

Bourton-on-the-Water Parish Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the Village & Environment Committee
held at 7pm on Wednesday 23rd of August 2023
in the Salmonsbury Room, The George Moore Community Centre

Those Present: Cllr B Hadley (Chairman), Cllrs S Coventry, A Davis, J Jowitt, and A Roberts.

In Attendance: Linda Morrison Allsopp Locum Clerk and Cllr L Hicks ex officio.

Members of Public: No members of the public attended.

- 1) **Apologies for absence:** Cllrs Launchbury and Wareing.
- 2) **Declarations of Interest:** None
- 3) **To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on** Wednesday 28th June 2023.
The Minutes were approved as a correct record.
- 4) **Public Session:** There were no members of the public present.
- 5) **Matters Arising:**
 - a) Grass verge agreement with Gloucestershire County Council Highways.
Agreement in Dropbox was drafted to cover the work that was already being done as part of the Parish Council's grounds maintenance contract and charged to GCC Highways for a fixed fee. However, it was agreed at a meeting with Dan Tiffney on the 16th of June it was necessary to review the areas included in the draft agreement as many were in addition to what was currently being covered by the Parish Council. The Clerk sent the documents to Mr Tiffney for review on the 19th of June, with no response so far. This links to item 7.
 - b) Christmas Tree Working Group: Cllr Hadley reported that the Risk Assessment has been completed. Telehandler & driver with licence & insurance are being donated by Hacklings. Thirty to thirty five foot tree has been purchased from a new supplier in Somerford Keynes at a cost of £375. Cost is covered by a donation from Bourton Vale Parking Ltd. Collection of the tree from the supplier on Friday the 17th of November. Dale Hackling has confirmed his assistance. Delivery to the Green on the 18th. Awaiting response from helpers/volunteers.
Lights installed W/C 20th November by Colin Baldwin & Forrester Access.
Switch on Friday 1st December at 4.30pm.
Date of Removal and Disposal of the Tree to be agreed when date for removal of lights has been confirmed by Colin (provisionally Saturday 6th January 2024 8.30am).
Environmentally friendly disposal provided by the tree supplier who will assist with the setting up, to ensure the tree looks its best. Cost a lot less than last year. Suggestion from Cllr Davis that this success story be written up for other Clerks and Parish Councils.

Purchase of a sound system at a cost of £1300 to £1500 still to be considered by Full Council. Could consider making a request to u3a for use of equipment. Presently there are only two events: Remembrance Sunday and the Christmas Tree lighting. However, there are plans for having other events, including a future Centenary Event for the George Moore Building. Agreed that the proposal should go to Full Council in September for outline approval.
 - c) Accessibility Audit:
Original copy of the Audit prepared by Inclusion Gloucestershire in Dropbox gave an opportunity to revisit the issues raised.

Completed so far – Accessible circular walk with leaflet has been completed. Still question on who will maintain it. Suggestion that the Committee go back to Inclusion Gloucestershire for a small piece of work to promote this and Cllr Davis is preparing a funding application. Work in progress – the drop kerbs are being chased with Dan Tiffney at Highways. These will be paid for from the Tourist Levy. Extra slab for seating near the river; quote discussed at Committee but a raised edge may be required to ensure a wheelchair cannot roll into the river. Plans to consult RoSPA. Play areas; Rye Crescent, new pieces of equipment, will be suitable for small children who are disabled.

