

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee held in the Town Hall on Tuesday 26 July 2022 at 6.45pm

Present: Cllr A Spencer (Chair)
Cllr L Budd
Cllr A Rea
Cllr L Rea (from 7.06pm)
Cllr T Lannin

In attendance: Mr J Parsons (Town Clerk)
Mrs L Lane (Administration Officer)
Cllr V Abbott

The public participation session lasted from 7.06pm to 7.19pm

PA22/010 **APOLOGIES:** No apologies were received.

PA22/011 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

PA22/012 **WORK PLAN UPDATE:** The work plan was reviewed. The Town Clerk advised that he had tweaked the work plan to split out completed items. The Parks Officers have been doing a great job, one of the Officers has completed Chainsaw training and they have both completed training on use of the strimmer. They have already been putting their new skills to use. They are being encouraged to take before and after photos when they have completed work. Cllr A Rea advised that he has put together a commentary regarding the war graves which are in the cemetery. With regard to prominent people from the past, there do not appear to be any buried in the cemetery. He is aware that his commentary contains a lot of text and only a small amount of visual as there is only 1 photograph available that is copywrite free. He queried whether any surviving family should be spoken to before this is published. The Town Clerk suggested he approach Commonwealth War Graves for advice on this, and speak to the Senior Finance Officer for contacts regarding the graves. It was also suggested that something should be put on social media. The Town Clerk advised that once the commentary was ready he would ask Colourbridge to produce it.

Cllr Lannin thanked the Parks Officers for sorting Victoria Park out after the recent vandalism.

Cllr Lannin asked whether the wording relating to Kings Gutter could be altered, it is passable but not good. The Town Clerk agreed to amend this. He went on to advise that the Devon County Officer couldn't see

any way around this but legally something does need to be done to maintain the right of way. He advised that he would speak to Dartmoor National Park to see whether they have any suggestions or specialist knowledge. It may require a diversion.

Cllr Spencer queried why it cannot be cut through with a chainsaw.

The Town Clerk explained that it is the root ball so it would not be safe to do due to the ball containing soil and stones.

Cllr Lannin asked whether a bridge could be constructed over it. The Town Clerk advised that Devon County thought it would be too difficult to secure it safely and there would be the issue of getting materials to the site. Putting steps in which go up and around may be the only solution. Cllr Lannin voiced concerns that people would still go over the wall rather than using the steps.

The Town Clerk agreed to speak to Dartmoor National Park.

Cllr Lannin asked why herringbone parking is not suitable for Filham Park. The Town Clerk advised that this is due to the measurements of the park, herringbone would have been used if there was space to add additional parking down the middle but there is not enough space for this.

Cllr A Rea asked whether any more information had been found regarding an exercise class taking place in Filham car park. The Town Clerk advised that no further complaints had been received, Cllr Rea advised the allotments are not aware and the Town Clerk had been unable to find anything about these classes.

Cllr Lannin commented that a lot of work has been done to remove laurel and rhododendron, but wanted to know what was being done to keep on top of this, could this be a volunteering day? The Town Clerk advised that volunteers get involved if Parklife are working on projects.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the information in the work plan;
- (ii) speak to Commonwealth War Graves for advice on the commentary for the cemetery; and
- (iii) speak to Dartmoor National Park for advice regarding Kings Gutter.

PA22/013 **PLAY AREAS:** Members considered the proposed questions to be included in the consultation questionnaire (copy previously circulated).

The meeting was suspended to allow Cllr Abbott to join in the discussion (proposed A Rea seconded Lannin).

The following suggestions were made:

- Larger spaces to write in
- Clarification of whether 'rock' means rocking or rock climbing
- Images of play equipment would be good

- Additional question 'can you give an example of a great park you have been to and why it is great?'
- Split the questions to obtain answers for both parks
- Electronic links to questionnaire to go in school newsletters
- Poster with QR code and link to online questionnaire in all parks including those not owned by Ivybridge Town Council
- Grandparents may use parks at different times
- Need to ask children directly
- Could the schools talk to the children during circle time?
- Use this questionnaire for children aged below 12, have an additional one aimed at teenagers
- What would teenagers want? Zipwire, spiderweb climbing frame? Insurance implications of these?
- Could local businesses sponsor? Need to ensure happy with ethics of these businesses – need a policy?
- Q7 is subjective, could it be changed to what one improvement would make you use the play area more?
- Aim to have the survey ready for when children go back to school with a closing date of end of September

CLlr Budd queried what the budget is for this. The Town Clerk advised that it is £8,000 with an additional £6,000 approx. from the Lions Club.

It was **RESOLVED** to make the requested revisions to the questionnaire and circulate to the Parks Committee.

PA22/014 **PLAY AREA INSPECTION:** The Play Area Agreement relating to Play Area inspections (copy previously circulated) was considered. Cllr Spencer proposed that this be accepted. Cllr A Rea seconded and all were in agreement.

