

Minutes of the Meeting of the Operations Committee Held on Wednesday 27th June 2012 at 10.30am in the Community Office

Present:

Councillors:

Barry Adby – Chairman
Ted Backhouse – Vice-Chairman
Tim Horton
Robert Barber
Tony Williamson
Ian Hill

Co-opted Member:

Linda Nicholson

Officer:

Kristina Tynan

Members of the Public:

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60/12 Apologies for Absence
Roger Beattie

61/12 Minutes of the Meeting held on 29th May 2012 which were accepted by Council on the 11/06/2012 to be agreed

Minute 57/12 to have 'Tim Horton' removed and 'The Committee' inserted.

Resolved: That with the change above the Minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

62/12 Declarations of Interest

Tim Horton declared an interest in the Tree on the Recreation Ground item as the Jubilee Committee have pledged a tree and he is the Chairman of this Committee. He took no part in the discussion on this issue, signed the 'Declaration of Interest' book and left the room for this item.

63/12 Matters arising

There were no matters arising other than agenda items.

64/12 Outstanding Issues

Letter to BT re leylandis has been sent and awaiting a reply.

65/12 Property

Car Park

Hedge on Johnsons Alley – Robert Barber reported that he has been to visit this area and showed the committee the photographs he had taken. Discussion took place on this and it was noted that the hedge is higher than the lights and the hedge needs to be seriously managed by pushing back the width of the hedge and reducing it's height. It was also stated that any works could not be done until the 1st August due to the bird nesting season not being finished until this date. It was noted that these works have been given permission to be done by Full Council.

Resolved: That we reduce the width of this hedge (Car Park and Watcombe Road sides) and reduce the height to 10ft.

The Clerk to write to the residents affected to let them know these works will be done.

Discussion also took place regarding the leylandi hedge on the BT site and the part of the hedge which they own adjacent to Johnson's alley. It was noted that we are awaiting a reply from BT on this. It was thought that once we receive a reply. Robert Barber and Tim Horton will request to meet BT on site to discuss what the best solution to this area would be.

Area behind Recycling Bin area – Robert Barber had also taken some photographs of this area. Linda Nicholson stated that this is a lovely bit of wood which she has always called the Magic Wood and thinks this area of town is very special and should not be changed.

A vote was taken on whether this area should be left as it is, of which two councillors abstained and it was:

Resolved: That this area should remain as is with the litter cleared up
It was also agreed that the opening should remain and should not be closed up as many people use it as a short cut.

Rubbish around recycling bins- It was noted that we had received an email and photographs of this area showing the dreadful state this area was in. Further to this the Clerk contacted BIFFA and our District Councillor, Angie Paterson and the rubbish was cleared and the area swept the next day. However it was noted that this is an on-going problem. The bins get emptied every Friday but by this time there is lots of rubbish, including TV's, chipboard etc left. The bins are marked re-cycling but mostly the rubbish is not able to be recycled due to all sorts of non-recycling being put in them. It was also noted that there seems to be a lot of trade waste. The regular Friday collector reports most Fridays to the office and states which items he is unable to collect and how much rubbish there has been left around the bins. He also checks items to see if there are any identifying details.

The Clerk has contacted BIFFA, SODC and the Flytipping Department. The Flytipping department has installed camera signs up there but this does not seem to have any affect on the problem. After discussion it was:

Resolved: That the Clerk look into having the bins emptied on another day of the week as well as Fridays and also to speak to SODC about installing cameras in this areas.

Watcombe Road Entrance – The Co-op has been written to asking them to re-instate the area by the footpath to the car park. Discussion took place on this and the following was agreed.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we write to OCC asking them to adopt this path from Hill Road to the Car Park footpath entrance.

Survey – Ian Hill had produced some graphs for the information we had previously collected on empty spaces about. However the car park was only checked twice a day. He said we need more regular data, ideally an hourly check. He said he would organise this to happen. It was thought that a number of photographs at the same locations each hour would be a good idea as we could see what cars were parked and for how long. At each check the number of empty spaces will also be counted. IH and KT to liaise regarding the organisation of this.

Public Conveniences

Roof – This work has been commissioned and should be completed before the next meeting.

Future improvements – Ted Backhouse had found out information on toilets, urinals and wash units. Tim Horton has also previously given out some information. It was noted that in December 2011 Full Council had previously given permission for the committee to spend up to £6,000.00. It was agreed that the wash units should remain as they are in good order. The cost of replacement units were noted as being in the region of £1600 each. There was much discussion and agreed the following:

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we purchase 2 toilets for the ladies and 2 urinal bowls and one 1 toilet for the mens . The bowls to replace the existing panel urinal. To spend up to £5,000 which will include any works needed to install these.

Car Park Order – The Clerk reported she has spoken with John Backley at SODC today. He advised that to put a car park order in place, we need firstly to draft one up, send it to all the Statutory Consultees eg Police, Highways, Emergency Services. Once they have sent their comments back, which must be incorporated into the Order, we then have to advertise it to the public in a newspaper.

There seems to be no other cost involved other than advertising. He has said he will send the SODC procedure to the Council.

