

## IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

### The Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee held in the Town Hall on Tuesday 31 May 2022 at 6.45pm

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

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

PA22/001 **ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON:** Cllr Alan Spencer was nominated and seconded as Chairperson for 2022-2023.

PA22/002 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON:** Cllr Tessa Lannin was nominated and seconded as Vice-Chairperson for 2022-2023.

#### *The public participation session lasted from 6.45pm to 7pm*

PA22/003 **APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received from Cllrs L Budd and A Rea.

PA22/004 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

PA22/005 **WORK PLAN:** The work plan was reviewed. The Town Clerk advised that the Parks team have been busy, and the new Parks Officer was currently on a chainsaw training course.

Cllr Wilson queried why the Filham access road was not on the work plan. The Town Clerk replied that it was 106 funded and also a separate project to the Masterplan. It had fallen behind due to being held up by the Donkey Sanctuary agreement, and change of staffing at John Grimes. The costs have escalated and it has gone back to South Hams to allocate more money. The cost to do the tender process has been made more expensive. He reassured the committee that it had not been forgotten and he hoped it would be completed by this Autumn or next Spring. ParkLife is making good progress with the Masterplan.

Cllr L Rea commented on how nice Fore Street was looking. The Town Clerk advised that South Hams had asked the Town Council to provide a quotation for our Parks team to paint the bins. Cllr Wilson remarked that the metal benches in Fore Street are 8 years old but look brand new, and it is worth considering using similar elsewhere. The Town Clerk advised that the Lions Club have folded and they wished to spend the £6k they had remaining on a legacy project which needed to be spent by the end of June. Cllr Wilson suggested the steel benches with the Lions Club crest. Cllr Lannin mentioned replacement of the old bench by the war memorial. Cllr L Rea suggested the MacAndrews Field play equipment. Cllr Wilson commented that the Victoria Park

play area was also in need of upgrading. The Town Clerk suggested that the Rotary Club may also be able to put in some funding. He would speak to one of the Lions Club members the following day and offer to ring fence the money if the Club needed to spend it by June. It could then be used in the future on the Council's play areas which are pending a public consultation on play equipment.

Cllr L Rea remarked that the work plan looked good. The Town Clerk responded that Wayside was looking neglected. The Parks team do not have the conservation expertise, however they are doing their best to maintain it with the existing wildflowers and a mowed border. The biodiversity management plan could cover this shortfall later in the meeting. The Town Clerk advised that the wildflower areas can be strimmed then the hay raked off, but they did not have the capacity for larger areas.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) note the information in the work plan;
- (ii) contact the Lions Club, offering to ring fence the £6000 of the club's remaining funds with a proposal that it be used towards the Town Council's play areas in the future following a public consultation on play equipment.

PA21/043 **PLAY AREAS:** Members considered the method for consulting with the community regarding play equipment in Victoria Park, MacAndrews Field and other open spaces.

Cllr Spencer stated the importance of engaging with the widest proportion of the community as possible. The Town Clerk proposed doing a form in-house. The Filham masterplan consultation was done by ParkLife which had funding and was quite expensive.

Cllr Wilson felt it was important to concentrate on Victoria Park currently and make safe MacAndrews Field. Cllr Lannin stated that a clear plan was needed, and Cllr L Rea added that it was easier to obtain funding if we had got a plan, and there are different levels of consultation where we don't need to spend money.

The Town Clerk suggested an event. Cllr Lannin responded that she was happy to go out into the community and hand out questionnaires. She referred to the Annual Town Meeting where someone had mentioned gym equipment. The Town Clerk advised that this had been a question in the Masterplan questionnaire, however the responses had ranked very low down the list. Cllr L Rea was aware of one in Preston Green where she visits, and remarked that she rarely sees it used. She did feel however that it could still be included in the questionnaire for people to then prioritise.

Cllr Wilson stated that MacAndrews Field had limited parking whereas Filham is more accessible. Cllr Spencer queried getting schools involved with the survey as a project. Cllr Wilson replied that it is not

the schools using the play area in MacAndrews Field as in Victoria Park. The MacAndrews Field play area can be busy with Stowford School parents, but not the school. Cllr Lannin reiterated that she would be happy to hang around handing out questionnaires on certain days after school. The Town Clerk offered to be in attendance also. The Assistant Town Clerk stated that it was important to capture all members of the community who are in charge of children, and not necessarily just parents/guardians of school age children. She had taken her baby grandsons to use the Victoria Park play area and had some feedback to offer.

The Town Clerk suggested the survey asks for preferences on natural play area, slides and swings etc. Cllr L Rea suggested re-using elements of the masterplan.

The Town Clerk proposed getting the survey ready in July for before the schools break up for the summer, with a response deadline for first couple of weeks in September. These could then be analysed ready for the Parks meeting at the end of September.

It was **RESOLVED** to prepare and launch a play area consultation before the schools break up for the summer with an early to mid-September deadline, and to report the findings back to the Parks Committee on 27 September.

