

The Minutes of the Village Environment Committee (VEC) Meeting held on Wednesday 9th June 2021

A meeting of the VEC was held on Wednesday 9th June 2021 at 7.00 pm where members of the public were also invited. The following Councillors were present: -

Present: Cllrs P. Millett (Chair), S. Coventry, B. Hadley, L. Hicks, A. Roberts, B. Wragge
Observer: Cllr A. Davis

1. Apologies for absence: None
2. Declarations of Interest: None
3. Minutes of the Village Environment Committee meeting held on 12th May 2021: It was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously to approve the minutes, subject to the amendment of Item 6.11 header in which "Forrester Access" is changed to "Village Sign".
4. Matters arising:
 - a. Springvale Allotment Rent: It was noted that back payments of rent have now been paid;
 - b. Protection of Village Green drain with an angled trash screen: Ongoing – Cllr Roberts will provide an update at the next meeting.
5. **Village Maintenance**
 - 5.1 **New CDC Litter Bins:**
 - The committee noted arrangements for the installation of new bins by end-June with the later addition of bin "wraps" – the office will progress the preparation of artwork for the wraps when bin sizes are to hand, for committee approval in July;
 - Cllrs Hadley and Hicks reported from their meeting with Bourton Primary Academy Y5 pupils to discuss their concerns relating to plastic pollution and littering in the village. It was unanimously agreed to involve those pupils in the design of one of the bin wraps and posters; the committee welcomed the future involvement of Primary Academy pupils in matters of common interest;
 - 5.2 **Trees:**
 - i) Parish Council trees:
 - a) Inspection: It was noted that the inspection is now due and not all works undertaken in the previous inspection dated 2018 have been completed. It was proposed and seconded that the committee commissions a new survey (to include St Lawrence's churchyard) without delay to identify all tree works required at this stage rather than rely on an out of date inspection, unanimous agreement. In the event any emergency works are identified these will be instructed without further delay.

Standing Orders were suspended: Cllr Davis asked the committee to also consider including works to some trees not in the Council's ownership where the ownership was uncertain and affecting highways visibility or accessibility issues.

 - b) Tree Management Policy: It was proposed and seconded that, in line with the policy, a retained tree surgeon would be appointed for the next 3 years, to include carrying out the approved survey and any works arising from it, unanimous agreement. The office is instructed to progress the obtaining of the relevant number of quotes, including drawing the attention of those surgeons with whom the Council has previously worked to the opportunity;
 - c) Jubilee Orchard: The committee noted the Tree Warden report about works required at Jubilee Orchard which are outside the scope of the 2018 Tree Survey, and it was proposed and seconded to instruct tree works as per the Warden's report dated 24th May, unanimous agreement. Office to obtain costings for the work for Council approval in July. NB: The Committee offered a vote of thanks to Sue Pacini for her ongoing assistance in maintaining Council's trees, which is very much appreciated. The office is instructed to instruct works to repair the entrance gate using Clerk's delegated powers.
 - ii) GCC: Ash Die-Back consultation: The Committee agreed not to request any trees for planting on Council land, but to consider any offers of free trees that may arise from the occasion of the Queen's Platinum celebration;
- 5.3 **Signage:**
 - i) Bye-Laws sign: It was proposed and seconded that one new sign is located on the post opposite Hartwells, agreed by majority vote – Office to instruct P. Scarrott to install the sign, facing the Green;

ii) Village Green signage: It was proposed and seconded to defer the decision regarding a date for a survey of village signage to the July meeting, to allow information about snagging issues with TRO signage and government advice relating to Covid-19 social distancing after 21st June to be considered, unanimous agreement. After a brief discussion regarding village signage in general it was clear that the committee wished to improve the visual impact of signage to allow legal signs to be properly displayed and other signs to be presented in a more cohesive and attractive format. This will be taken forward at the time of the survey.

Standing Orders were suspended: Cllr Davis asked the committee to take into account that some signs are under the ownership of primary authorities and sought assistance in improving some signage throughout the parish, as well as around the Village Green

iii) The committee noted Paxweld's quote is awaited for works required to refurbish the Village Sign fixings;
5.4 Accessibility Audit: The Clerk is instructed to investigate alternative options about an accessibility audit (GRCC, Cirencester & S. Cotswolds Access Group); to obtain a quote from Accessible Glos about the area identified (Rissington Rd car park to The Avenue on both sides of the river); to seek information from Stow TC regarding the scope and benefits of their recent audit.