It was **RESOLVED** to renew the inspection service from South Hams District Council.

PA22/015 **GRASS CUTTING:** The Town Clerk provided a verbal update on grass cutting and issues with the verge cutting contract. The Town Clerk advised that he had met with other Town Clerks from the local area and they are all experiencing the same issues. Some towns are spending a lot on cutting, some are using weedkiller on the kerbs and some are leaving the verges to grow. The consensus is that in 2022/23 only Towns and Parishes will cut the verges. Framing the verges, which cost an additional £300, does not look as good as had hoped, maybe due to the dry weather, but it has helped with the visibility. The contractor now has the correct maps. Cllr Croad has offered £1,000, Cllr Abbott £500 and Cllr Jones has also offered a sum from her locality budget. The aim is to use this to add more colours and flowers to the verges, however this is not cheap to achieve as this involves a lot of labour to strip the turf off. Trying to get Parklife to cost up a proposal for Woolcombe Lane and Cornwood Road. Possibly strips in each verge due to cost?

Cllr L Rea asked whether money from the reserves could be used for this. The Town Clerk advised that it could be. The focus is on seeing what is feasible then this will be communicated to the public in the autumn.

Cllr A Rea commented that when this is done we need to make sure that residents know that it is money from their taxes that is being used and that the Town Council are organising this.

Cllr L Rea asked whether the costing of having the verges cut five times a year could be made available so it can be compared to this proposal.

The Town Clerk commented that some people like it the way it is, some like manicured verges. Need to find a balance between biodiversity and neat corners. In reality it is likely to take 2-3 years. Woolcombe Lane and Cornwood Road should be looked at first then add to this if we have the funds.

Cllr Lannin asked whether it would be possible to include a plan of the verges on the Town Council website. The Town Clerk advised that South Hams District Council have their interactive map but Devon County do not have anything like this.

It was **RESOLVED** to note this information.

PA22/016

UPDATE AND INFORMATION: Updates and information were received (copy previously circulated).

Filham Park Masterplan

Benches should be in by the end of the summer. Only two contractors have provided quotes for the central track. We have requested a third quote. Both of the quotes already received are within the budget.

Bridleway Diversion

No objections have been received. It now needs to go to Devon County Council Full Council then it will need to be advertised.

In Bloom

The judges provided some great feedback, their visit went well. The phone box looks fantastic.

Fore Street Bins

FCC / South Hams District Council advised they could not pay to update the bins. The Parks Officers have paint and materials so they will be working on them soon.

Damage and Anti-Social Behaviour

The police have stepped up recently sending officers to Victoria Park more frequently which seems to be helping.

Cllr Lannin advised that there are still some bits in Longtimber Woods which looks a bit like a shrine. She feels that this does need to be addressed now.

The Town Clerk advised that the Mayor was going to approach them and will have the conversation with the family if required.

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

Meeting ended at 8.19pm

Signed.....

Date: 8 August 2022

DRAFT

Public Participation Session 7.06pm to 7.19pm

It was agreed to wait until Cllr L Rea joined the meeting as she had a point she wished to raise in the public participation session.

Cllr L Rea advised that she wished to speak about fishing in Longtimber Woods following a request from a member of the public. She advised that she does have a personal and professional relationship with the member of the public. She went on to say that she feels that this links into maximising our assets, we could generate income from selling permits for people to fish in the woods however she is not aware of the ecological and other impacts this could have.

The Town Clerk explained that the Council have been approached by Plymouth and District Freshwater Angling Association who would like to lease the fishing rights in Longtimber Woods. They would run it on behalf of the Council so they would be responsible for issuing licenses etc.

Cllr Budd asked whether they would catch and release or take the fish away. The Town Clerk advised that they promote catch and release with non barbed hooks. Other concerns included erosion of the river bank and safety of the general public. Cllr Lannin suggested speaking to other local authorities who own riverbanks to see how they address this.

Cllr Budd asked whether they could fund an independent consultation into this and queried whether it would have to go out to tender in case anyone else wished to lease the fishing rights.

Cllr Spencer asked whether there were any ethical reasons against fishing. Cllr Lannin advised that she did but wouldn't impose them, but would want the issue considered, as well as ecological concerns. She said that she used to see large brown trout in the river but now only sees small ones. There are lots of things to consider and she acknowledged that fishers are keen on the health of the river.

The Town Clerk advised that they do say the right things in their email, river cleans, citizen science. He suggested that the fishing rights could be leased 2-3 years as a trial then reviewed and put out to tender.

Cllr L Rea commented that we would need to make sure that it is worth our while.

The Town Clerk advised that he would speak to the Plymouth and District Angling Association to see whether they would be willing to pay for the groundwork, and he would also speak to Westcountry Rivers Trust.