

Report of the meeting of the Open Spaces Committee  
held on 23 November 2021 at 7.30pm  
in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

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Present: Cllr Clive Parkinson (Chair)  
Cllr Bob Griffin  
Cllr Chris Davies  
Cllr Angela Symonds  
Cllr James Murray  
Cllr Jayne Stansfield  
Cllr Martin Trueman (arrived late)  
Cllr Guy Rawlinson

Mr Mike Elcock – St Mary’s Churchyard  
Judith Hurford  
Wendy Sydenham (Deputy Clerk)  
Hannah Cornford (Minutes)

(Cllr Pam Shipp – absent)

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

Apologies were considered and unanimously accepted from Cllr Helen Harrison and Cllr Pam Shipp.

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

There were no members’ declarations of interest.

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

There were no members of the public present.

**4. TO APPROVE THE REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 14.09.21 AND TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ANY OPERATIONAL ISSUES OR MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORT NOT CONSIDERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA**

A correction was made to item 6, regarding the wildflower seed (it will reseed itself, rather than need to be reseeded). The Deputy Clerk updated the Committee that there had been no progress on the outstanding medium and low risk actions from the ROSPA inspections, due to staffing issues, but that we may need to explore outside contractors completing these. The tree works were due to start at the end of the month and monitoring of these would become a standing item on future agendas.

*(Cllr Trueman arrived)*

5. **TO NOTE ANY DECISIONS MADE OUT OF MEETING**

The Committee noted two decisions that had been made out of meeting (these were both for expenditure and agreed by the Chair) as follows:-

- (i) £720 for urgent hedge cutting at the Mundy Playing Fields
- (ii) £1800 to cover costs incurred by the path works contractor at the Chantry Road Play Area for ceasing works on 26 October

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

Mike Elcock updated the committee on works at the churchyard. The Deputy Clerk was getting quotes for a new mower. It was agreed that new keys to the shed could be cut for members of the Holy Mowers team. It was noted that the site had received a 'thriving' award from South West in Bloom and a certificate was on its way.

*(Mr Elcock left the meeting.)*

7. **TO RECEIVE A GENERAL REPORT ON TREE PLANTING FROM THE TREE WARDEN AND CONSIDER A LOCATION FOR THE GOLDEN JUBILEE OAK TREES**

Judith Hurford explained that the trees coming would be too small and vulnerable to be planted immediately into their permanent locations. It was agreed that they would be found a suitable place in her field until they were big enough for transplanting. When big enough, they would be put into the environmental area on Poulterbrook. This course of action was unanimously agreed.

Cllr Stansfield would put onto a South Glos Council agenda an issue regarding a new charge for tree planting on South Glos land, which was proving to be prohibitive.

8. **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE REDEVELOPMENT OF CHANTRY ROAD PLAY AREA, TO CONSIDER AN ALTERNATIVE PATH LAYOUT AND THE ADDITIONAL COSTS INVOLVED, AND TO CONSIDER FURTHER PATH WORKS**

The Chair outlined the situation regarding the path works at the Chantry Road Play Area. Work by contractors had been stopped and a revised path layout had been accepted out of meeting by the Chair. It was noted that the revised layout would cost more than the original layout. The Deputy Clerk confirmed that the play equipment contractor may need to charge for storage if there was a delay to installation beyond February 2022.

The Committee discussed the situation in detail and two proposals were put forward, both of which involved rejecting the revised path layout accepted out of meeting.

- (i) Cllr Martin Trueman proposed an alternative layout (curving inwards). It was noted that this may also be more expensive than the original layout, although the Committee did not have a quote for this and therefore the exact cost was not known. The proposal was seconded by Cllr Guy Rawlinson.

- (ii) Cllr Jayne Stansfield proposed that Council revert to the original layout. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Bob Griffin.

Both proposals were voted on. The first proposal received three votes in favour, one abstention and three votes against. The second proposal received four votes in favour and there were four abstentions. Therefore the second proposal, to revert to the original layout, was carried. Cllr Jayne Stanfield offered to speak to a resident to inform him of this decision.

9. **TO CONSIDER ISSUES RELATING TO A HANGING BASKET SCHEME FOR 2022**

The current supplier was no longer able to supply hanging baskets and it was unlikely that Council would be able to provide a watering service in light of significant staffing and recruitment issues. The Deputy Clerk had not been able to get other suppliers to give quotes for baskets. The difficulties regarding the watering service were noted and it was proposed and agreed that the Deputy Clerk should contact a specific local supplier to see if they could assist with the supply of baskets.