Standing Orders were suspended: Cllr Davis emphasised the importance of all future advertising and job specifications to be gender neutral.

5.5 Maintenance Services Contract It was noted that the advertising of all future roles and job descriptions would be gender neutral. It was proposed and agreed to adjust the draft contract to make provision about insurance and to include the hourly rate; Committee to make a recommendation for Council to approve the contract at its July meeting once the Clerk has confirmed the maximum sum that can be instructed under delegated powers;

5.6 Clapton Row Village Green: It was proposed and agreed that this item would be deferred until after the new Clerk is in post, at which time consideration will be given to various ways in which protection can be delivered using a cost-effective solution.

Standing Orders were suspended: Cllr Davis advised of Council's links with the Quarry so this may enable access to any stone if required.

5.7 Christmas display:

- It was proposed and agreed to accept the generous offer from Bourton Vale Car Park to donate the tree in 2021, unanimous agreement; the office will liaise with Cllr Hadley about the order of the tree from the 2020 supplier;
- It was proposed and seconded to recommend to Council for approval at its July meeting the purchase of 12 sets of replacement tree lights (to include spares) up to the sum of £500 in line with C. Baldwin's quote dated 7th June, unanimous agreement.
- Cllr Hadley to liaise with the office about all arrangements relating to the display prior to works instructions being issued within the agreed budget;

5.8 CDC Welcome Back Fund: There are no schemes relevant to this committee which can be progressed under this scheme – the information will be forwarded to the Tourism Action Group for consideration;

Standing Orders were suspended: Cllr Davis asked to be copied into the inform her representation on GMTF.

6. Burials

6.1 Cemetery Shed It was proposed and agreed that the committee will defer this work and bid for a project budget of circa £2k (subject to demolition costs also being included) within the 2022-23 financial year to enable its replacement at that time, unanimously agreed; it was unanimously agreed to donate the benches and bins to Bourton Vale Cricket Club prior to the shed being locked with no further access being permitted prior to its later demolition – Cllr Millett to liaise with the cricket club;

6.2 St Lawrence's Churchyard The committee agreed to discuss maintenance in general and mowing arrangements in particular at its meeting in August; Cllrs Hicks and Wragge were delegated to undertake the annual Risk Assessment of the churchyard and cemeteries in accordance with the agreed inspection template and report back to the committee's meeting in July;

7. Allotments

7.1 Cemetery Lane

- It was proposed and seconded that the Committee approve the tenant proposal for a traditional Surplus Produce stall to be located at the entrance, unanimously agreed, subject to no produce being left out overnight and all arrangements relating to the running of the stall to be at the tenant's own responsibility;
- It was proposed and seconded that the Committee approve the tenant proposal for a new shed subject to the shed being within the permitted size, unanimously agreed; it was unanimously agreed that the committee will remain responsible for the approval of all structures;

7.2 Springvale

- The committee noted P. Scarrott has been instructed by the office to make minor repairs to signage on the footpath boundary;
- It was agreed that Cllr Roberts would inspect the reported area of damage by tree roots to a neighbouring property and bring recommendations back to the committee in July for consideration/action;

8. **Any Other Business**

8.1 Risk Assessments: The office is asked to prepare an inspection template to enable all assets under the responsibility of the committee to be undertaken in a timely manner, for the committee's consideration in July and agreement about an inspection date;

8.2 Village Green bye-laws: Cllr Hadley advised the committee that the bye-laws were based on HCLG's model set, which is not able to be amended in terms of the wording or clauses included without specific application to HCLG; this process is likely to be lengthy and is not guaranteed of success. It was agreed that it would be helpful to liaise with the local Police team in order to ensure all parties are aware of the interpretation of the laws and the responsibility/ability for enforcement in respect of the tethering/grazing of horses on the Green. The committee will consider whether the current signage requires amendment to accurately reflect the bye-laws as part of its review of village signage in general

Standing Orders were suspended: Cllr Davis asked that information is published once these issues have been clarified to address the current confusion amongst residents, visitors and the Police as to what is permitted and what action is available.

9. **Date of Next Meeting** – Wednesday 14th July 2021 at 7.00 pm.

Projects Held Over:

- New Burial Space
- Potential formation of an Allotment Association
- Replacement of Cemetery Shed
- Protection of Clapton Row Village Green