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## Open Spaces Committee Meeting MINUTES

**21<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2025 at 6.30 pm in the Bird Henstridge**

All members are summoned to attend.

The meeting will commence after there has been an opportunity for members of the electorate of the Parish to speak. There were no residents present at the meeting.

Cllr Scard welcomed everyone to the PC meeting at 6.30pm.

- Present:** Cllr Scard (Chair) Cllr Smith, Cllr Courtenay, Cllr Steel, Cllr Howlett, Cllr Finch, Cllr Graham
- In attendance:** Mr Frazer Cooke, Ann Lee PC Clerk, no residents present
- Apologies for Absence.** To receive and approve apologies for absence including reasons given (Local Government Act 1972 s85 (1). **Cllr Thompson**
- Declarations of Interest.** (Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any Pecuniary or Other interests they may have under the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct) **None declared**
- To approve as a correct record the minutes of the minutes of the Open Spaces Meeting held on the 22 October 2024.** (Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12). **Cllr Scard. Cllr Graham proposed that the minutes presented were an accurate and true record, seconded by Cllr Steel, unanimously carried.**
- To note the Actions from the 24 July Meeting and discuss any matters arising.**

| Minute Reference               | Item                           | Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Outcome                                                                                              |
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| 30 April 2024<br>Cllr Steel    | Southwest in Bloom Entry 2024  | Work supported with volunteers started in May, however although Council took entry £30 fee, application was not submitted. Cllrs acknowledge that the work from volunteers is not wasted and thanked Cllr Steel and volunteers for undertaking this work.<br><b>Cllr Steel reported that the funding is secure and promised by Council. The PC is now waiting for Council notification for re-entry in April 25</b> | <b>ACTION Cllr Steel Apply April 2025.</b>                                                           |
| 30 April 2024<br>Cllr Thompson | Oak Vale wood scheme of works. | Cllrs are now waiting the final quote from a previous employee from KOT. Cllr Thompson's quotes are ready. All quotes will be presented to the PC for decision at the February PC meeting. All quotes and schemes of work to be given to Clerk by the 24 January. Cllr Scard and Finch to                                                                                                                           | <b>Cllr Scard/Cllr Finch to collate all quotes and scheme of works for each and circulate copies</b> |

|                                               |                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                      |
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|                                               |                                                                     | outline difference in schemes presented and appraise in accordance with the previous PC's criteria minuted and provide a proposal for the PC to consider.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | with an outline in the differences of approach and make a proposal for the February PC meeting.                                      |
| 30 April 2024<br>Cllr Scard & Cllr Steel      | Ranger Duties                                                       | Cllr Steel had arranged a 6-month contract with Somerset Landscapes to do a 7-hour day at £220 - £31.42 an hour opposed to £342 - £45.60 (which included dead travel time and rest breaks). She reported the Ranger had been productive. Cllr Steel stated she anticipates wages will increase and anticipate an increase of 5% in expenditure for budget planning purposes. <b>Cllr Steel proposed to increase the budget by 5%, this was seconded by Cllr Graham, and unanimously carried</b><br><b>Cllr Howlett to add to budget forecast for the PC to consider.</b> | <b>ACTION: Cllr Howlett to add to budget forecast in December</b><br><br><b>COMPLETE</b><br><b>Now Closed</b><br><br><b>COMPLETE</b> |
| 30 April 2024<br>Cllr Graham and Cllr Howlett | Water Fountain installation                                         | Water fountain purchased over two years ago by PC for public access to be installed at cold water entry point at Village Hall. Wessex Water checks undertaken. Does not require daily cleaning. Provides public with drinking water without need to access to hall and is in keeping with recreational requirements and sporting fixtures. <b>Since the previous meeting: Cllr J Graham stated that the Village Hall will make their decision on installation on the 22.1.25.</b>                                                                                        | <b>ACTION Cllr Graham</b><br><br><br><br><br><b>ONGOING</b>                                                                          |
| 30 April 2014<br>Cllr Steel and Cllr JGraham  | Recreation Ground duties                                            | <b>Groundsman duties in Recreation Ground</b><br><b>a. White lining of pitches</b><br><b>b. Cutting of main grass area</b><br>Cllr J Graham reported that white lining will continue to be undertaken by the football club; The cricket club will continue to cut the grass. <b>This item is now closed</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>COMPLETE</b><br><b>Now Closed</b>                                                                                                 |
| 24 July 2024<br>Cllr Graham                   | Provision of permanent emergency access at recreation ground        | To present the final plans and provide costs in time for budget planning to full PC with quotes and agree start. <b>This work is now complete</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>COMPLETE</b><br><b>Now Closed</b>                                                                                                 |
| 24 July 2024<br>Cllr Graham and Cllr Finch    | Burial Ground revision of fees and quotes for Burial ground pathway | Path leading through the cemetery needs extending and path routing to ensure plots are respectfully treated by the public. <b>ACTION: Clerk to post current burial fees on the website. For review in accordance with the PCs wishes in April.</b><br><b>PC to review competitive fees in April</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>ACTION</b><br><br><b>COMPLETE</b><br><br><b>For decision in April 2025</b>                                                        |

