

IVYBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

The Minutes of the Parks and Open Spaces Committee held in the Town Hall on Monday 31 July 2023 at 6.45pm

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

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

There was no public participation

PA23/008 **APOLOGIES:** No apologies were received.

PA23/009 **INTERESTS TO BE DECLARED:** No interests were declared.

PA23/010 **WORK PLAN UPDATE:** The work plan was received (copy previously circulated).

The Chairperson stated that everyone had undertaken the site visits which had proved worthwhile for new Committee Members and also as a refresher for existing Members, and had provided different ideas.

Woodlands Cemetery

The Town Clerk advised that the historical noticeboards for the cemetery are in draft format and moving along. They do however need more work and fact checking. Cllr A Rea plus a local historian is dealing with this. There is £2000 in the budget for this and some additional money from the Royal British Legion.

Cllr Abbott suggested liaising with the District and County Council to provide an overview of benches in order to provide a cohesive strategy as they both own benches in various locations. The Town Clerk advised that both authorities have assets maps. Cllr Weeks stated that producing a map and having copies in the Information Centre may encourage more people to walk if they know there are places to rest on the way, and would complement 'Accessible Ivybridge'.

The Chairperson was conscious that the chapel is not being used. Although there was a problem of no toilet facilities she proposed a composting toilet, and for this possibility to be explored due to there

being no community meeting space at that end of the town. The Town Clerk advised that composting toilets were difficult to make wheelchair accessible, but the Chairperson suggested that they could be located in the current store once this is relocated to Filham Park, and then the whole space could be used. The Town Clerk confirmed that there is water and electricity but was unsure about drainage. Cllr Abbott suggested Dame Hannah's facilities could be used and the question be asked.

Victoria Park

Cllr Abbott had observed that the bug house had protruding nails and for this to be rectified.

Longtimber Woods

Cllr Lannin advised that the group WATER was asking landowners to put forward a funding proposal to turn fields into meadows, and this could possibly be something to look at in the future. Cllr Abbot stated that the fields at the top of the woods belong to another landowner. The Town Clerk suggested that the dead hedging work could be a contribution and protects the bank.

Cllr Austen was keen to re-start the conversation with the landowners on the other side of the river to purchase their land to enable a bridge to be reinstated. The Town Council could look at different channels of funding if the landowner agreed to sell.

Cllr Abbott was in favour of QR codes on signage and could target 80% of the population, and have a tree sign similar to the bird sign. The Chairperson challenged the value of screen time on a walk especially considering parts of the woods do not have a phone signal.

Cllr Weeks suggested providing sheets similar to those used at the Bioblitz event. These could be picked up at The Watermark and link into trees and animals as part of the walk to engage with the local environment. The Chairperson queried the Longtimber Woods signage locations in the town and if they were lacking in some places. Cllr Lannin stated that Cllr Week's suggestion could be linked into the Big Green Week, and that it would also be nice to do another Bioblitz. The Town Clerk responded that the Bioblitz event took up a lot of staff time, mainly the Assistant Town Clerk and the Admin Officer. The Chairperson requested for this to be planned in for next summer.

MacAndrews Field

Cllr Austen would like more trees planted. Cllr Lannin responded that this depended on the play areas. The Chairperson wished to hold off with more trees until it is clearer if there is any potential for these.

Filham Park

The Chairperson highlighted the restricted access at the fishing lake and enquired if this could be made accessible. The Town Clerk understood this was due to maintenance issues and a couple of paths are breaking up. The Town Council is responsible up to the outer edge of the inner path and the Fishing Club manage the remainder, and have done a good job of the maintenance of the inside. He advised that the Town Council meet with the fishing club periodically, and it would be useful to have a meeting in the near future. The Chairperson also requested to view PADCAC's lease in advance of this to see what break clauses or ability to increase rent may be available to the Council.

The Chairperson enquired if the Council meets with Manstow Football Club and the Cricket Club. The Town Clerk responded that he had emailed them about their diary engagements for using the park. He had only received a response from Manstow but no data. A Filham Park forum had been scheduled for 22 August 2023.

Cllr Weeks suggested the field neighbouring the allotments would make a good wildlife area and if enquiries could be made. The Town Clerk advised that this was the same family who own the land discussed earlier. The Chairperson requested the Town Clerk to enquire if this land might also be available to purchase.

Orchid Avenue

The Chairperson stated that Orchid Avenue would make a lovely orchard and it should be encouraged to be used more. The Town Clerk advised that the neighbours are reluctant for anything formal. The Chairperson queried whether it was worth the regular attendance of the parks officers and perhaps it should be re-wilded or sold to the neighbours. The Town Clerk advised it was land left over from when the houses were built, but he would check covenants. The Assistant Town Clerk advised that parks officers would still need to perform regular inspections of the site whilst it was in Town Council ownership.

