

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee held in the Town Hall on Monday 5 October 2021 at 6.45pm

Present: Cllr A Spencer (Chair)
Cllr A Rea
Cllr L Rea
Cllr T Lannin
Cllr R Wilson
Cllr L Budd

In attendance: Cllr S Hladkij (Town Mayor)
Mr J Parsons (Town Clerk)
Mrs J Gilbert (Assistant Town Clerk)
Skate South Devon CIC and Filham Bike and Skate Park
Members (3)

A public participation session took place from 6.45pm to 7.23pm

PA21/022 **APOLOGIES:** No apologies were received.

PA21/023 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

PA21/024 **SITE VISITS:** The outcome of the site visits was reviewed and Members considered the following urgent works needed (copy previously circulated).

The Chair highlighted three main items he regarded as urgent; the goalposts in MacAndrews Field, the play gates in Victoria Park and the Kings Gutter tree which was blocking the path. Cllr Hladkij queried if it would be possible to carve steps out of the tree. Cllr Wilson queried why it could not be cut and removed, however the Town Clerk responded that it was too big and there are issues with safety. He would be performing a site visit with the Parks Ranger, and commented that the steps were a nice idea.

Cllr Lannin queried if the money for green projects could be used and if MacAndrews Field had its own pot of money. The Town Clerk confirmed that there is £300 allocated for general maintenance in MacAndrews Field, and the goalposts were previously repaired by a company free of charge for the community however they did need to now get them welded up permanently.

Cllr Hladkij suggested that she could try and obtain P3 funding for the leat works from Stowford Mill to the viaduct from the next P3 application bid. Cllr Spencer added that it would be useful to have quotes for the next meeting.

Cllr L Rea suggested that it would be helpful to have costs split out for the general maintenance in-house work and the bigger projects, for

example Orchid Avenue. Cllr Wilson advised that there used to be a work plan on a spreadsheet so it could be decided what is needed when it comes to setting the precept. The Town Clerk responded that he would investigate bringing this format to the next meeting.

Cllr Budd raised the issue of the shabby carpet in the chapel. The meeting discussed the issue of disturbing the floor which comprises concrete flooring sealed with bitumen asbestos with vinyl floor tiles on top. It was considered futile cleaning the carpet for it to become dirty within a short space of time. The committee agreed that vinyl flooring on top of the vinyl tiles would be more durable and would not cause a disturbance to the asbestos. Cllr L Rea questioned whether public money should be used if the chapel is not used very often. Cllr Rea added that the committee needs to be mindful that there are cracks in the building currently being monitored, and it would be foolhardy to spend money before the current issues are identified.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to receive and note the information and:

- (i) for the Town Clerk to bring a work plan to the next meeting highlighting costs in preparation for setting the budget;
- (ii) to progress the works in the Site Visits Summary prioritised by the Chair, namely:
 - the MacAndrews Field Goal Posts to be welded;
 - Victoria Park Play Area Gates to be refurbished;
 - The Town Clerk and Parks Ranger to identify solutions regarding the tree blocking the Kings Gutter footpath, including exploring carving steps into the tree;
- (iii) Cllr Hladkij as P3 coordinator to include the leat works in the next P3 funding bid;
- (iv) no action be taken on the chapel carpet currently until the outcome of the cracks monitoring is identified.

PA21/025 **MILES WITHOUT STILES:** A contribution to the Dartmoor National Park project to improve access to Longtimber Wood was considered (copy previously circulated).

The Town Clerk advised that he was still waiting for a response from Cllr Croad with respect to support for a blue badge disabled parking space adjacent to the Station Road entrance via the viaduct to Longtimber Wood. Cllr Hladkij raised the issues with vehicles struggling to turn from Crescent Road due to the parked vehicles blocking at the viaduct. She confirmed she would also contact Cllr Croad and chase a response regarding the disabled badge enquiry.

Cllr Hladkij raised concern over cyclists being able to access the woods following removal of the kissing gate. The Town Clerk confirmed that signage will be in place deterring cyclists.

He confirmed that Dartmoor National Park will be using a contractor for the design improvements for the entrance, under the viaduct to the main path by the river enabling 'off road' tramper style mobility

scooters, however it is unlikely that it would be suitable for self-propelled wheelchairs.

