



Minutes of the Meeting of the Operations Committee Held on Wednesday 16th November 2016 at 8pm in the Community Office

Present Councillors: Bob West (BW) – Chair
Tom Bindoff (TB) – Vice-Chair
Roger Beattie (RB)
Ian Hill (IH)
Rachel Huckvale (RH)
Terry Jackson (TJ)
Stephanie Van de Pette (SvP)

The Minutes were taken by RH

100/16 Apologies for absence

Jon Lorimer, Tony Williamson

101/16 Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th October 2016 which were accepted by Council on the 8/11/2016 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 Chairman.

102/16 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest notified.

103/16 Matters arising

There were no matters arising other than agenda items.

104/16 Outstanding issues

1. **Unofficial path to Watcome Road in the corner of the Hill Road Car Park** – TB reported that he has cut down the ivy and estimates that there are two hours of work still to be done by himself and BW. They are determined to schedule this in before the next meeting. TB noted that the car park leaves need to be swept up – this should be an agenda item for December's meeting.

2. **Puddle by gate at Library end – this has now been done.** TB reported that it seems to be working – a puddle following heavy rain dispersed quickly. TB requested that Bob Thomas should prioritise keeping leaves off the strip. BW noted that the edge will need to be checked regularly to ensure that it does not become a trip hazard – it may need shingle at a later date.

3. **2 Trees in Paddock – CwT have been commissioned to do these works. Notice of Intent sent.** This usually takes six weeks so no progress expected as yet.

4. **Trees at Gorwell/Brook Street - CwT have been commissioned to do these works. Notice of Intent sent.** This usually takes six weeks so no progress expected as yet.

5. **Trees at Cuxham Road/Willow Way – CwT have approached OCC on this issue and are awaiting a response.** TB requested that KT should add this to the list of outstanding OCC issues and should ask Steve Harrod to follow this up.

105/16 Highway/footpath/tree issues

1. **Trees in Watlington**

a. Management Plan for all Watlington Parish Council trees – awaiting quote from Martin Gammie. Any other discussion. TB summarised the situation following a request for clarification from SvP – Martin Gammie has suggested that we pay an annual sum for tree work and he will then manage all the trees for which we are responsible, prioritising the trees that are most in need of work each year. SvP has reviewed the plan and is comfortable with its recommendations in principle. Following discussion of the likely cost each year, it was agreed that a sum of £3,000 will be needed on an annual basis.

RECOMMENDATION TO FINANCE COMMITTEE: That the committee consider allocating £3,000 annually for a tree management plan.

2. **Updates on any other issues.** None.

106/16 Open spaces

1. Recreation ground

a. Sports Field grass cutting – update. No update available in KT's absence.

b. Hedge between recreation ground and allotments – quote received. Details of all quotes received were unknown in KT's absence, but after discussion of the urgency of the issues it was:

Resolved: that the work should be carried out with a maximum cost of £400.

2. Paddock

a. New play equipment project - fencing update. RH reported that KT had contacted the Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association (OPFA), whose representative confirmed that there is no specific guidance on the distance of fencing from play equipment as long as fencing is not within the fall area of any piece of equipment. The OPFA representative suggested that we check with our Playground Inspector, but in KT's absence it was unclear whether this has been done – RH will follow this up. RH noted that Playdale specified 2m of clearance between the fence and the equipment, but that their plan has no dimensions or specific measurements and so is hard to follow accurately. BW and TB agreed to measure the distances exactly and create a usable plan. TB noted that the fence needs to be in place to allow the hedge to be planted in the early part of the New Year, so there is some urgency to this issue. RH reported that KT has said funding is in place for the fencing. After discussion of the aesthetics of the fence corner at the Library end it was:

Resolved: that BW, TB and RH should liaise with KT to ensure that the Inspector is happy with the accurate plans, and then order the curved fencing as appropriate.

On a related subject TJ and SvP reported that Watlington in Bloom have visited the site and have a wider area than expected in which to plant bulbs. They will go ahead and do this.

b. Launch of new play equipment – RH. RH reported that it has been difficult to find a date for this especially in the run up to Christmas. RH suggested waiting until the fence is in place and then holding a launch event in the spring. SvP suggested that this could tie in with a launch or other event for the new Children's Centre.

3. Other areas

1. Triangle on Cuxham Road – discussion on this piece of land. RB reported that he has measured the land at roughly 15m wide at the front, 2m wide at the rear and 12m deep. There was much discussion about whether the land should be offered for sale or whether it should be developed in some way as a community open space. It was agreed that this issue requires further investigation and that a full proposal will need to be developed in order to move forward in either direction.

