

DURSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES and REPORT of the MEETING of the GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE of the Council held in the **Dursley Library, May Lane, Dursley** at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 18th September 2018 for presentation to the Council on the 2nd October 2018.

PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor A Stennett.

Councillors: P Hayes, J Burdge, M Stennett, B Cairns (Vice Chair), J Ball, N Grecian

In Attendance: Town Clerk, J Kay, Deputy Town Clerk, L Wellings; Deputy Town Clerk; Cllr A Whitwell and M Woodward.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies received from Councillor M Nicholson (work).

2. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations were received.

4. REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no representations from the public.

5. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Green Spaces Committee Meeting held on the 12th June 2018, having been circulated among the members, were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6. CHAIRMAN'S VERBAL REPORT

The Chairman reported that agreed plans to construct communal compost bins on the allotment site had stalled; in light of this, the Deputy Town Clerk had researched and obtained quotations for wooden slat extension module type compost bins.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Council Office purchase 2 wooden slat extension module type compost bins, up to a total cost of £200.

7. TO RECEIVE THE INDEPENDENT PLAY INSPECTION REPORTS

The Independent Playground Inspection reports from the Play Inspection Co and the Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association, were considered.

It was noted that low risk findings and minor issues had been highlighted, these would be included in the Grounds Staff work programme.

The report for Kingshill Play Area highlighted issues with the basket swing; a moderate risk was identified due to one of the wooden posts showing some signs of rot.

The Deputy Town Clerk presented quotations for a replacement swing and advised the Committee to consider a longer-term plan for Kingshill Play Park equipment, given the expected life of the wooden pieces.

IT WAS RESOLVED to refer the matter of Kingshill Play Park and the swing's removal and replacement, to the next full Council meeting on 2nd October 2018.

8. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL MEMORIAL INSPECTION REPORT

The Kingshill Cemetery Inspection Report, undertaken by Council Ground and Office staff during 2017-2018 and circulated with the agenda, was reviewed and noted.

The report included information relating to the annual memorial inspection, general grave space inspection and turfing in the Cemetery.

It was recognised that the number of memorials being laid down had risen and staff would be looking closely at memorial issues to identify areas and processes that could be improved alongside contractors.

9. REGARDING THE GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE/GARDEN OF REST:

- a) The Deputy Town Clerk gave an update on the Garden of Remembrance at Kingshill Cemetery.

It was noted that several complimentary comments had been made regarding recent maintenance works; the area is continuing to be monitored closely and improvements to kerbing and weed control would be further investigated.

- b) The Deputy Town Clerk gave an update on the Garden of Rest at St Mark's Burial Ground.

It was noted that the Council office is monitoring the number of remaining vacant plots and would continue discussions with the Church on any management issues.

- c) An update to the Memorial Plaque Application Form and Guidelines for Planting and Memorials, circulated with the agenda, was considered. The proposed update concerned the inclusion of a paragraph on planting.

IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the proposed update to the Application Form and Guidelines.

- d) A change to memorial plaque fees, in light of a supplier cost increase, was considered. The new supplier costs were noted as £55.90 +VAT (6"x4") and £119.75 +VAT (12"x4") (incl. postage).

IT WAS RESOLVED to change the 'Cost of Plaque' fees stated on the Council's Burial Ground Fees and Charges schedule, to reflect the exact amounts charged by the supplier.

10. REQUEST TO PLACE AN ADDITIONAL INSCRIPTION ON A MEMORIAL

A request to place an additional inscription on a memorial was considered.

It was noted that in this particular case the owner of the Exclusive Right of Burial (ERB) was deceased and it had not been possible to complete a transfer of the ERB; the Council office had completed a considerable amount of work relating to background investigations.

Advice on the case had been sought from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM).

IT WAS RESOLVED to allow the additional inscription in this case, given the exceptional circumstances and ICCM advice on the matter. A letter would be drafted by the Council Office and approved by the Committee Chairman, it would make clear that permission is granted subject to an understanding that it does not imply any rights over the grave, and if somebody with a right to ownership turns up and claims it the memorial may have to be removed at the expense of the person who paid for it should the new owner object to it.

IT WAS RESOLVED to consider the ICCM advice more widely in relation to similar issues during the next review of the Cemetery Regulations.

11. UPDATE ON TREE WORKS

The Deputy Town Clerk gave an update on tree works as a result of the 2018 Tree Inspection Report.

It was noted that priority works had been undertaken to remove dead branches at Highfields Play Area, on trees at the Market Place and at the War Memorial Recreation Ground, in areas over the road. Works to sever ivy on various trees had commenced and would be completed by the end of September 2018.

It was noted that the removal of a Holly tree in St Mark's Burial Ground and the removal and replacement of a Hawthorne on the grass verge at Kingshill Cemetery, would be programmed to take place next year.

In relation to the dead Elm trees, the Deputy Town Clerk had been in contact with a bat expert from Gloucestershire Wildlife and was awaiting a date for a site meeting.

12. REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S INSPECTION PROGRAMME FOR GREEN SPACES

Council's current Inspection Programme for Green Spaces was reviewed.

It was noted that the Contractor Check for the BMX surface had not been undertaken since the resurface work in 2017; the surface is subject to a general monthly inspection by a RPII Level 2 qualified member of the Ground Staff team and is included in the independent annual play inspection, with no issues arising to date.

IT WAS RESOLVED to remove the Contractor Check for the BMX surface from the Inspection Programme, a contractor check would be arranged on an 'as and when'

basis, should the Council’s routine play inspections highlight any issues with the surface.

It was recognised that the annual memorial inspection would be better suited to an ‘every 2 years’ programme, given the current practice and ongoing follow up work. This timescale would not fall outside the advice given at a recent ICCM memorial course attended by the Senior Grounds Staff.

IT WAS RESOLVED to change the annual memorial inspection to take place every 2 years.

13. UPDATE ON INVESTIGATIONS INTO ESTABLISHING A PETANQUE TERRAIN ON THE WAR MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND (WMRG)

The Deputy Town Clerk presented a report on the proposal for a Petanque terrain on the WMRG and investigations so far.

It was noted that the proposal is not identified as a Green Spaces project and no money has been allocated to such improvements in the budget.

Members expressed general support for the idea and suggested it could be a good crowdfunding project. Area A, in the corner of the field closest to the Community Centre was considered to be a good location.

IT WAS RESOLVED to continue investigations, including funding opportunities, and get quotations for the installation of a terrain in Area A (with and without fencing).

14. ACCESS TO THE CHILDREN’S PLAY AREA WHEN THE WAR MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND (WMRG) IS HIRED OUT FOR TICKETED EVENTS

The Town Clerk reported on the negative feedback received during/following the closure of the fenced children’s play area on the WMRG at the recent Carnival Dursley weekend; people felt that access to the play park during ticketed events should be maintained as it is a public facility.

The Committee was asked to consider this.

While it was recognised that the play park should be kept open during ticketed events where possible, it may be difficult to do so for some e.g. Fireworks night.

IT WAS RESOLVED to review the Council’s Terms and Conditions of Hire for Green Spaces.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:04pm.

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Chairman

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Date

