

# WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



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## Washington Parish Council Open Spaces (Recreation, Allotments, Footpaths and Conservation) Committee Meeting

Draft MINUTES of the Committee Meeting held on Monday 18th April 2016 at Washington Village Hall

**PRESENT:** Cllr Whyberd (Chairman), Cllr Milner-Gulland, Cllr Newman

**ALSO:** Zoe Savill (Clerk to Washington Parish Council)

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Parish Tree Warden, Mr David Hill

**ABSENT:** Cllr Dore (unwell) and Cllr Muddle, Cllr Thomas

**Cllr Whyberd opened the meeting at: 19:00 hours**

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Thomas (work)

**2. Declaration of interest and Dispensations.**

None received

**3. Approval of the Minutes of the last Open Spaces (Recreation, Allotments and Open Spaces meeting**

The Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the 21st March, 2016 were **accepted** as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

**4. Public Question Time**

Cllr Whyberd welcomed the new Parish Tree Warden, Mr David Hill, to the meeting and invited him to speak about his new role. Mr Hill gave an overview of the position which was primarily to monitor the health of the trees in the parish and to educate the public of the value of the trees. He reported that there were a host of projects which could be undertaken to achieve this, and that with the help of the public, he would start by identifying the ancient trees, those over 300 years old, and register them on a national database. He said there were a great number of very old

trees in the parish and he welcomed any pictures, particularly those taken on GPS-enabled phones, as well as the measurement of the girth of trees, for identification purposes. Cllr Milner Gulland, suggested it might be useful for Mr Hill to have a list of all the trees in the area with a preservation order from the tree officer at Horsham District Council. Mr Hill agreed to make the arrangement and that he would be attending committee meetings from time to time to give any updates of his progress. Cllr Whyberd said that the Parish Council would help all they could, and thanked him for his informative introduction.

### **Matters arising from previous minutes**

The clerk reported that due to staff sickness and bad weather, Andrew Gale had postponed planned remedial works to three trees on the allotments until Thursday 12th May. Cllr Milner Gulland asked what was happening to the big tree on the allotment. Cllr Whyberd said the Parish Council had previously agreed not to do anything but would not object if one of the allotment holders wanted to do the work instead. The clerk agreed she would follow this up.

## **5. Allotments**

*To receive and discuss any update regarding possible planning restrictions on parking by the allotments and in Sandhill Lane, and a proposal for a yellow line outside the allotment entrance.*

The clerk was unable to provide an update and hoped there would be a response from Horsham and West Sussex County Highways in time for the next meeting. However, she noted that similar complaints made to Horsham's enforcement officer John Attfield last year, had resulted in an investigation and that no action had been necessary. The clerk agreed to make enquiries. Cllr Newman reported that at a recent CCLC meeting there was some discussion about double yellow lines and that it was more effective if parish councils, rather than individuals, requested them. Cllr Whyberd said this was unlikely because Washington had, according to Cllr Philip Circus, already reached its quota of one TRO allowed in each area by West Sussex County Highways.

## **6. Recreation Ground and Parish Property**

*To discuss and agree a draft schedule of hire charges for the Recreation Ground*

The clerk was awaiting further information in order to complete a schedule of hire charges for the Recreation Ground for consideration by the Committee.

### **Ground Maintenance**

Cllr Whyberd reported that a representative from the Sussex FA inspected the Recreation Ground earlier in the month to assess its suitability for an improvement grant. The meeting had been organised by Sarah Osbourne of Ashington Cougars junior football club which hopes to use the grounds for future fixtures. Sarah attended the meeting, with Danny Flynn and the Washington clerk. A soil test was performed and the FA would be sending a report of their findings. However, the clerk was informed that funding for ground improvements was unlikely but it was possible there may be a grant available towards new goal posts. The FA representative recommended the mole draining by Danny Flynn later in the year, as an effective measure to greatly improve the very damp ground conditions.

