** Washington Parish Council**

**Open Spaces (Recreation, Allotments, Footpaths and**

**Conservation) Committee Meeting**

Draft **MINUTES** of the Committee Meeting held on Monday, held on 21st January, 2019 at Washington Village Hall

**PRESENT:** Cllr A Lisher, Cllr G Lockerbie, Cllr R Milner-Gulland and Cllr R.Thomas.

**ALSO:** Miss Z SavillClerk of the Council

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**: 1

**ABSENT:** Cllr Glithero

**The meeting was opened at: 19:30 hours**

1. **To Consider nomination of Chairman of the Committee**

**RESOLVED** to nominate Cllr Lockerbie as Chairman. Cllr Lockerbie accepted and was duly appointed.

1. **Receive apologies for absence**

Apologies received and accepted from Cllr Glithero (unwell)

1. **Declaration of interest and Dispensations**.

Declaration of interest from Cllr Thomas under item 8 - he is personally known to the applicant for a tenancy.

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

**RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting on 19th November, 2018 as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

1. **Public Speaking**

No members of the public spoke.

1. **Matters arising from previous minutes** (For information only)

*To note any matters arising from the previous minutes.*

**RESOLVED** to **NOTE** that the Chichester Diocese have agreed to provide a copy of the Order in Council on the closure of the graveyard, and to clarify the Council’s legal position. Response pending.

1. *To Review Tree Management Strategy.*

Members discussed the draft Tree Management Strategy from Andrew Gale

and supporting comments raised by the Parish Tree Warden David Hill. Mr Hill kindly agreed to help review an inspection schedule once a map of the Council’s tree stock is in place, forming the initial setup. He suggested that a GPS system of mapping the co-ordinates of the Parish Council’s trees would be a cheaper survey option than tree tagging. Mr Hill reported that he did not require any equipment to carry out the task. The Clerk to undertake a risk assessment.

The Chairman thanked Mr Hill for reviewing the document and for agreeing to

undertake the necessary inspections required towards meeting the Council’s tree

management obligations.

**RESOLVED** to recommend approval of the draft Tree Management Strategy to the

Parish Council subject to quotation of the various mapping options from Andrew

Gale, and final minor amendments to the wording. Clerk to seek quotation

for consideration.

*To Consider report of Ash Trees on the Recreation Ground*

Members considered the Tree Warden’s concerns about the condition of Ash

trees showing signs of die-back, behind the Allotment Garden. The Clerk reported

that Andrew Gale inspected the trees and reported in December that they were in

bud and showing signs of life. However, without seeing them in full leaf it would be

difficult to confirm whether they are alive, in decline, or dead. Mr Gale confirmed

that as a result of HS1 works being undertaken in March 2018, he believes the

Council has met its Duty of Care regarding the Ash trees but advises that monitoring

after extreme weather events is always wise. The Tree Warden confirmed that he is

undertaking inspections of this area and will report any further concerns.

**RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the information.

1. **Allotments**

***To Receive and Review Tenancy Reports.***

Members discussed an inspection report of the Allotment Garden which took

on 15th January.

***Plot 4***

**RESOLVED** to **NOTE** that the tenant has tidied the plot and prepared the beds

following a written reminder from the Council in November. Tenant’s response

circulated before the meeting. No further action required.

***Plot 7***

Members NOTED the following report of Plot 7:

* The repair of a gap in the fencing remains outstanding after a reminder in November (circulated before this meeting), and is contrary to 5(g) of the tenancy guidelines. Clerk has sent a further reminder. Also damage/partial removal of fencing to the rear, leading to an animal hutch on the Allotment Garden, contrary to 5(g) of guidelines.
* Signs and reports that ferrets have been kept on the Allotment Garden, contrary to 5(c) of tenancy guidelines. In October tenant requested consent for ferret/quails on the plot, with housing. Refused by Committee for welfare/health reasons. Tenant has denied keeping animals on the plot - his email response to be discussed with Personnel
* Two-tier animal hutch containing used bedding, animal litter, on Allotment Garden alongside plot, contrary to 5(f) of the tenancy guidelines. Ownership unknown. Tenant had applied for hutch of similar description in October.
* Animal waste litter left in open storage and open bags by a shed on the plot contrary to 5(a) of the guidelines.
* The plot is tidy but not being cultivated according to 5(a) of the guidelines. Pathway is clear.

