

Report of the meeting of the Open Spaces Committee  
held on 6 May 2021 at 7.30pm via video conference

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Present: Cllr Clive Parkinson (Chair)  
Cllr Guy Rawlinson (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Chris Davies  
Cllr Bob Griffin  
Cllr Helen Harrison  
Cllr Pam Shipp  
Cllr Jayne Stansfield  
Cllr Angela Symonds

Mr Mike Elcock – St Mary’s Churchyard  
Mrs Judith Hurford – Tree Warden  
Wendy Sydenham (Deputy Clerk)

(Cllr James Murray – absent)  
(Cllr Martin Trueman – absent)

**1. TO RECEIVE ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY MEMBERS’ DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Guy Rawlinson declared an interest in matters relating to St Mary’s Churchyard as a member of the Holy Mowers.

**3. TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no members of the public present.

**4. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIR OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE**

The Chair nominated Cllr Guy Rawlinson as Vice Chair of the Committee. The nomination was seconded by Cllr Jayne Stansfield. There were no other nominations. The Committee unanimously agreed to the elect Cllr Guy Rawlinson as Vice Chair.

**5. TO APPROVE THE REPORT OF THE PLAYING FIELDS AND CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 06.04.21 AND TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ANY OPERATIONAL ISSUES OR MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORT NOT CONSIDERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

Cllr Jayne Stansfield proposed that the report of the meeting be approved. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Bob Griffin and unanimously agreed.

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that she was in the process of setting up a working group to look into potential planting sites for trees available through the Woodland Trust

scheme as well as considering the use of tree planting to act as a natural barrier to unwanted vehicle access to some of Council's green spaces. The working group would report back to the Open Spaces Committee.

**6. TO APPROVE THE REPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 06.04.21 AND TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ANY OPERATIONAL ISSUES OR MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORT NOT CONSIDERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

Cllr Guy Rawlinson proposed that the report of the meeting be approved. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Chris Davies and unanimously agreed.

**8. TO RECEIVE A GENERAL REPORT ON ST MARYS CLOSED CHURCHYARD**

*(Cllr Guy Rawlinson left the meeting for this item.)*

Mike Elcock updated the Committee on issues relating to St Mary's closed churchyard. They were participating in No Mow May. Contractors had finished some cutting back works.

Permission was requested to install some bees hives in the Churchyard (the previous beekeeper had removed the existing beehives). The Committee agreed to this in principle with the condition that they were installed by someone with the relevant expertise and a risk assessment was completed by that person. The Deputy Clerk agreed to send the previous beehive risk assessment to Mr Elcock to assist with this.

The Chair thanked Mr Elcock for joining the meeting and for providing an update. Mr Elcock left the meeting.

*(Cllr Guy Rawlinson re-joined the meeting.)*

**9. TO RECEIVE A GENERAL REPORT ON TREE PLANTING FROM THE TREE WARDEN**

A report from Judith Hurford, the Tree Warden, had been circulated and was noted. Information on of the Woodland Trust Free Trees scheme had also been circulated.

Mrs Hurford asked for a Councillor volunteer to join the Tree Strategy Group, as the previous Councillor member was not a member of the Open Spaces Committee. Cllr Guy Rawlinson volunteered to become a member. It was noted that this should be added to the list of Councillor membership of outside bodies.

Cllr Jayne Stansfield confirmed that she would continue to chase SGC with regard to areas for tree planting.

**7. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST REGARDING THE ADOPT A KIOSK SCHEME**

Information had been circulated on the scheme. A request had been received by Thornbury In Bloom to adopt the phone box by Nat West Bank and use it for planting. The request was discussed and it was agreed that there may be other uses for the phone box alongside planting by Thornbury In Bloom. It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk

should go ahead with the process of adopting the phone box and its use would be discussed further in due course.

**10. TO CONSIDER ISSUES RELATING THE SPLASH PAD WATER SUPPLY**

An email from the Towns Trust had been circulated and was noted. The email had confirmed that they did not wish to give permission for an additional water pipe to run through the allotments next to the Mundy Playing Fields. The response was noted by Council. Cllr Jayne Stansfield proposed that Council confirms that it does not consider the expenditure necessary to improve the water supply to the splash pad would provide value for money, especially as the preferred route for an additional water pipe was not available, and therefore this project be put on hold. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Chris Davies and unanimously agreed. It was further agreed that this issue should be put on the agenda for a Committee meeting in the autumn when Council could review any complaints received during the summer regarding the splash pad's water supply.

**11. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST TO ADAPT THE PUBLIC TENNIS COURTS FOR OCCASIONAL USE AS A PICKLEBALL COURT**

A letter requesting this had been circulated. The request was discussed and it was noted that adding in pickleball court lines should probably be acceptable as long as they were in a different colour. It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk should arrange a meeting on site with the Thornbury Pickleball Club to talk through the practicalities of the request, in particular how the lowering of the net would work. A representative of the Tennis Club should also be invited to the meeting in order to keep them informed. It was noted that the costs of the changes would need to be met by the Thornbury Pickleball Club.