It was **RESOLVED** that £1,000 from Parks, Woods and Open Spaces reserve (9101/901, currently standing at £18,745) be allocated to this project and for officers to work with DNPA to deliver the access improvements detailed above.

PA21/026 **BUDGET PREPARATION:** Items were considered to be included in the draft budget for 2022-2023 (copy previously circulated).

The committee agreed that the current water bowser needing use of a trailer and consequent problems with storage should be replaced. Cllr Wilson recommended an IBC 1000 litre plastic bowser where the container can be separated for storage. Cllr Lannin commented that Kingsbridge Bloomers had a bowser that could be pulled by pedestrians. Cllr Wilson warned of manual ability to pull this, and also suggested that it would be helpful to know where water can be obtained from around the town.

Cllr L Rea queried only 25% of expenditure in month 5. The Town Clerk confirmed that a lot of the work will be done in winter and he would expect expenditure to be close to the budget predictions. If it doesn't get spent it can go into Parks reserves or into another reserve. Cllr Wilson added that extra was put into the budget to account for ash die back. The Town Clerk advised that the tree inspection is due in 6 months' time and an update will be provided on the ash trees. He also advised that ParkLife is used to support officers, although Filham Park work comes from S106 and South Hams fund his cemetery work.

Cllr Lannin queried the purchase of various replacement tools previously mentioned that would share a battery. The Town Clerk confirmed that the strimmer will be purchased using P3 funds and will use the same battery as the mower.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk would prepare the figures ready for the next committee meeting in December, noting the purchase of a new water bowser and the potential for ash tree works.

PA21/027 **UPDATES AND INFORMATION:** Updates and information were received (copy previously circulated).

Woodlands Cemetery

The Chair highlighted his concerns that no agreement was in place for the cemetery extension area. The Town Clerk responded that the Town Council is under no obligation to take it on. The current cemetery is under a 20-year agreement from 2019 so it is doubtful that this would be required to be handed back. He suggested that with 3 years to run before the management of the extension needs to be agreed, it is not a priority currently for South Hams.

Filham Park Kiosk

The Town Clerk informed the committee that he has failed to receive a response from the party interested in setting up the Kiosk. They have been away for the summer and had sent holding responses. He will bring it back to committee in December but fears he may have to draw a line under it. Cllr Lannin queried if the skate area with the toilet block would be a better location. Cllr Budd then commented she did not feel this location was suitable for the toilets as older people will wish to visit an area where there are predominantly younger people. She suggested using the Cricket Club, which is refurbishing the upstairs. Accessibility issues were raised, and the fact that access would not be available when matches are on. The area by the cadets' hut was the preferred option as it does not introduce more buildings into the park. Cllr Wilson added the importance of having them accessible and visible from the car park.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and note the information.

Meeting ended at 8.10pm

Signed.....

Date: 1 November 2021

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION – 6.45pm to 7.23pm

Presentation from Skate South Devon CIC and Filham Bike and Skate Park

Filham Bike and Skate Track Group was established a couple of years ago, and Skate South Devon are a more recent off-shoot to develop wheeled sports in Ivybridge. They were in attendance to present their Executive summary of Ivybridge Wheeled Sports Strategy to the Parks Committee.

They have a vision to work with ITC, SHDC and DCC, and there are two areas of development. The Aldi development is removing the skate park from the town centre and also the Filham Masterplan identified more wheeled sports. They have held detailed discussions down at Filham Park and are presenting their overall idea.

There are two strands:

- Filham Park, where the existing BMX track was not suitable and was levelled. In the Masterplan survey people were keen to have a bike facility and the ideal area is behind the cadet building, which is a nice space and a good opportunity to provide a new unique facility. The early bike track design was quite limited in terms of usage, linear tracks lending itself to BMX bikes and restricting other users because of tarmac. Moving away to a more open free flowing activity using a concrete material would unify all wheeled sports and offer a lot more longevity. This does come with more costs but the groups strongly believe it would provide a great facility.
- With respect to the relocation of the current skate park they have had discussions with South Hams to keeping it in a central location in the town. The best place identified is Torre Park, a route used by school children, joining the east and west of Ivybridge, and lies near the Manor and Erme Primary School. They are proposing a small traditional skate park, and having had input from developers feel a bowl facility could have benefits. The concrete is quiet and low in the ground, and tree planting would reduce the impact on residents, and it would be within the restrictions of being over 50m away from nearby housing. There is up to £50k of funding through the Landfill Communities Trust.

