

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee held in the Town Hall on Monday 25 March 2024 at 6.45pm

Present: Cllr L Rea (Chair)
Cllr T Lannin
Cllr V Abbott
Cllr L Austen
Cllr S Murphy
Cllr A Spencer
Cllr S Weeks

In attendance: Mrs K Elliott-Turner (Town Clerk)
Mrs L Lane (Administration Officer)

PA23/039 **APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Cao.

PA23/040 **DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS:**
No interests were declared.

PA23/041 **PUBLIC SECTION:** No members of the public were present

PA23/042 **MINUTES:** The minutes from the meeting held on 29 January 2024 were previously circulated to members.

It was **RESOLVED** to confirm and sign the minutes of 29 January 2024 as a correct record.

PA23/043 **DOG FOULING:** The Committee considered the report (copy previously circulated).

Members thought that getting the schools involved would be a good idea, asking whether children could design some posters. It was noted that dog fouling is an issue on the pavements as well as in our parks and open spaces. A campaign of communications including social media, the press and posters was suggested. This may not change the mindset of those who leave their mess but it may shame them into picking it up.

It was noted that dog walkers walking multiple dogs could struggle to notice where they foul due to having so many dogs to watch.

Members went on to discuss signs warning of fines for dog fouling. South Hams District Council are currently working on getting a dog warden position up and running to cover the South Hams. Issues could then be reported to the dog warden.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Begin a campaign of communications including signs made from children's posters; and
- (ii) Express an interest to South Hams District Council for a dog warden

PA23/044 **PERMISSION TO USE FILHAM PARK – AIR CADETS:** Members considered a request from 339 (South Dartmoor) Squadron, Royal Air Force Air Cadets for permission to use Filham Park (copy of request previously circulated).

The Town Clerk explained that the Air Cadets have previously had permission to use Filham Park but their rules have changed so they needed to request permission again. The request is for the same activities as previously but includes the skate park area. They are aware that there are future plans for this area.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the request from 339 (South Dartmoor) Squadron, Royal Air Force Air Cadets for permission to use Filham Park.

PA23/045 **WOOD N MOOR – PEATLAND AND WOODLAND RESTORATION:** The report regarding a proposal from the Woodland Trust to provide a free woodland assessment in the spring, with a view to providing low value timber from Longtimber Wood for the Wood N Moor peatland restoration project, and to arrange a Woodland Management Plan through the Woodland Trust was considered (copy previously circulated).

The Town Clerk explained that the Larch has a statutory notice on it as it is diseased and that there would be issues disposing of the diseased wood in the usual way. The Woodland Trust can still use this wood as their processes prevent the spread of the disease. There would be no cost to the council and it would be a great partnership opportunity.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree for the Woodland Trust to provide a free woodland assessment in Spring, with a view to providing low value timber from Longtimber Wood for the Wood N Moor peatland restoration project, and to arrange a Woodland Management Plan through the Woodland Trust.

PA23/046 **GRASS CUTTING & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT 2024/2025:**

The Town Clerk advised that following assessment of the tenders received, the successful contractor for the 2024/2025 financial year is Idverde UK. She will be meeting with their Contract Supervisor in coming weeks.

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

PA23/047 **WORK PLAN UPDATE:** An update was received on the committee work plan for 2023/24 (copy previously circulated).

The committee noted that the planning applications for play equipment in MacAndrews Field and Victoria Park have been approved.

The tree planting along the west boundary of MacAndrews Field was queried as there has been a lot of planting already. Also, once the new equipment is installed the park might look very different. It was agreed to carry this over and speak to the Assistant Town Clerk who is lead on the play equipment project.

A query regarding signage for the War Graves in the cemetery had been received. Members thought that this was close to being completed. The Town Clerk advised she would investigate.

Members were advised that South Hams District Council has a new initiative for memorial benches. Devon County Council has advised that they may allow benches to be installed on their land. There are a number of benches on DCC land already that are in a poor state of repair and do not appear to be anyone's responsibility.

The Town Clerk explained that DCC have said that the Town Council may do what they like with the verges, in terms of planting, as long as permission is sought for anything structural such as benches, or tree planting, and that they do not obstruct underground services. Benches could have up to 5 memorial plaques and it would be nice to develop a style of benches for the town so they match.

Members discussed accessible park-type benches and picnic benches, including the installation of concrete plinths with space for a wheelchair at the end of the park-type bench. Inclusivity should be considered when installing items in the park.

The Town Clerk went on to suggest working with SHDC on a centralised plan for memorial benches around the town including a policy. This is to be brought forward to the next meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Speak to the Assistant Town Clerk about previously proposed planting on the Western boundary of MacAndrews Field, following installation of the new play equipment;
- (i) Investigate the position regarding the signage for War Graves at Woodlands Cemetery; and
- (ii) Work with South Hams District Council to come up with a plan for memorial benches in the town.

PA23/048 **UPDATES AND INFORMATION:** A report from the Town Clerk with updates and information was received.

Members discussed the old swimming pool in Longtimber Wood, it fills up with water during wet weather in spite of efforts to drain it. It does provide a habitat when it is full of water but there were concerns about health and safety implications. The Town Clerk agreed to investigate.

Members discussed Holman Way and Orchid Avenue. These areas must remain in Council ownership until 2027 but are not really used by the community. The Town Clerk advised that the Parks Officers have cleared, planted some wildflowers and put wildflower seed down at Holman Way. There are also fruit trees and it was suggested that this community space could be publicised on social media to encourage the community to use these spaces. If Council agrees to sell this land in the future, covenants could be included to prevent it from being built on. Residents wanted Orchid Avenue to be kept secluded as a dead end however the side leads onto a footpath so members would like investigation as to whether this could be opened up for the community to use to access the space.

The Town Clerk advised that the events guidance document has been updated, to include the new charges, now having a sliding scale for fees depending on the size and type of event. She recommended that the charges are reviewed annually when considering budgets.

Members discussed the upcoming meeting with PADCAC. They voiced concerns about respect for the environment and other park users, for example cutting down the tree on the island and locking gates. Members wished to know how many members the fishing club has and how many of these are from Ivybridge.

To summarise, investigations will be made into health and safety implications of the old swimming pool at Longtimber Woods being allowed to fill with water, rather than continually trying to drain it; the land at Holman Way and Orchid Avenue will be publicised as available for the community to enjoy; Parks Officers will investigate whether Orchid Avenue could be opened up for access via the adjacent footpath; PADCAC will be asked for information on Ivybridge membership.

Meeting ended at 7.39pm

Signed.....

Date: 3 June 2024