Holman Way

Holman Way was discussed and considered a good site for housing. The Town Clerk advised that he would investigate what could be done with these two spaces and aim to bring this back to the next Parks meeting. Then if the committee wish to sell them it will go to Full Council for a decision.

Cllr Lannin queried if there was any guidance for types of bird boxes and this project could be linked in with community groups. The Town Clerk advised that there are only three types and not a lot of variety. This would be similar to the pied flycatcher boxes in Longtimber Wood,

and could involve Makers Mews and the Share Shed in making bird boxes.

Cllr Abbott added that community involvement could include disadvantaged people such as South West Lifeworks.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) liaise with the District and County Council to provide an overview of benches with a view to providing map for the community to use;
- (ii) explore the possibility of installing a composting toilet at the cemetery;
 - (i) explore whether Dame Hannah's facilities could be used;
 - (ii) remove any protruding nails from the bug house;
 - (iii) enquire with the landowners on the opposite side of the river in Longtimber Wood if they are willing to sell their land to enable a bridge to be reinstated;
- (iv) investigate tree signs in Longtimber Woods plus provide sheets linking into these and animals at The Watermark;
- (v) plan a Bioblitz for next summer;
- (vi) set up a PADCAC meeting and issue the Chairperson with a copy of the fishing club lease in advance;
- (vii) enquire if the field neighbouring the allotments at Filham Park is available to be purchased;
- (viii) investigate the covenants on the land at Orchid Avenue and Holman Way with a view to selling, and aim to bring back the information to the next Parks Committee meeting;
- (ix) involve community groups in making bird boxes.

PA23/011 **MEMORIAL BENCHES:** The Senior Finance Officer had provided a report on the charges and costs currently for benches, plus comparison charges for Plymouth City Council and South Hams District Council. The recommendation was to set a minimum price of £750 plus VAT which was a significant increase but still considered a fair price. This would be on a ten-year sponsorship period. There is a lot of demand for benches in the cemetery and a waiting list exists.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) set a minimum price of £750 plus VAT on a ten-year sponsorship period for all memorial benches;
- (ii) clear the waiting list;
- (iii) identify bench locations.

PA23/012 **CEMETERY POLICY:** Members discussed their recent site visit to the cemetery. The cemetery policy needs to be adhered to and reaffirmed, with focus on items adorning graves being placed on the headstone plinth due to there being a risk when strimming and cutting the grass. As a result of not adhering to the policy broken glass and ceramics can be a health and safety risk. Items not able to fit on the headstone plinth

will be retained in a safe place for a temporary period. Reminders are also needed about none use of plastics in the cemetery, and for the signage on the bins for compostable and non-compostable waste to be made clear. Cllr Lannin also requested a sign thanking the public for complying with the cemetery policy.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) place items currently on grave plots onto headstone plinths;
- (ii) remove and retain items that will not fit onto headstone plinths for a temporary period;
- (iii) make clear the signage on bins for compostable and non-compostable waste;
- (iv) produce a sign thanking the public for complying with cemetery policy.

PA23/013 **PLAY AREA AGREEMENT:** The offer to renew the South Hams District Council Play Area Inspection Agreement for 2023-2024 was considered (copy previously circulated). The service is heavily subsidised by South Hams District Council, and includes monthly inspections by qualified Locality Officers and an annual engineering report. The Town Clerk advised that he would check that the monthly inspections were being carried out and obtain a recent report.

It was **RESOLVED** that this Agreement was good value and to accept the automatic renewal and not opt out of the scheme.

PA23/014 **UPDATES AND INFORMATION:** The tender process for the access track had ended today (31.07.23) therefore it was not known to date if there had been any responses. The work is to be fully funded through S106 and the Donkey Sanctuary.

The height barrier has been repaired and road signs warning of the height restrictions installed. Cllr Abbott queried if the barrier could have a forerunner bar to alert drivers. The Town Clerk advised that there is a 10 mph speed limit which would not allow sufficient time for the bar to be effective, however he would investigate if the manufacturer had any suggestions.

South Hams District Council management have scheduled a site meeting at the cemetery extension with contractors on 15 August. Town Council officers will also be in attendance to discuss how access to the extension area will be managed plus arrangements whilst funerals are taking place.

It was **RESOLVED** to investigate the feasibility of a forerunner bar on the height barrier.

The Committee are recommended to resolve to exclude the public and press for the next item as publicity could prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

PA23/015 **FILHAM TRACK:** Issues with the Council owned track between Filham Park and Wadland Lodge were considered (copy previously circulated).

It was **RESOLVED** to undertake repairs to preserve Ugborough Bridleway 6 near Wadland Lodge.

PA23/016 **PLAY AREAS:** The Town Clerk provided an update on the progress of the tender process from Officers and working group (copy previously circulated)

It was **RESOLVED** to delegate Officers to evaluate the bids to achieve best value, and once this process was completed Officers to award the play area contract.

Meeting ended at 8.20pm

Signed.....

Date: 18 September 2023