**12. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON A GRANT APPLICATION FOR REFURBISHMENT OF THE CHANTRY ROAD PLAY AREA**

The Deputy Clerk reported that feedback had been received on its grant application for a fully accessible play area. It had been confirmed that in order to be successful, the application should be amended to include onsite fully accessible toilets and accessible parking. Cllr Helen Harrison proposed that it was noted that the cost of this would be prohibitive and therefore Council had no choice but to withdraw its application for the grant and not proceed with a fully accessible play area on that site. It was further proposed that Council consider applying for a grant for fully accessible equipment when it was next refurbishing the Mundy Playing Fields as this site could better accommodate the facilities that were being asked for. It further proposed that the Deputy Clerk proceed with plans to refurbish the Chantry Road Play Area along the same lines as the Oakleaze Road Play Area. The proposals were seconded by Cllr Bob Griffin and unanimously agreed.

**13. TO NOTE THE FINDINGS OF THE ROSPA INSPECTION OF COUNCIL'S PLAY AREAS IN APRIL 2021**

A schedule of the remedial actions identified during the recent RoSPA inspection had been circulated and was noted. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the high risk actions had already been dealt with and progress would begin on addressing the medium risk actions next.

**14. TO CONSIDER WORKS NEEDED TO THE STEPS BY THE SLIDE AT THE OSPREY PLAY AREA**

The Deputy Clerk reported that there had been significant wearing of the ground between the steps on the grass bank next to the slide at the Osprey Park Play Area. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that she was satisfied that the initial installation of the steps was within regulations and that the wearing of the ground was unfortunate but not predictable. A quote had been received from the company who had installed the steps to install a further six steps which would limit further wear to the ground. The cost would be £630 + VAT and could be covered by the play equipment maintenance budget. Cllr Bob Griffin proposed that we proceed with the works as quoted. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Chris Davies and unanimously agreed.

**15. TO AGREE FEES FOR FIXED PERIOD GRAVE MAINTENANCE FOR 2021/2022 FOR THORNBURY CEMETERY**

Fees for fixed period grave maintenance for 2021/2022 were proposed by Cllr Jayne Stansfield as follows:-

	Service A	Service B
10 years	£700	£850
20 years	£1400	£1700

The proposed fees were seconded by Cllr Bob Griffin and unanimously agreed.

**16. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR STORAGE**

A request had been received by one of the exercise groups who used the Mundy Playing Fields for some storage space for equipment in the Pavilion garden. It was noted that many groups used the playing fields and other requests may be received, and also that the garden was locked and so a key would need to be given to the group. Cllr Jayne Stansfield proposed that this request be denied in light of the precedent it would set. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Helen Harrison and unanimously agreed.

**17. TO CONSIDER A REQUEST TO AMEND THE OPENING TIMES OF THE CAR PARK IN THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS**

A request had been received to extend the 8.00pm closing time of the car park to start on 1<sup>st</sup> April rather than starting on 1<sup>st</sup> May. It was noted that this would logically follow the change to British Summer Time. Cllr Chris Davies proposed that the change be made. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Jayne Stansfield and unanimously agreed.

**18. TO AGREE COUNCIL'S PARTICIPATION IN THE HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2021**

The Committee agreed to open the Town Hall on Saturday 11 September 2021 to participate in the Heritage Open Days.

**19. TO RESOLVE UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS BE EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS AS PUBLICITY**

**WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED**

Resolved.

**20. TO CONSIDER QUOTES FOR A SURVEY OF COUNCIL'S TREES**

The Deputy Clerk provided details of four quotes received for these works. The least expensive quote for the main survey came with a much higher hourly rate for additional advice, which is often needed following storm damage, etc. The second lowest quote for the main survey came free additional advice and was therefore more cost effective overall. In light of this, Cllr Chris Davies proposed that we proceed with the company that provided the second lowest quote for the main survey. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Pam Shipp.

**21. TO CONSIDER QUOTES RELATING TO THE INSTALLATION OF A WATER BOTTLE FILLING UNIT IN THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS**

The Deputy Clerk provided details of quotes for a water bottle filler. These included quotes for a model with a push activation system which is slightly more expensive but would come with lower contamination risks. Cllr Bob Griffin proposed that the Committee agree in principle to proceed with the quote for this model. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Chris Davies and unanimously agreed. It was further agreed that this issue would need to be referred to the Finance and Policy Committee for their approval, as it involved signing up to a three year contract. The Deputy Clerk presented two quotes for installation of the water bottle filler, both from contractors with the relevant approvals. Cllr Bob Griffin proposed that we proceed with the least expensive quote. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Chris Davies and unanimously agreed.