

# WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



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

**MINUTES** of Open Space (Recreation, Allotments, Footpaths and Conservation) Committee Meeting to be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September at 7:45pm at Washington Village Hall (Doré Room)

**PRESENT:** Cllr S Buddell, Cllr B Hanvey, Cllr T. Keech (Chairman) and Cllr J Luckin

**ALSO:** Clerk to the Council Ms Z Savill

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** 0

**ABSENT:** 0

The Meeting was opened by the Chairman at 7:45pm.

- 0/9/23/1** To Receive and Approve apologies for absence.  
None received.
- 0/9/23/2** To Receive Declarations of Interest as defined under the Localism Act 2011.  
None
- 0/9/23/3** To Approve the Minutes of the last meeting  
The Committee **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the OSRA meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were a correct record and duly signed by Chairman.
- 0/9/23/4** Public Speaking  
None.
- 0/9/23/5** Outstanding Action and Matters Arising from the last meeting:  
The following report of Outstanding Actions and Matters Arising was previously circulated and noted.

Action	Progress
New noticeboards at Pixies Corner and Village Hall to be ordered for installation.	Signs of Cheshire confirmed (email 13 <sup>th</sup> Sep) the boards were made and would be delivered in the next two weeks. Clerk to notify in Nick

	Blunt Fencing who will be doing the installation.
Annual tree inspection to be arranged for August 2023. Clerk to action	Actioned. Inspected by Gale Tree Consultancy. TC. Report to be reviewed at OSRA Meeting on 18 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2023 agenda item O/9/23/16
Arrange skip for clearing rubbish behind allotments. Clerk to action and notify Stewards.	Actioned. Skip to be delivered to the site on 29 <sup>th</sup> September. Plot Holders notified.
Arrange to have Plot 7 split into two; and to plant hedging in gaps in the hedging by the Recreation Ground.	Actioned. Groundsman has divided the plot with fencing and also fenced gaps in the hedges with the recreation ground.
Arrange trespass warning notices for the allotment gate and gate to the rear. Clerk to action.	In progress. Notice displayed on main gate. Second notice is pending.
Ask HAGS if they can add latch mechanism to open/close the Play Area Gates. Clerk to action.	In progress. Email from HAGS (12 <sup>th</sup> Sep) that they will respond within 3 days. No response. See agenda item O/9/23/11.

**O/9/23/6 Allotment: To Receive September 2023 inspection report and Consider any actions required.**  
 It was noted that a site inspection would be carried out after allotment rubbish is cleared by Plot Holders scheduled at the end of the month.

**O/9/23/7 Allotment: To Review 2024 Rent**  
 Members reviewed rents in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement (item 1d) and considered requests from two Plot Holders not to increase them. Members noted that the annual rent had not been increased in the current year and the Council had a responsibility to ensure that costs for the site are met as far as possible. Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** to increase the rent 6.4%, the last recorded Retail Price Index (July 2023) as per the terms, representing an increase of between 98p and £2 per year for plot holders. Allotment Holders to be notified when letters go out for the 2024 rent invoices. Clerk to action.

Two members of the public entered the meeting.

**O/7/23/8 Allotment: Agree quotation for fencing gaps in hedge by the Recreation Ground**  
 It was noted that a quotation from the Groundsman to fence two further gaps in the Allotment hedge alongside the Recreation Ground, had not been received in time for the meeting. It was **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Clerk to agree the quotation within budget and for replanting the gaps in the London Road hedge.