107/16 Property

1. Car Park

Johnson's Alley – hedge cutting - this work has been scheduled in for 14th December 2016. RB noted that the hedge needs cutting at the Hill Road car park entrance and requested that KT check that it is scheduled for cutting soon.

2. Public conveniences

1. Updating of the facilities – discussion on final arrangements, colours etc. RB reported that he is waiting for a quote on ceramic urinals, rather than metal. TJ noted that the quotes to refurbish the floor have still not been finalised but requested that, where the terrazzo floor is broken, it should be replaced to match the rest of the floor as closely as possible. After much discussion on colour it was agreed that the powder-coated windows, disabled door and internal doors will be dark/racing green, with black as a second option if a suitable green is not available.

2. Public conveniences – update on cleaning regime – attached. All Councillors expressed their gratitude to the cleaner for her excellent work and agreed to ask KT to give her a bouquet of flowers or other suitable gift at Christmas, on the Parish Council's behalf. RB reported that a plumber has been instructed to replace the broken urinal sensor.

RB also showed a photograph of the Pavilion changing room toilets, which were filthy. BW suggested that they might need to be professionally cleaned. RB is looking into a specific cleaning product.

3. Community Office

1. Painting of office – the Finance Committee has been asked to consider this at the next meeting. The quotes that had been received should be sent to the Finance Committee.

108/16 General issues

1. Emergency Plan – review for 2016 and to nominate an Operations member (previously Linda Nicholson – the current Emergency Plan was attached to agenda. BW agreed to be the representative for the Operations Committee. There was discussion about the other vacant representative roles: IH suggested that KT could ask Angie Paterson about the Church contact, and RB said that he would ask the surgery to update their details.

2. Environmental issues – TJ and SvP to update. TJ will be running an Environment Stall at the Christmas Fair and asked for volunteers to help her set up in advance.

3. Red kites – RB. TJ reported that she is creating a leaflet with input from Cathy Rose at the Chiltern Conservation Board (CCB). The leaflet may be funded by the CCB or by a group of Parishes. TJ said that Cathy is writing diary entries for the Watlington Times to try to educate residents about issues with feeding the kites. SvP suggested creating a Red Kites page under the Tourist Information section of the website. TJ stressed that there are two separate problems – residents feeding the kites in town and wildlife/bird photographers feeding them on the Hill.

4. Winter Maintenance Plan. SvP said that she would draft a Winter Readiness Plan outlining the Parish Council's responsibilities in the case of wintry weather, and stating a list of priority work for Bob Thomas. BW and IH noted that salt stocks are still in place from last year.

109/16 Promotion of issues

1. Message in a Bottle – promotion of this – SvP. SvP asked that this emergency contact initiative whereby those who live alone keep contact details in a bottle in their fridge be publicised via WPC channels. RB stated that the bottles are already available in the Parish Office and said that notice of this will be included in the Watlington Times and in leaflets in the surgery.

2. Priority service for vulnerable residents during power of water failure – SvP. SvP queried whether this was in place and RB stated that the surgery holds a list of vulnerable people.

3. Promotion of warning from Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue over white goods – SvP. SvP will ensure that the relevant information is uploaded to the website.

110/16 Correspondence

1. Berinsfield – end of cutting season – attached. Noted. There was a consensus that members are happy with their service.

2. J Beard – Sports Field – attached. IH agreed to ask the sports club to clean up their rubbish behind the container, and to be careful to dispose of all rubbish properly in future. It was agreed that KT's response to the letter should acknowledge the writer's environmental concerns.

111/16 Future Issues for Discussion/Implementation

1. Cobbles outside public conveniences – BW is looking into this.

2. Enforcement of 2 hour bays – when recommendations are received from the NP Infrastructure Report. TB summarised the reports findings including the suggestion that more of the parking spaces should be identified as two hour bays, prioritising shoppers. TB showed one of the parking discs that could be used to indicate length of stay, with occasional fines in place to enforce this. RH expressed concern about the impact of more two hour bays on residential parking especially if the freight clearway is imposed. BW asked that KT seek advice on what can be done about abandoned vehicles and noted that one van has not moved for almost a year. BW suggested that the PCSO may be able to advise. There was much debate about how much of the car park should be two hour bays, and about whether the terms and conditions could be better summarised to fit on a sign in the car park. It was agreed that any change to the number of two hour bays would require a full investigation and impact study, and so it was:

Resolved: that the Strategy Committee be asked to consider this issue in greater depth.

3. Car Park marking out – awaiting plan from KW.

4. Recycling bins for the town – at an appropriate time.

112/16 Any Other Business

TB reported that the culvert in Brook Street is to be checked for blockages following recent flooding. It was agreed that KT to formally request a survey of the culvert in Brook Street to check for blockages following recent and repetitive flooding.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9.58PM

