

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee held in the Town Hall on Tuesday 8 February 2022 at 6.45pm

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

In attendance: Mr J Parsons (Town Clerk)
Mrs J Gilbert (Assistant Town Clerk)

**Cllr Budd arrived 6.50pm*

There was no public participation session

PA21/034 **APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received from Cllr Wilson.

PA21/035 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

PA21/036 **WORK PLAN:** The work plan was reviewed. The Town Clerk had introduced a colour code to show where funding would be drawn from, however he accepted that further tweaking was needed to make the prioritisation of tasks clearer. Since the new Parks Officer has recently joined the team many of the smaller tasks have already been completed such as cleaning signs, and the larger tasks can now be tackled. The Town Clerk suggested Cllr A Rea may wish to be involved with the signage at the cemetery.

He advised that he and the Assistant Town Clerk would perform a site visit in advance of Parks Committee meetings in order to see first-hand tasks that are required.

Cllr Lannin liked the colour coding, but remarked that it would be helpful to gain an understanding of the Parks team's regular workload in addition to the work plan. The Town Clerk confirmed that in addition to the bin route and litter picking they perform various tasks as required, such as strimming, repairing a broken fence, cleaning up broken glass etc. It was agreed that general tasks undertaken could be listed for each site under the work plan. He also informed Members that if they identified any work themselves and wished to suggest these are added to the list, to contact either himself or the Assistant Town Clerk.

Cllr L Rea queried if all timescales marked as 2022/23 were realistic. The Town Clerk confirmed that not everything could be achieved in the timescale. Some tasks would be seasonal, for example tree works are done in summer. Cllr Budd queried if these could be reviewed in 6 months' time if there is an underspend in the budget. The Town Clerk

advised that if at the end of the Financial Year there is a surplus the Chairs will look at sharing this in the reserves to spend next year, therefore the Policy and Resources Committee will give a steer on where surpluses are allocated. The Town Council is still looking at a small deficit in the budget.

It was **RESOLVED** to make further improvements to the work plan with respect to prioritising work, and also include general tasks undertaken daily at the various sites by the Parks team.

PA21/036

PLAY EQUIPMENT: Members considered the report regarding the deterioration of the MacAndrews Field natural play equipment installed in early 2014. Following an engineering inspection, the play area had to be closed due to rotting timbers. The Assistant Town Clerk advised that Earthwrights, the original installers, had produced a condition report, proposing repair of decayed timbers and replacement of others at a cost of £6162. She had gone back to them challenging the premature decay and lack of warranty asking for a reduction in price and details of the warranty, however a response was still awaited.

She had been in discussions with some natural play equipment providers and was currently obtaining prices for refurbishment/replacement of the timber structures. Discussions with providers was erring towards ripping out and replacement as the current equipment is too rotten and repair was not considered a suitable option. It had been considered that the work could be undertaken in-house by the Parks team, however this was ruled out due to potential insurance implications.

The Town Clerk advised that there is a total of £1297 in Restricted Reserves which could be used towards this. The balance would need to come from the Parks, Woods and Open Spaces Reserve which stands at £17,368. Cllr Budd suggested crowd funding, however it was felt that this would not be an appropriate course of action as it was more suitable for one-off specific projects, whereas this would require ongoing maintenance.

All agreed that the play equipment needed to be in-keeping with the current natural style. Cllr A Rea commented that the figure of £6162 was for repair, and realistically replacement is likely to be in excess of this figure. The Town Clerk advised that if it is recommended to go with a wholesale replacement, that it be delegated to the Town Clerk and Clerk to liaise and obtain quotations. This can then be taken to the next suitable Council meeting, either Full Council where all Parks Committee Members would be present or a Parks Committee meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to delegate to the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk to liaise and obtain quotations for a replacement of a similar natural timber structure in place of the current play equipment in MacAndrews Field. Once obtained these will then be taken to either Full Council or Parks Committee meeting with the aim of getting the play area reopened as soon as possible.

PA21/033 **UPDATES AND INFORMATION:** Updates and information were received (copy previously circulated).

Parks Ranger Update

The new Parks Officer has joined the Parks team. He is very community orientated, being visible and engaging with the public. He is doing four days a week, and will occasionally do a three-day week and team up with the existing Parks Officer to work on a Saturday giving a presence around the town.

Filham Masterplan

Phase 1 of the masterplan is progressing and it is hoped that the work will be completed by August. This will include picnic tables and improvements to accessibility of the park. ParkLife is project managing the improvements, funded by S106 money and are publishing a page in the Ivybridge Magazine. Cllr Budd requested that this is shared on social media. It was confirmed that IMAG a copy will be published on the Town Council's Facebook page and website.

Grounds Maintenance Contracts

Hulls Landscaping have been successful in gaining the Grounds Maintenance contract. South Hams, the previous contractor, failed to provide a quote as competitive. It is a one-year contract, comprising 50% price, 30% technical ability and 20% environmental approach. The grass cutting was reduced down to twelve cuts per year, with less than half the original cutting area required and Holman Way removed from the contract. Payment will only be made on an as-cut basis.

Cutting Crew were awarded the contract for the cemetery. They provided a competitive quote, having looked after the cemetery for over twelve years. Their environmental credentials also factored. They are a local company based in the town.

Memorial Inspection

The memorial inspection in the old section of Woodlands Cemetery took place at the end of November 2021. There were no failed memorials and 3 require monitoring on a 12-month programme to check for any further deterioration. The remainder are scheduled to be inspected in 3 years' time.

Longtimber Path Improvements

The DNPA co-funded 'Miles without Stiles' project to remove the barriers between the viaduct entrance on Station Road, and improve the drainage and track down to the river has been successfully carried out. Now the barrier has been removed improvements to the fence have been identified and also replacement of the South Hams bin.

DCC have also indicated that two advisory blue badge parking bays will be marked to enable transport for those with mobility scooters and two bays will accommodate a minibus if necessary.

Emergency Tree Works

These have now been completed on the Erme bank and at Manstow.

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

Meeting ended at 7.35pm

Signed.....

Date: 7 March 2022