the existing surface?

TH stated that he was not sure that the plan would add an enormous amount of spaces to what is actually needed and endorsed that nothing should be done which would affect tree roots. He also said that 20 years ago the possibility of if something was built in the Lampits Close was looked at and then some space could be given over the recreational/sports use. The recreation and sports area is very important and needs more car park spaces than currently exist. The ditch area should be explored and perhaps also moving the post and rail fence to behind the goal area and this area could then be used

for extra car parking. It would be worth looking at both sides of the track area. TH went on to say that lighting would be the most expensive element. There is lighting on the outside of the pavilion but it shines on the play area and not on the car park. He also said that the car park will need resurfacing at some point in time. TH also made reference to the fact that no rent has come in this month from the sports sections.

RB said that the Committee would be well disposed to try and help the car park situation but also pointed out that WPC have no money presently budgeted for any works. TH said that there are possible grants that could be applied to. RB thanked KW for attending on this item.

WPC would need to have a clear plan in place before Beechwood Estates could be approached. Following discussion it was:

Resolved: To have a site meeting with RB, TH, NB, IH and Keith Woolfson + another football representative and cricket club representatives in the daytime and then to continue the meeting if necessary in the Pavilion.

iv) **Playbark for zip-wire area** – Quotes have been received from three companies. After discussion it was:

Resolved: That we order 30 cubic metres of playbark from CPA Horticultural at a cost of £1158.00

v) **Sports Field** – This item was discussed above in item 33/15 item i) and ii).

b) Paddock

1. **Fencing options/Hedging** – There have been 3 options of fencing looked at and after discussion it was agreed that we should go with the metal fencing option which would cost approximately £1650.

Resolved: That TH and KT put in a formal application to the SODC Infrastructure funding for this and they will actively pursue other funding opportunities.

It was noted that the hedging which has been agreed to is only sold by the pallet of 50 which costs £285. This might not cover the entire length but should at least cover the straight run. There has been a donation of £200 towards this hedging. It was agreed that the hedging be also added to the Infrastructure grant application. It was agreed that this planting could be done before the metal fencing is put in as the existing chestnut paling would be enough to protect the plants.

A note about this and the removal of the willow hedge to be put in the next edition of the Watlington Times.

2. **Play equipment** – Report has been received and KT will go through with Bob West.

3. **Outside Paddock Area – Area to the Library and High Street** – It was noted that this area is never swept or cleaned. This area belongs to OCC. It was noted that WiB have occasionally swept this area. After discussion it was:

Resolved: To write to OCC asking if they could address this area with regular sweeping and cleansing.

34/15 Property

a. Car Park

i) **Car Park Entrance/Watcombe Road Works Co-op**– Works have been completed. It was noted that these works were done in one day. TH said that the surface is good, the local residents are happy and it has made a vast improvement to this area. He said that he had hoped that the kerbs were going to be re-set in the correct position but this did not get done and also the drain cover did not get re-set they only re-tarmacked around it. We have asked the contractor for a price to put in a bollard at the corner as they said they had a low cost solution and TH will chase this up (It was noted that a new bell bollard would cost £800).

TH was thanked for all his work with getting the Co-op to fund these works. TH said he would like to go back to Bryan Cranston at the Co-op and say that not all the works that they said they would

do have been done

Resolved: That TH to continue having a dialogue with Bryan Cranston, through the Clerk and also to continue discussions with Lee Pave regarding installation of a bollard.

It was noted that the drain cover in question is a GPO installation and it was thought we should address this issue with British Telecom.

ii) **Works to Drains** – This needs to be looked at again with experts on site. TH suggested that one option would be to ask OPC (who did the drain survey) to give us some costings for solutions to the problem. We need to look at all possible solutions.

Resolved: That a meeting is set up with OPC, RB, TH and Bob West to discuss this issue on site and report back to the next meeting.

iv) **Marking out the 2 Hour Car Park Spaces**

Resolved: That we get costing for marking out the 2 hour bays in red and also to have a stencil saying '2 hours only' put on in each 2 hour space.

As the meeting had now lasted 2 hours it was:

Resolved: *That the meeting continue for another 15 minutes only*

b. Public Conveniences

i) **Updating of the facilities** –BW/TH to update regarding draft tender of works. To be discussed at the next meeting. TH said that the windows could do with replacing. RB suggested replacing the existing Crittall windows like-for-like or using wooden windows rather than plastic as the toilets are in the conservation area.

ii) **Cleaning Regime** – It was noted that our volunteer, Jenny has done a fantastic job in deep cleansing these facilities.

Resolved: That all members have a look at the public conveniences before the next meeting.

35/15 Water Treatment Outfall Monitoring Group - Further discussion following comments at Full Council. This issue was discussed and TH said that this issue is very important with Watlington residents. RB stated that as there is already a major campaign on this with much expertise in the existing Watlington Watercourses Project Group he is worried about duplication of work and confusion caused by overlapping bodies. However the Parish Council could exert an important influence on other bodies when required. IH commented that this issue is very broad and extensive at a time when the Parish Council is already fully stretched and that this issue is being dealt with elsewhere. RB said that regarding the Neighbourhood Plan, the sewerage plant is being talked about and information needs to be gathered and the right actions to be agreed before extra housing is discussed.

After further discussion it was:

Resolved: To not proceed with the issue of a Water Treatment Outfall Monitoring Group at this time.

TH said that this gives him the green light as an individual to do what he wants on this issue as the issues he circulated to the existing Watercourses Group has not resulted in any actions on the issues he raised.

36/14 General Issues

1. **Summer Sports Programme** – KT has sent a letter to SODC on this but no reply has been received. KT has chased up.

2. **Phone Box at Christmas Common** – TH said that WiB will be contacting residents in May.
3. **Howe Road and Accidents** –Response received from Mark Francis, OCC which states' *I looked at the site, it would be possible to install chevrons but unfortunately I currently have no budget for signing works, I'm afraid I will have to wait to see what funding is available in the new financial year'*
4. **Footpath W13** – OCC have started work on this footpath.
5. **Environment Agency Grants for surveying culverts** – *To be discussed at the next meeting.*
6. **Streetlife** – Asking if we could introduce them to local groups . They have just launched in Didcot and are a new local community website for South Oxfordshire. Visit www.streetlife.com - *To be discussed at the next meeting.*
7. **Grass Cutting in Letts Alley** – A resident has asked if we could add this area to our grass cutting regime *To be discussed at the next meeting.*
8. **Request from Youth Club** – Asking for permission in put up some Graffiti boards – see attached. *To be discussed at the next meeting.*
9. **Junction 6 Cleaning**– TH reported that cleansing in this area will be increased – Bins will be emptied three times a week and the area will be litter picked on a fortnightly basis.

37/15 Correspondence

1. OCC Countryside Officer – Information regarding Footpath 13 – Noted.

38/15 Future Issues for Discussion

Items for next meeting are shown in the minutes above.

39/15 Any Other Business

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 1.14PM