

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee held in the Town Hall on Monday 13 November 2023 at 6.45pm

Present: Cllr T Lannin (Chairperson)
Cllr V Abbott
Cllr L Austen
Cllr S Murphy
Cllr S Weeks

In attendance: Mrs K Elliott-Turner (Town Clerk)
Mrs J Gilbert (Assistant Town Clerk)
One Member of the Public

There was no public participation

PA23/017 **APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received from Cllr L Rea and Cllr C Cao.

PA23/018 **PUBLIC SECTION:** No points were raised.

PA23/019 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

PA23/020 **MINUTES:** The minutes from the meeting held on 31st July 2023 (copy previously circulated) were confirmed as a correct record.

PA23/021 **CEMETERY MEMORIAL TREES:** An in-principle agreement to introducing a cemetery memorial tree package, subject to satisfactory initial investigations was considered (report previously circulated).

The Town Clerk would identify where the trees could be located in consultation with the Parks Officers and SHDC Tree Officer. The proposal was for these to be included in a new mapping system (Parish Online). If agreed in principle she would come back with costings, with a variety of options depending on space and soil type.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree in principle to introducing a cemetery memorial tree package, subject to satisfactory initial investigations.

PA23/022 **PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER – DOG CONTROL CONSULTATION:** The committee considered making a response to the SHDC consultation on Public Space Protection Order – Dog Control (report previously circulated).

They wished to respond to the consultation by highlighting two issues not currently covered under the existing policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to respond to the South Hams District Council consultation on Public Space Protection Order – Dog Control with the following comments:

- (i) Dog Control Order includes a limit on the number of dogs being walked by a person at any one time. This is to ensure proper and safe control of dogs, and also to ensure the walker is able to spot when dog waste needs to be picked up.
- (ii) The current Public Spaces Protection order 2021 Control of Dogs notes in A (b) refers to three charities. Why are there just those three when there are other similar support dog charities?

PA23/023

RECREATION GROUNDS & VERGE CUTTING CONTRACT

2024/2025: Members considered a one-year or three-year cutting contract, frequency of cuts and areas to be cut (report previously circulated).

Devon County Council has an annual agreement with the Town Council to cut verge visibility splays around the town. There is a minimum of four cuts per year. There have been complaints received regarding the visibility splays. Upon assessment it would appear that the quality is not down to the contractor but rather the specification. Four cuts of visibility splays leave a longer cut length which results in a thatch, and it is recommended that there is an increase in the frequency of cuts, and this would enable the grass to be cut and left. It was proposed that no changes are made to the grass cutting schedule for the parks but that the parks and verges contract is combined.

Members queried if the grass cutting could be performed in-house giving more control. The Town Clerk confirmed that this could be explored, however this would take time to give it good consideration. She recommended that the grass cutting is contracted out for the next financial year and concentrates on cutting frequency, then investigate the in-house as another option later.

The committee were in favour of this proposal, and would also like to see wildflower pockets developed in suitable areas to tackle rewilding expectations.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) contract for grass cutting and verge cutting from 2024/2025 financial year on a one year basis;
- (ii) increase the frequency of visibility splay cuts to x8 cuts per year, plus full cut of Woolcombe Lane and Cornwood Road x 8 cuts per year;
- (iii) do a review of undertaking the contract in-house for 2025-26.

PA23/024

CEMETERY FEES 2024-2025: Members considered the proposed increase in charges (copy previously circulated).

It was **RESOLVED** to accept the proposed cemetery fees for 2024/25.

PA23/025 **DRAFT BUDGET 2024-2025:** The proposed draft budget for recommendation to Policy and Resources Committee was considered (copy previously circulated).

Members noted that the Cricket Club rent is to be increased, and the Town Clerk confirmed that the annual rent would be increased with effect from 17 December in line with RPI as per lease conditions.

The chairperson would like to see a budget for trees overall rather than under various cost centres. The Town Clerk advised that it was set out under the various park headings to identify costs established within each individual park, however it is something which could be explored.

The Assistant Town Clerk informed Members that there would be an additional amount to cover the memorial inspections due in 2024. The chairperson wished to see funds put into reserves to cover this in the future.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend the draft budget to Policy and Resources Committee.

PA23/026 **WORK PLAN UPDATE:** An update on the committee work plan for 2023/24 was received (copy previously circulated).

A discussion took place regarding bench locations. It was suggested that permission is requested from Devon County Council for the Town Council to site a bench on Ivydene Road on the uphill side of the road. It was also suggested that the bench on Exeter Road, which is in a poor state, be removed as no-one accepts ownership. The barrier tape placed around it by the Town Council now acknowledges it as their responsibility and liability.

The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council will have more duty to consider biodiversity with new legislation regarding this being introduced in the New Year. It was recommended that quotes are obtained for a Woodland Management Plan to be produced in the new financial year.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) receive the work plan;
- (ii) seek permission from Devon County Council to site a bench on Ivydene Road on the uphill side of the road, and remove the bench on Exeter Road;
- (iii) obtain quotes for a woodland management plan to be produced in the next financial year.

PA23/027 **UPDATES AND INFORMATION**

A verbal report was received.

Play Area projects – MacAndrews Field and Victoria Park. Planning applications for both sites had been submitted, however South Hams Development Management had requested additional information for Victoria Park play area before the application could be validated. This included a tree survey, heritage statement, scaled drawings and elevations and a drainage survey. The MacAndrews Field application was validated without any issues.

However, the case officer assigned for both applications then flagged up insufficient documentation for MacAndrews Field, advising that the applications had been validated by different officers. He requested the MacAndrews Field application be withdrawn and re-submitted with the same requirements as Victoria Park.

A planning consultant was engaged and the required documentation for Victoria Park has been sent to Development Management in order to satisfy the validation requirements, with the exception of a tree survey which is currently awaited. The MacAndrews Field application has been re-submitted and is still undergoing the validation checks.

Filham Park – Skate Park

Nick Harris of Skate South Devon has met with our Parks Officers to discuss their store space in the proposed building, space requirements, access, etc. The Planning Officer has visited the site following our pre-app submission. No questions have been raised to date, and we are awaiting their response.

Filham Park – Wadland Lodge

The contractor has been asked for a date on when work to repair the culvert can commence – 14 days notice is required to close a Bridleway.

Tree stump in Kings Gutter, Longtimber

Our local Dartmoor Ranger advises that she has a contractor who may be able to remove the large tree stump – awaiting an update.

The committee wished to record its thanks to the Assistant Town Clerk for endeavouring to progress the play area planning applications through the planning validation process.

It was **RESOLVED** to receive and note the verbal report.

Meeting ended at 8.07pm

Signed.....

Date: 11 December 2023