The group stated that the idea for Filham Park is unique, and would be a UK first, bringing together the whole community. The concept is that of a pump park, not a skate park and not a pump track and would be suitable for wheelchairs. This is an ambitious project and will require a lot more funding than originally set out in the masterplan of £150k, being closer to £500k. Pending the Town Council's support for the project, the Council's parks consultant will explore the Section 106 money for Filham Park. They do not expect this to be to the detriment of other sports receiving funding, and are looking at other funding streams. They are trying to keep the funding for the skatepark relocation separate with funding from SUEZ.

Cllr L Rea stated that this was a really exciting vision, and as the first of its kind at Filham Park queried the numbers it would attract. The group predicted into the hundreds. The style would be kept at a lower height and a 3-year-old on a scooter to a 37-year-old on a skateboard could use the facility. On traditional skateparks there

are lips, whereas the design will have bumps and lumps, known as berms and rollers and transitions for all abilities.

At 7pm Cllr Spencer requested that Standing Orders be suspended for the Group to continue with their presentation. The Committee agreed and Standing Orders were suspended

Cllr L Rea liked the accessibility concept, querying if it is bringing lots of people into town how many could use it at a time and whether it could cope. The group responded that different demographics using the facility would tend to manage themselves at various times of the day and there are no pre-set rules, and there would be a respect for other users. It was difficult to say how many, but it could facilitate more than 20 and probably some would be local people.

The group advised that this pump park design would be the first of its nature in the UK. In the States there is a company called Evergreen who have produced a pump track which is a reinvention of old idea and well known in the skaters world. People are looking at a facility like this in Ivybridge, and it would bring people in outside of the town. They agreed that being overwhelmed is something to think about. People are travelling distances to go these facilities and there is a lot of potential. The people they have spoken with at Maverick really want to do this. It is a unique opportunity. They can see what is happening in the USA and want to bring it to the UK, and it would be a big deal.

Cllr Lannin also stated she was really excited and impressed with the vision. She liked the fact that Filham is close to the train station and this makes the location sustainable. Not everyone visiting will necessarily be using cars, and as it is currently an outline plan there is flexibility, and in terms of other things in the masterplan that facility ties in well.

Cllr Wilson added that as long as the plan provides a toilet facility that is expandable then it could work. Most of traffic would be on foot or bike

Cllr Hladkij highlighted the access to wheelchairs, and suggested that if it's a first, the Disability Sports Agency could be interested in putting money into it and they could look at working with them.

Cllr Budd sought clarification on how it would work having all wheeled sports together. The group responded that the facility at Filham would be designed to bring together all sports under one place. It wouldn't be a perfect set up for BMX which is a long linear track, this falls between the two. The design of Evergreen style is free flowing. All groups can fit together and turn taking is obvious at skateparks, and can be utilised by people at once. Mountain biker Mark Weir designed a pump track in his back yard and was also a free flowing park, and they could be creative in how they do that. It can be done in dirt or tarmac, but concrete brings together all users under one facility.

The Town Clerk could see the benefit of bringing a mass of multi levels or usage and ability which the previous track was unable to offer. Cllr Wilson added that it was providing a facility that certain users have previously been excluded from

The group also confirmed that Ivybridge is a green area and the whole space will not be concrete. It would have at least a 30 years' life cycle and could be as long as 100 years if looked after and if done correctly from the start. They had set up a CIC to support the Town Council in this venture and provide regular maintenance. They would like to work with the Town Council to explore what funding is available, and if happy to go ahead with the vision to push South Hams for funding. They do not expect to achieve the full amount and will look at other funding options

Cllr Wilson queried if they had approached Ugborough Parish Council, however they confirmed that they were not discussing more widely until they had approached Ivybridge Town Council in the first instance. They added that they are committed to providing this facility, and will raise the balance and will not settle for less until the whole funding is in place, even if it takes a few years.

Cllr Spencer thanked the group for attending to discuss their proposal.

The Public Participation Session ended at 7.23pm and the Skate South Devon CIC and Filham Bike and Skate Park left the meeting