- O/9/23/9 Allotment: To Consider an application for a vacant plot.**  
 An application for vacant Plot 11B from a resident at the meeting was considered. Members noted that the applicant had previously visited the plot with one of the stewards and had returned her signed Tenancy Agreement to the clerk. Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the tenancy subject to pro-rata rent of £5.14 for the remaining year. Clerk to counter-sign the agreement on behalf of the Council. The tenant was informed of the rent increase for 2024 and commented on how cheap it was. The tenant informed the committee that she would be seeking consent for a shed on the plot at the next meeting. This is subject to the clerk's confirmation on the status of a prior application by one of the previous tenants of the plot.
- O/9/23/10 First Extension Graveyard: To Receive September 2023 Inspection Report and Consider any action required.**  
 Members noted the inspection report kindly made by Cllr Luckin. It was noted that the resident in neighbouring Banks Cottage had reported access difficulties to her garden steps due to overhanging vegetation from the graveyard. Members discussed this and the reports of overhanging vegetation on the wall by the Street. It was noted that this contained established ivy which if removed could potentially affect the structural integrity of the wall. The Committee **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the clerk to make arrangements for this to be inspected by an arboriculturist with a view to cutting back the vegetation if this is recommended. Cllr Luckin agreed to notify the resident and to remind them of their rights to cut back encroaching vegetation on their property.
- O/9/23/11 Washington Recreation Ground: To Agree quotation to modify gates to the Play Area**  
 It was noted that HAGS had not provided a quotation to be considered in time for the meeting. Deferred to the next meeting.
- O/9/23/12 Washington Recreation Ground: To Agree quotation for LED lighting on the MUGA**  
 It was noted that the contractor was waiting for suppliers to confirm the original quotation for the lighting from March earlier in the year. Deferred to the next meeting.
- O/9/23/13 To Agree quotation to replace AED casing at Pixies Corner Cabinet**  
 It was reported that the defibrillator casing at Pixies Corner site was stained with mould and beyond repair and the viewing panel to the cabinet had cracked. Following a discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the quotation of £65 to replace the casing and to delegate authority to the clerk to arrange repairs to the panel up to the value of £300. Clerk to action.
- O/9/23/14 To Discuss Annual Inspection Report of Council property and Agree recommended action**  
 The Chairman reported on the inspection carried out with the Clerk of Council Assets on 11<sup>th</sup> September. A report of the inspection with recommendations drafted by the Clerk was previously circulated. It was noted that with the exception of a cracked grit bin in Sandhill Lane, believed to be owned by WSCC, there were no urgent repairs required outside the council's ongoing maintenance plans. The annual ROSPA safety inspection report of the play area was anticipated in October for review. The Clerk strongly advised that the First Extension Graveyard is surveyed and any recommendations are reviewed by the Committee. Following a discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** a survey by a suitably qualified professional and to review funding options for any recommended works at the next appropriate meeting.

It was further agreed to defer a full review of the assets inspection pending the annual Play Inspection report and graveyard survey so that the Committee has the full picture of what needs to be done. Clerk would notify WSCC of the cracked grit bin.

**O/9/23/15 To Review the Grounds Maintenance Schedule.**

Members reviewed the Council's grounds maintenance schedule. Following a discussion it was **RESOLVED** to **AGREE** the schedule as amended to include hedge cutting along the boundary with 'Jockeys Meadow' field from the Village Hall car park. Clerk to seek quotations for 2024 and a three-year arrangement.

**O/9/23/16 To Consider the Annual Tree Inspection Report and Recommendations.**

Members reviewed a report by Gale Tree Consultancy of an interim inspection of the Council's trees. The report was previously circulated on 4<sup>th</sup> September and members considered the recommendations. It was noted that there was no obvious cause for the decline in part of the Recreation Ground hedge by London Road and that the gaps should be replanted with mixed species hedging. Following a discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to the Clerk to arrange for the highest priority works to be carried out. Quotations for other recommended works to be sought for consideration at the next appropriate meeting. A quote from the groundsman for replanting the declining sections of hedging was pending. Clerk to action.

**O/9/23/17 Rampion 2: To Report any updates affecting the Washington Recreation Ground**

It was noted that the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) had validated an application for a Development Consent Order for the Rampion 2 windfarm expansion project to go to examination. Email notifications from the developer and their agents, Carter Jonas, were circulated to all councillors on 11<sup>th</sup> September.

Following a discussion, the Committee noted that the clerk will submit the Council and Recreation Ground Charity's Relevant Representation to be an interested party in the examination, once registration opens.

**O/9/23/18 To Report the MUGA lights electricity reading for July and August 2023**

The following electricity readings for the MUGA lights from Mr Gerig at the Village Hall were NOTED:

August: 06129

July: 06127

**O/9/23/19 Any other urgent Open Space, Recreation & Allotment and Footpaths and Conservation issues that may arise OR items for the next Agenda.**

None raised.

**O/9/23/20 Date and Time of next meetings**

**Parish Council Meeting:** Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023, 7:30pm

**Planning & Transport Committee:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 7:00pm

**Open Spaces Committee:** Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 7:45pm

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:45pm.

Signed.....

Dated..... 16-10-23 .....