- d) Data for Ground Rent and where applicable, water charges levied.
Verbal report from Cllr Roberts. Large water bills prompted him to consider charging for water. Cemetery Lane water bills higher than the others. Charge of £22.50 per half plot. At the moment water costs approximate the rental income. Cemetery Lane has a higher water usage per tenant. Cannot quantify the use of the Garden of Remembrance tap which is treated as a tenant.
Comparison rental information for other parish council allotments given. Need to consider an increase in allotment charges. Locum Clerk asked to check if 12 months' notice required. 1st January is the annual renewal date.
- e) Boundary at Piece Hedge allotments: To note installation of grass path between Plots 90a&b by Pete Scarrott instructed under Clerk's delegated authority.
Noted
- f) Village Green Hire Policy: To agree changes to wording to confirm frequency of bookings. Assistant Clerk suggests there is no benefit to fortnightly hire & this may prevent groups from choosing their traditional dates or may prevent hire of Victoria Hall in conjunction with the green. Recommend last part of Clause 4g is removed, ~~'and these will be arranged on alternate weeks, wherever possible, in order to preserve the condition of the Green.'~~
Committee agreed the proposal.
- g) Resurface area under Cemetery Gate: Cllr Roberts to report if a quote to lay slabs and dig an animal underpass is required.
The trip hazard, where most people walk through, has been removed by putting down bark chippings and by re-profiling the ground. Access for animals still allowed, so no further action required. Hasp needs to be recessed further into the stonework so quotes required.
- h) CCTV: To receive an update on possible equipment and funding options.
This has also been debated at Highways, but not a cheap option and little enthusiasm for it.
- i) Bicycle racks: To receive an update on possible locations and funding.
GP surgery suggested as a possible site. Circular seating outside the Willow Pub - add a covered cycle rack. Cycling group visits can be 30-40 in size. Need a walk round to decide. Cllr Hadley and others agreed to do this depending on the date and time. Cllr Davis reminded the Committee that Cotswold District Council have funding available for Cycle Racks.
- j) Jubilee Orchard: To receive an update from the Village Warden re the installation of a new litter bin. No further update. The Village Warden to ask Ubico whether bin behind Manor Close could be relocated to this location as it's often vandalised and collections missed. Committee felt a bin was required behind Manor Close. Should request another one from Ubico.

- 6) **Finance:** To note the current Burials & Allotments and Village Maintenance Cost Centre Summary Reports. Noted.
- 7) **War Memorial:** To receive grant offer from War Memorials Trust towards memorial repairs and sign contract to accept conditions & proceed.
Grant offer of up to £280, 50% of the eligible costs. Method Statement and conditions must be followed to qualify for the grant. Committee agreed to accept Agreement and send to Full Council for signature. Removal of wreaths and cleaning of the War Memorial prior to Remembrance Sunday to be added to the Agenda for the next meeting.
- 8) **Churchyard & Cemeteries:**
- a) **Memorial Testing at Cemetery and St Lawrences:** To agree a schedule and receive updated quotes. The Committee need to agree a schedule of testing within cemetery & churchyard & agree contractor.
There are eight hundred to a thousand gravestones, but not all require testing. Proposal to provisionally accept the Richard Smith quote of £3.75 per memorial, subject to a site meeting. Prewarn Parishioners in the next Browser article that the checks will be taking place and the liability rests with the owner of the head stone, not the Parish Council.
- b) **Rotted roof timbers at the Lychgate:** To consider recommendations and quotation from Paul Honour to address rotten timbers.
Paul Honour has advised that the removal of a stone is required before he can provide a final quote. He needs to quote for the work to provide the final quote. Assistant Clerk to request the quote. If the final quote is higher than this year's budget then it can be included in the budget for next year.
- 9) **Village Maintenance:**
- a) **Village maintenance contract:** To receive a report from Cllr Roberts on the meeting held with the contractors on 14th July to discuss any issues with items on the specification and agree further actions.
Verbal report from Cllr Roberts. Contract in Dropbox for reference. Idverde are having problems identifying parts of the village and the Assistant Clerk is having to contact them on a weekly basis when work is not being done, yet in other areas compliments are being received from Parishioners. The Locum Clerk informed the Committee that the contractors are billing the Parish Council for work in Moreton in Marsh and despite repeated emails from the Assistant Clerk and a call from the Locum Clerk, they are continuing to do so.
- b) **Additional maintenance works**
Weed and tidy Jubilee Garden beds: To consider quotation from idverde to carry out additional maintenance with additional plants at a cost of £1550. This was not agreed. The item was deferred to see if volunteers could be recruited to do the work.
Cut back Station Road hedge at Traffic lights at a cost of £650. Agreed to go to Full Council.
- 10) **Village Green:**
- a) **Byelaws signs:**
- a) To consider quote from The Wright Signs for new sign on the Village Green (as per 30th May Extraordinary Meeting item 23/045(1)) and on Clapton Row Green, to replace the temporary sign currently attached to a tree, at a cost per A2 aluminium composite sign of:
- (1) £105 without post kit or
 - (2) £215 with post kit including fitting.

Village Green does not need a post, it can be attached to an existing structure, but a post kit will be required for Clapton Row Green. Proposed to purchase both a sign without post kit and a sign with the post kit. Agreed by Committee.
Cllr Roberts suggested that the temporary sign could be used at the Victoria Street Green.