|                              |            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                               |
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|                              |            | Cllr Graham and Finch to produce a range of options with proposed scheme of works to resolve burial ground path and provide quotes by March 2025.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Cllr Finch and Graham<br>ONGOING                                                                                                                                              |
| 24 July 2024<br>Cllr Howlett | Allotments | <p>a) ACTION i) Cllr Scard and Cllr J Graham to get Les or a contractor to clear vacant plots and seal with black plastic so they can be let again.</p> <p>b) Cllr Howlett, Cllr J Graham, Cllr Steel, Cllr Finch to establish best means of clearing mixed rubbish and make provision to clear rubble from the graveyard that has amassed from grave digging.</p> <p>c) To investigate if the Community Service Payback teams could act as a task team to clear unused plots and cover with black plastic in preparation for new tenants to take over.<br/>ACTION: -Clerk to follow up contact with Community Service Payback team for start date.<br/>Cllr Howlett to write to tenants with a date for a meeting to discuss plans and encourage setting up an allotment Association</p> <p>d) Cllr Scard to ask Les to mow paths throughout the site once mower purchased.</p> <p>a. Allotment payments<br/>ACTION: Clerk to ask RFO for summary of payments received to date from tenants.</p> <p>e) Cllr Howlett to write to the remaining tenants requesting fee payments by the next PC meeting on the 21 January 2025.</p> <p>f) Annual meeting date schedule with allotment tenants<br/>ACTION: To be incorporated into the payment letter with a reply slip to test if tenants want this opportunity.</p> | <p>ACTION:-<br/>ONGOING</p> <p>ONGOING</p> <p>Cllr Howlett</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Howlett</p> <p>Cllr Scard</p> <p>Cllr Howlett</p> <p>Cllr Howlett</p> <p>Cllr Howlett</p> |

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|                          |                              | <p>g) <b>Introduce enforcement management process when tenants do not comply with tenancy agreement</b><br/>Clerk to provide an example</p> <p>h) <b>Cllr Howlett to apply for grant from funding relating to Health and wellbeing from the Council (Contacting Fodo SALC with an expression of interest)</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Howlett</p> |
| 22 Oct 24<br>Cllr Graham | Playground                   | <p><b>Removal of tree stump in the playground following letter of concern.</b><br/>Cllr Graham to contact Cllr Gaymer to ask tree surgeon assistant to undertake this work</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Cllr Graham                      |
| 21 Oct 24<br>Cllr Scard  | Tools                        | <p><b>Provision for handyman's tools (maintenance and spares) To replace the old strimmer's cord and provide a battery replacement or replace with a STIHL strimmer.</b><br/>Cllr Scard stated that both maintenance team members find one of the strimmer's too heavy to use. A cord and battery are required for the strimmer in the Green Shed. A mower replacement is also required. Provision in the budget has been agreed by the PC. Cllr Scard is going to investigate and purchase a lightweight petrol strimmer and a mower before the season starts. This will be undertaken within PC budget limits.</p>                                                                                                                       | Cllr Scard                       |
| 21 Oct 24<br>Cllr Finch  | Asset Register               | <p><b>To review asset the register and ensure accurately compiled with any additional recommendations for replacement of tools to be available for the new budget, compared an alternative option of contracting with Landpower for lease alternatives.</b><br/>Cllr Finch reported that he had reconfigured the Asset Register. He is in the process of locating all the assets registered. He recommended adding the grit bins to the list. He raised concern that a Lenova tablet is missing. Once complete the register will need publishing on the website. He explained that the value of the assets can not be depreciated over time in accountancy terms but that the PC can suggest the life expectancy of each items listed.</p> | Cllr Finch                       |
| 21 Oct 24<br>Cllr Scard  | Plane Tree recreation ground | <b>Cllr Scard to ask Cllr Gaymer to engage tree surgeon to trim lower branches to avoid vandalism once the tree has lost all leaves</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Cllr Scard/Cllr Gaymer           |

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|                                  |                                | <b>Cllr Scard to discuss with Cllr Gaymer and see if the tree stump in the playground can be undertaken at the same time.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                  |
| 21 Oct 24<br><b>Cllr Steel</b>   | <b>Christmas Tree Purchase</b> | Cllr Steel reported that the bark chippings could not be used as they were too acidic for spreading over the jubilee flower bed within the recreation area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Cllr Steel<br/>Item Closed</b>                |
| 21 Oct 24<br><b>Cllr Howlett</b> | <b>Budget preparation</b>      | Provision for Open spaces budget to be provided to the RFO <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintenance provision for Oak vale wood (£1,400 for this year and thereafter £1000 every three years.</li> <li>2. 5% increase in expenditure for the use of the Ranger</li> <li>3. Provision for new maintenance equipment £1,500</li> <li>4. Allotment costs £2,190 for initial work from existing reserves, external grant applications £5k</li> <li>5. Kier/or equivalent for Highways for 3 days provision £2k</li> <li>6. Playground audit uplift 3% and £500 provision for playground/gym repairs</li> <li>7. Consideration for pathways. Styles provision (estimation required)</li> <li>8. Contingency for emergency (estimation required)</li> </ol> | <b>Cllr Howlett<br/>COMPLETE<br/>Item Closed</b> |