It was noted that the Clerk produced a draft order in 2007 and the committee to be circulated with the draft. This item to be an agenda item for the next meeting.

66/12 Open Spaces

Recreation Area

Ash Tree and New Tree Pavilion – It was noted that quotes have been requested for work to this tree. Tim Horton reported that the Jubilee Committee

have pledged a tree to be put in this area.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we plant an English Oak tree in commemoration of the Queens Jubilee, which would be supplied by the Jubilee Committee in this area with a view to it being the landmark tree in this location once the Ash tree, which is nearing the end of its life, dies.

Dog Waste Dispensers – Ted Backhouse has researched these and a dispenser will cost £79 and 800 bags will cost £26.00.

Resolved: That we purchase 1 dispenser and 800 bags at a net cost of £105.00

Porta-loo in Recreation Ground

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we hire a porta-loo for the Recreation Area for the Summer Holiday period

Watlington in Bloom – The Judging will take place on 4th July 2012. The WIB group will be attending to the tubs in the town, having a litter-pick on the weekend prior to the visit. WIB have an emphasis this year on private/public gardens and will be visiting Orchard Walk, Lilac's Place for example. Tom Bindoff will be escorting the judges with Tim Horton. WIB have also purchased some yellow vests with WIB on the back.

67/12 General Issues

OCC TRO B480 and B4009 Road Closures– 20th June 2012 –It was noted that these have been postponed to September 2012 and OCC will also look at drainage issues in this area.

Triathlon –Tim Horton reported that he attended the OALC AGM at which a Swyncombe Parish Councillor brought up the issue of the Triathlon. Robert Barber also said that he had spoken to the County Councillor, Caroline Newton on this issue. John Howell has taken this up and sent a letter to all Parish Councils affected by this. The Liaison Officer on this issue at OCC is Peter Ronald. After discussion it was :

Resolved: That we organise a meeting with Peter Ronald to discuss the 2013 Triathlon which OCC have said will be a different route for 2013. However it is believed that in 2014 the route will possibly be the same as for 2012. All neighbouring Parish Councils to be invited. This meeting to be arranged for before the end of July if possible.

War Memorial – We have received a letter from the War Memorials Trust, which is the national charity dedicated to the protection and conservation of our war memorial heritage. They state that they were recently contacted by a member of the public who was concerned about the condition of the stonework of Watlington war memorial, High Street. In photographs they have dating from 2010 the memorial appears to have been pointed with hard cementitious mortar which was failing in places and therefore re-pointing is

required. They generally recommend that historic stone is pointed with lime mortar and have attached a helpsheet on this for further guidance. From the photographs there are also areas of stone damage which require repair. The photographs we have are limited so there may be some other areas which require attention. They have written to bring this to our attention and to ask whether the Parish Council has any plans to address the condition of the memorial.

It was noted that this Trust administers grant schemes for the conservation and repair of war memorials which cannot be funded retrospectively.

Following discussion it was agreed the following:

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we agree to seek some quotations from experts in pointing in lime mortar and when we have the quotes to seek a grant for this work from the War Memorial Trust and then get the work that is needed to the War Memorial attended to.

Flooding in Britwell Road – It was noted that we have had many comments on this problem and have reported it to OCC who have said they will look at the drains when the weather is better. However this has always been a problem and we first reported it in 2006. It was noted that the pipe is not large enough to cope with the amount of water which was put in by the developer of Quarrington Place. This problem is affecting a lot of residents in this area.

Resolved: That we write to OCC to support Mr Hurst's quest for some action to be taken on this by OCC. That we ask for a detailed assessment of the problem and what actions they will be taking.

Mr Horton to draft a letter on this.

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68/12 Correspondence

1. Mrs Harvey – **re Paper Shop** – This letter was discussed and it was noted that this was looked at by Angie Paterson, our District Councillor. It is a concern for lots of residents and the Council has received many comments about the poor condition of this property and it being an eye-sore in the middle of the High Street. It was noted that this property is also a unit of accommodation as well as a shop.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we write to the Chief Executive of SODC asking that he intervenes over the continuing vacancy of the former Paper Shop and ask his advice as to whether compulsory purchase through the District Council is now an appropriate means of relieving the problem of this site.

2. John Howell MP – Triathlon - **Discussed above.**

3. SODC – re Tree Preservation Order No 127/2009- **Noted**

4. Mr Hall – re Couching Street parking – **Have passed onto TVP and the Clerk has replied to his letter.**

5. Conservation Officer-War Memorials – **Discussed above**

6. Mr Hurst – re Flooding in Britwell Road – **Discussed above**

69/12 Future Issues for Discussion

Car Park Order - July

Mansle Gardens Entrance - September

Walkabout – July – Members to contact the Clerk if they have specific areas they wish to be put on the route.

70/12 Any Other Business

Thorn Tree at Barbers Cross – This has been pruned by OCC

Re-seeding of an area in the Paddock – This still needs to be done, the Clerk to try to arrange that this be done asap.

Keys to Community Buildings – Tim Horton asked if the keys could be labelled more clearly. The Clerk and Ted Backhouse to review this.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 12.15 PM