- b) Agree date and who will install the fencing to protect the Village Green during the winter months. Quote from idverde received for £795. Committee agreed a date of Monday 4th December to put up the fencing and to dismantle the fencing on Monday 25th March 2024. Proposal that idverde be asked to quote on the basis of £1000 for both the erection and dismantling of the fencing. Cllr Roberts to chat with idverde.
- c) Agree date to inspect the Village Green with the maintenance contractors to reseed and returf where necessary. Ask idverde for a meeting in early October with Cllrs Hadley and Roberts to quote for the work. Cllr Roberts to discuss with them.

11) Allotments:

- a) Springvale boundary fence: To receive report from Cllrs Roberts and Davis on the site meeting with CDC on 10th July.
Verbal Report from Cllrs Davis and Roberts. Parish Council responsible for the boundary fence and a quote for the work is required from Peter Scarrott. Cllr Davis and Roberts to have meeting with Mr Scarrott to explain what is required.
- b) Cemetery Lane: To consider a request to split Plot 25a into two halves to make a more manageable size plot for the existing tenant. This is the only plot on the whole site that has not been halved. Recommendation from Assistant Clerk is to approve request as this would also help reduce the waiting list (currently 10). Committee agreed.

12) Ash Die Back Replacement Trees: To consider offer from Gloucestershire Highways and decide on a response.

Form to be returned by the 1st of September. Trees to be planted between November and March

Two options

- 1. Submit areas to be considered for replanting on highways land by the Ash Dieback Team
- 2. Submit a request for whips/trees to be donated, for the parish council to plant themselves within the community.

Cllr Davis to research and feedback on possible sites, so that an application can be submitted before the 1st of September.

13) Bench cleaning: Cllr Roberts to report on the outcome of his approach to the Village Warden and the Clean & Green Team requesting assistance to clean the benches and litter bins.

Cllr Roberts gave a verbal report. Clean & Green Team have been disbanded and the Village Warden has declined.

Proposal to write to Ubico and request they clean big black bins inside and outside. Request to the Scout Group to clean the benches.

14) Environmental Action Working Group: Cllr Wareing to update from recent meetings.

In the absence of Cllr Wareing, the Environmental Action Group report was deferred to the next meeting on the 7th of September. Cllr Hadley will create the agenda for this and the election of a new Chairman will be the first item. Check the terms of reference if the chairman can be a non-councillor.

15) Correspondence:

- a) Email re the grass cutting at Bourton Chase Phase III. Covered in item 5a.
Email in Dropbox from GCC Highways requesting that Kingfisher Road and the surrounding areas be added to the grass cutting schedule. This has yet to be specified & costed by Dan Tiffney.
- b) Email from David Ashton re update on Japanese Knotweed
Report that eradication is complete for this year. Re-application will be required next year.
- c) Email from resident re Community Safety Officers.
Community Safety Officers are outside the remit of the Parish Council. This is a policing issue and when the Parish council ask for support the Police response is that they do not have the resources. Answer to the resident with this information.

16) Items to note. To receive reports for information only.

- a) Report received from tenant at Cemetery Lane allotments that the boundary fence bordering Greystones Lane is damaged/rotten and in need of attention. Cllr Roberts will check.
- b) Curbing stones outside what was the Mad Hatters, at the Old Ford, are missing. Add to the agenda for the next meeting.
- c) Assets of Community Value list is to come back to Council. Cllrs Davis and Samuel working on this. Councillors to circulate for comment before next Parish Council meeting.
- d) Harrington House are floating their little boats down the river every Thursday. Benefits the Parish because they remove the dams and they raise money to look after local footpaths.

17) Date of Next Meeting: 7.00pm on Wednesday 13th September 2023 in the Salmonsbury Room.

18) Confidential Session: Resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 Section 1, extended by the Local Government Act 1972, Section 100, that the following items are confidential as they relate to individual allotment tenancies. As such, the press and public are excluded from this part of the meeting. This was agreed and Cllr Hicks left the room.

19) Cemetery Lane Allotments: To receive correspondence from two allotment tenants (Confidential Paper 10a & 10b) and agree actions.

Committee agreed to write to the first tenant explaining that if they have a physical problem that restricts their ability to carry water, then please put in a request for dispensation. Add the need to follow the Dignity and Respect policy to the Tenancy Agreement, with the required notice.

20) Annual allotment inspections by Cllrs Hicks and Roberts: To review inspection findings and agree further actions. Cllr Hicks was welcomed back to provide their report. Committee accepted the report and Assistant Clerk to write to the highlighted tenants.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.28.