*(Cllr Trueman left)*

10. **TO CONSIDER ISSUES RELATING TO OAKLEAZE GREEN**

10.1 To receive an update on the installation of a hedge/fence on Oakleaze Green

The Chair reported that he had met with a local resident to discuss issues relating to the installation. The fencing works had been delayed but should hopefully take place early in the new year. The trees would be looked after by the Tree Warden until they could be planted after the installation of the fence.

10.2 To further consider requests to install more bollards on the Oakleaze Road side of the Green.

It was agreed that bollards were likely to not be a viable option due to underground services. It was agreed that the Deputy Clerk should investigate other alternatives.

11. **TO CONSIDER OPTIONS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEAR LOCALISM AGREEMENT STARTING IN APRIL 2022**

A quote had been received from South Gloucestershire Council for changes to the way grass cutting was managed on parts of Morton Way and Grovesend Road. This would involve large sections being left uncut, but with an annual “cut and collect” of sections to encourage the growth of wildflowers, etc. The additional cost of £2400 was unanimously agreed. This additional expenditure would be fed into the budgeting process.

*(Judith Hurford left)*

12. **TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL TO LOCATE A COVID COMMUNITY TESTING VAN NEAR THE PAVILION AROUND FOOTBALL MATCH TIMES.**

This was unanimously agreed.

13. **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE PUBLIC TENNIS COURTS WORKING GROUP**

A meeting had been held last week of the working group, also attended by an LTA representative. Various options were identified and would be explored further by the working group and LTA could continue to help with this. It was noted that the current agreement with the Tennis Club has been extended for another 12 months up to May 2023.

14. **TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM THE TENNIS CLUB TO CLOSE THE CAR PARK LATER IN THE SUMMER**

There would be no additional charge to close the car park up to 9:30pm, but later than that would incur one. It was agreed that both proposals be put to the Tennis Club, with them paying the additional charge if they chose this option.

15. **TO CONSIDER POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR THE FIRST MEMORIAL HEADSTONE IN THORNBURY CEMETERY**

The options were discussed and it was agreed to leave the headstone until it fails a topple test and is laid down, then review again at that time.

16. **TO AGREE THE FEES AND CHARGES FOR SPORTING FACILITIES 2022/23**

The new fees and charges were agreed.

17. **TO MONITOR COMMITTEE PROGRESS AGAINST THE COUNCIL BUSINESS PLAN**

The Deputy Clerk reported that progress against the plan was on track. One item could be updated – the Mundy Playing Fields Trust had met and agreed to sign the Management Agreement with Council.

18. **TO CONSIDER AND AGREE ANY COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEE**

This would be the Golden Jubilee memorial oaks, Oakleaze hedge planting, changes to grass cutting at Morton Way and Grovesend Road, the SGC COVID van and the additional equipment at Streamleaze play area.

19. **TO RESOLVE UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMINSSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS AS PUBLICITY WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST BECAUSE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED.**

Resolved.

20. **TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON AND FURTHER CONSIDER QUOTES FOR REPLACEMENT CEMETERY GATES**

The site visit had taken place and a method for fixing of the posts agreed. Committee agreed to go ahead and place the order for the gate as agreed at the last meeting. Quotes had been sought from fitters, but it had not been possible to obtain three quotes for this specialist work. It was agreed to accept the second cheapest quote as the contractor had more experience in this type of work. Council may consider looking at the cost of restoring the stone pillars next year.

The Deputy Clerk reported that the gates at the other end of the cemetery were no longer closing properly. Committee agreed that staff could explore getting these repaired by the same fitter, up to a maximum spend of £500.

In relation to the Cemetery, the Chair reported that there were some issues regarding the planning process for the new extension. A decision may need to be made shortly, out of meeting, regarding how to proceed, but may involve proceeding straight to a full planning application because there were currently significant delays within the pre-application process. It was agreed that we should wait for a written report from Environment Agency before making this decision.

21. **TO CONSIDER QUOTES FOR REPLACEMENT PLAY EQUIPMENT AT STREAMLEAZE GREEN PLAY AREA**

The roundabout and stepping stones had reached end of life and needed to be replaced. Three quotes for replacement equipment were presented and it was unanimously agreed to proceed with the middle valued quote. The least expensive option was only an estimate as it was not based on a site visit and could therefore change and there was also a significantly longer lead time with this contractor.