PA22/007

**GRASS CUTTING:** The Town Clerk provided an update on the grass cutting and issues with the verge cutting contract. South Hams had lost the DCC verge cutting contract. The cuts are now only done four times per year, there used to be six cuts although less cuts do now tie in with biodiversity. The maps were provided by DCC and subcontracted for best value price but whole swathes were not being cut. It was then discovered that DCC had not sent all the maps. The subcontractor did struggle to accommodate the additional maps once this had been realised, however they still managed to fit these in and even with the new maps it is still coming in on budget.

What is in the DCC contract is very specific however, and limited to visibility splays. When South Hams were subcontracted they were probably cutting it all whereas the new contractor is only cutting what is in the contract.

It is not Town Council land so we cannot cut what is not in the contract, South Hams are not cutting the non-visibility splay areas, and DCC made the decision about only cutting visibility splays some years ago due to cost cutting. The Town Clerk has contacted DCC and South Hams and is hoping to pull the responses together and come up with a plan. It may be that the contract will be handed by to DCC in which case any complaints can be directed back to them.

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

PA22/008 **MANAGEMENT PLANS:** Members considered whether to review the Longtimber Woodland Management Plan and how other sites can more positively be managed for biodiversity and wildlife through seeking further advice, and the scope of that advice.

The Town Clerk advised that the Forestry Commission had paid for the Longtimber Woods Management Plan done in 2016. This should be repeated every five years, therefore the date has passed. South Hams District Council is looking for biodiversity projects. Cllr Wilson suggested that any money available from South Hams could be used to tackle the invasive species. The Town Clerk stated that this item was about parks in general, and queried whether we need help putting together a plan to help the parks team manage the parks and open spaces and obtain quotes for an ecological survey.

Cllr Lannin raised the issue of the small pond near the top of Longtimber Woods where people have been removing tadpoles. She stated that more could be done with it and it could be made deeper so it does not dry out.

Cllr Wilson proposed that if doing a survey around the town it should focus on where to reduce and divert spend so as not to increase the precept. The Town Clerk advised that there is £2k in the Climate Change fund, and Dartmoor National Park may have projects that could be tapped into for Longtimber Woods. Cllr Wilson suggested finding money for the survey once we have looked for smaller projects. The Town Clerk advised that the management plan would have specific areas that need to be cared for.

It was **RESOLVED** over the summer to update the Woodland Management Plan in Longtimber Woods and to develop a town wide wildlife management plan, and to investigate how much it would cost to do a detailed survey of our habitats.

PA22/009 **UPDATES AND INFORMATION:** Updates and information were received (copy previously circulated).

### **Filham Park Masterplan**

The skate park was taken out of the phased works as the Wheeled Sports Group did not want to be rushed and hold up the rest of the project. They have grand plans for their wheeled sports facility and would prefer to wait. There are still plans for a Ranger Station, and the Wheeled Sports Group would like an indoor shared community space. The Bloomers will have a separate allotment space for storage. The Ranger Station will be funded with 106 money plus £70k of CCLA funds which can only be used on capital projects. Phase 2 was scheduled to take two to three years as of last year.

The Town Clerk advised that there could be an issue with the water supply however, as there is only one supply from Wadland Lodge. The Cricket Club sub meter it and it also supplies the cadets and

allotments. Cllr Lannin suggested rainwater storage, and Cllr L Rea queried the water supply for the Donkey Sanctuary. The Town Clerk responded that this would be worth investigating.

**In Bloom**

The Bloomers Group needs volunteers who can help with marketing and funding. They need to be established as a constituted community group with a committee, and the new Community Connector will be supporting the group.

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

Meeting ended at 8.04pm

Signed.....

Date: 27 June 2022

Public Participation Session 6.45pm to 7pm

Cllr Lannin wished to raise an issue regarding fence posts that have appeared on the opposite side of Longtimber Woods on the permissive footpath.

Although this falls outside of the parish and is not an Ivybridge Town Council matter she wished to raise the issue on behalf of local residents who have raised concerns. She sent an email to the Harford Parish Clerk which was forwarded to the landowner. The landowner sent a response appearing somewhat aggrieved about irresponsible dog owners.

Cllr Wilson stated that this was private property and the Town Council had no influence over it. Cllr L Rea stated that since the pandemic there had been a massive increase in dog ownership and significant increase in rescue dogs which have been neglected, and can be unpredictable for inexperienced owners.

The Town Clerk advised that the landowner has put up a sign and he suggested that we ask for a picture of this. The Council could put out a statement requesting the public to observe this, and if visiting neighbouring land on Dartmoor please respect landowners' property and other users.

Cllr Wilson suggested a reminder regarding the number of dog on dog attacks. The Town Clerk advised that dog organisations have codes for different colour leads to symbolise nervous dogs etc and he could use wording from the various organisations giving guidance such as the Blue Cross Animal Charity to put some wording together.

Cllr Lannin advised that she would go back to the landowner to inform him of the Committee's discussion.