### **Village Hall**

Nothing to report

### **Youth Shelter**

Nothing to report

### **MUGA**

Nothing to report

### **Children's Play Area**

*To discuss and receive any update on the application for S106 funding for the provision of improvements to the Children's Play Area.*

Cllr Whyberd reported that the clerk had been informed by Horsham that the s106 monies for the scheme was now approximately £2,500 less than the £28,605.14 originally expected. It was not clear whether the amount was included in the original figure last year or that it was allocated to a scheme in Storrington.

Cllr Newman asked if the school might be willing to contribute towards the play area from funds raised at the Village Day and also suggested the clerk approach local businesses and prominent individuals. The clerk agreed to follow this up.

Cllr Whyberd said that a reduction to the scope of the proposals for the children's play area was a last resort if the PC were unsuccessful in generating the shortfall from elsewhere.

### **Bus Shelters**

Nothing to report

### **Parish Noticeboards**

## **8. Footpaths and Bridleways**

*To receive and discuss the progress of the formation of the mini country park and laying out of footpaths on land north of the Millford Grange development*

The clerk reported that she had not had a response from the National Trust regarding their talks with Barratt Homes to take over the management of the park. Principal Planning Officer (Horsham South) Hazel Corke, had been unable to update the Parish Council on the progress of the development of the park in time for the meeting. Earlier this month, Cllr Paul Marshall (HDC) had contacted Horsham for clarity on the legal agreement on the Country Park Management Scheme and was informed that it should be implemented before the occupation of the 39th dwelling. A Long Term Landscape Management Strategy in respect of the Country Park had been submitted and approved by the Council's Landscape Officer in November in 2014. Cllr Beglan told Councillors that there were signs of landscaping works and a gateway had been created to the site but progress seemed slow. The clerk to update Councillors on progress of the park and the new footpath by the NT from Georges Lane, through the NT field, and joining up with the new country park south of Sandy Lane.

### **Conservation issues**

Cllr Milner Gulland reported on a site visit at the Triangle between himself, Cllr Whyberd and Dr Tony Whitbread of Sussex Wildlife Trust. There had been a useful discussion and Dr Whitbread had suggested that it should be made into a Local Wildlife Site, although this did not give it any statutory protection, but it appeared to have advantages in terms of making sites so designated less of an attraction to developers.

Dr Whitbread had been particularly impressed with the orchid area, and the chalk stream. However, because of funding constraints, the Trust would probably be unable to support the Parish Council financially in the management of the Triangle. Dr Whitbread was generally in favour of not too much management and that any tidying and fencing could be undertaken by volunteers. Cllr Whyberd said he hoped to put the Triangle on the Community Asset Register, and he would be contacting St Mary's School to promote the site as a place of scientific interest ideal for educational visits. Cllr Whyberd would also be reporting on the meeting at the APM on the 19th April, and appealing for volunteers.

### **9. Any other Open Space, Recreation & Allotment and Footpaths & Conservation issues that may arise OR items for the next Agenda**

*To receive any update from HDC regarding the provision and maintenance of a dog bin at Sandgate Park.*

The clerk had no further update from HDC to establish who would be responsible for the maintenance and emptying of a dog bin following a request by a local resident to provide one at one of the entrances of Sandgate Park. Cllr Whyberd commented that he was not in favour of a dog bin in Bracken Close, and that any provision should be within the confines of the Park, and the responsibility of Horsham District Council. Cllr Heeley said this was unlikely as Horsham was not prepared to install bins unless they were positioned outside the park for ease of access.

*Footpath/bridleway over the bridge at Washington*

Cllr Britt reported that the muddy conditions had made the path impassable, and the ground never dries out. Cllr Whyberd suggested that the problem was more to do with the materials used for the surface, He said that the conditions were better when Fittleworth stone was used but the ground up concrete was not as effective. A major factor with this path was overgrowth of Laurel hedges on both sides which meant that the path was not dried out by the sun.

*Clean for the Queen*

Cllr Britt confirmed that the "Clean for the Queen" litter pick around Washington would be taking place on Saturday 7th May. Volunteers would be meeting at the Village Hall Car Park at 1.30am.

### **The Meeting Closed at 19:55 hours**

Date of the next OSRA Committee meeting 23rd May 2016

Signed.....

Date.....