## 5) Committee Matters

- a) Oak Vale wood scheme of works, progress and quotes in preparation for decision by PC in February meeting **Cllr Finch/Thompson All quotes and comparative schemes of work to be provided for the PC meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025.**
- b) Football club update **Cllr Graham & Cllr Steel noted that the goal posts have been moved, provision has been made for net extensions. A football tournament is scheduled for August. Cllr Graham will check dates with the Cricket Club.**
- c) Update on pump track repair **Cllr Graham. Cllr Graham has contacted C & G for a quote for surfacing the damaged areas.**
- d) Update on tree stump removal **Cllr Graham This will be undertaken at the same time as the tree in the recreation area has its lower branches trimmed.**
- e) Footpaths and styles discussion regarding recent correspondence from Somerset Council and to resolve a way forward **Cllr Scard and Frazer Cooke**

Mr Cooke reported that there are still 41 pathway defects including 3 bridges and 5 stiles together with vegetation growth.

The next steps are to:-

- a) Seek the PC's response to the Guidance that has been issued by Somerset Council. This response will impact on the role of the PPLO for the Parish.
- b) Agree prioritization of routes that residents feel are critical for repair including the White Hart route.
- c) Establish landowners with pathways on their property

Concern was expressed about a pathway running through the 130-home development. It seems the route is closed. **ACTION** Fraser to write a letter to Eve Winn regarding the closure of the pathway on the development site.

- f) Glasdon Imperial Co Mingle waste bins for the recreation ground including costs and purchasing options for recommendation to the PC meeting in February 2025. **Cllr Steel** Cllrs discussed the anticipated costs, location of PC bins with an objective to reduce the number of bins and use larger receptacles as the cost of emptying is not size dependant.

**ACTION Cllr Steel agreed to investigate cost comparisons and collection schedules to determine best way forward.**

- g) Proposal for 3 dog waste bins to be taken back by the Unitary Authority providing one or two larger bins are in place to reduce long term costs (Charging starts in April 2025) **Cllr Steel. Cllrs agreed that this can be resolved with the use of co-mingle bins.**

- h) To identify the exact site in the church graveyard/cemetery for the relocation of 3/4 headstones for the Young/Dewfall family from the former Congregational Chapel in the High Street. **Cllr Scard. Cllr Scard reported that this has been achieved, and this action is complete.**

To resolve the possible relocation of the three other unattended headstones (names of Scammell and Combs) and advise PC on potential cost for the February PC meeting. **Cllr Scard** Cllr Scard reported that the cost of the relocation of the gravestones would cost c£1,200 and each one would need to be mounted at a cost of £120 each. Cllrs recommended taking steps to photograph the stones and discuss means to archive the location of the original graves in the PCC archives and place a plaque in the cemetery indicating where the unattended graves remain. **Cllr Scard to take steps to achieve this.**

- i) To resolve the graveyard path by relocation of bins, gate control and path determination. **Cllr Finch and Cllr Graham. ONGOING**
- j) To consider burial ground mapping and software to maximise burial spaces and record keeping **Cllr Finch and Cllr Graham ONGOING**
- k) To provide general synopsis of litter areas of concern and make recommendations **Cllr Finch** Cllr Finch identified the areas of concern and concentrate a litter pick in late Spring. **Cllr Finch ONGOING**
- l) To resolve car park entrance ice problems **Cllr Graham** Cllr Graham had been investigating options that included excavation, drainage pipes to accommodate water runoff from the fields. It is costly with estimates exceeding £6k with loss of access to the Village Hall for 4 days. Cllrs debated alternative options including additional lighting and use of gritting. **Cllr Graham to circulate quotes.**

- m) Update on Water fountain installation **Cllr Graham Cllr Graham stated that the Village Hall will make their decision on installation on the 22.1.25.**
- n) Provision for Patio Sweeping **Cllr Graham** Cllr Graham recommended that the patio needs to be swept once a month. Cllrs resolved to ask Les to add this to his schedule.

**Next meeting 15 April 2025**

**Reports and agenda items for submission to the Clerk by the 1 April 2025**

**Exempt Session – Exclusion of the Press and Public**

The Council is recommended to resolve that under section 1, paragraph 2 of the Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting of the following items of business because the publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

**1. To discussion appraisal for maintenance employee ACTION** Cllr Scard and Cllr Steel. Cllr Scard and Steel will arrange to meet all maintenance employees in February 2025.

**Ann Lee Parish Clerk**