Clerk to circulate email regarding the ferrets, and the tenant’s response.

**RESOLVED** to send a further reminder upon the tenant to repair fencing, to remove

the animal waste, clarify ownership of the animal hutch, and give reasons for

not cultivating the plot according to guidelines. To be reviewed at the next

meeting.

Further **RESOLVED** to refer tenant’s response regarding allegations of

housing ferrets on the Allotment Garden, to the Council Chairman for full comment.

***Plots 9a - tenancy agreed/signed on 24th May 2018***

Members NOTE the following report:

* Plot untidy and weedy. No signs of any management or cultivation since last inspection contrary to tenancy guidelines 5(a). Further reminders sent on 29th November 2018 and 15th January - no response from tenant.
* Rent overdue from September

Clerk reported that the tenant took on the plot in May in a poor state and that he

would make a start on preparing it for Autumn last year.

**RESOLVED** to send a final reminder to the tenant to improve the appearance of the

Plot according to tenancy guidelines and pay outstanding rent. To be reviewed at

the next meeting.

***Plot 9b -***

Members NOTED the following report:

* Plot untidy and weedy - no sign of management or cultivation since last inspection. Reminders sent 26th July and 29th November and 15th January.

The tenant has had this plot since November 2016.

* Rent overdue from September

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk should serve Notice to Quit upon the tenant due to breach of the Tenancy Agreement (non-cultivation) and failure to pay the rent

***Plot 11a-***

Members NOTED the following report:

* Half the plot remains unmanaged and uncultivated, not according to tenancy guidelines, since inspection in November. Reminder letter to tenant on 29th November circulated.

Clerk reported tenant’s response, giving reasons for being unable to manage the

plot and that the pathway was overgrown and inaccessible owing to the vacancy of

the adjoining plot since 2017.

**RESOLVED** that the pathway is cleared by the Council and to review progress

on the plot at the March meeting. Clerk to organise path clearance and advise

the tenant.

***Plot 11b***

**RESOLVED** to **NOTE** that the new tenant has signed the Tenancy Agreement for plot 11b and paid the £5 rent for 2018/19. Deposit of £20 to be reconciled on bank statement.

Clerk has written to tenant on 10th January requesting a site visit to ensure the tenant has the correct plot. Response pending.

**Plots 12 and 13 - shared tenancy**

Members NOTED the following report of plots:

* Half Plot 12 has been dug over since Council’s letter to tenant on 29th November reminding them of their tenancy obligations. No signs of any management or cultivation of the other half of Plot 12 since last inspection, contrary to tenancy guidelines 5(a).

* Plot 13 is used for hens and does not require to be cultivated.

Several builder-size waste bags at the rear which contain used sawdust from chicken housing, and appear to have been there some time. This is not in line with tenancy agreement 5 (a) guideline and may be attacting vermin. vermin.

* Rent outstanding on both plots.

**RESOLVED** to serve notice upon the tenant to remove the waste, tidy Plot 12 in line

with the tenancy guidelines, and pay the outstanding rent**.**

***To Consider a tenancy application for Plot 10b***

Members considered and discussed an application from a Washington resident for

Plot 10B which has just become vacant. Clerk has met with the tenant to confirm the

plot and respond to any queries.

**RESOLVED** to approve the tenancy subject to signed tenancy agreement.

***To Consider a tenancy application for Plot 10a***

Members received and discussed an application from a Washington resident for

Plot 10a which has just become vacant. Clerk to meet the tenant on the Allotment

Garden when he returns from vacation, and confirm the plot.

**RESOLVED** to approve the tenancy subject to signed tenancy agreement.

***To Consider request that Council takes over responsibility of moving main fairway***

Members received and discussed a request from a Tenant of Plot 6 that the Council

mows the main fairway to the Allotment Gardens. Currently the tenants are jointly

responsible for this and have been cutting areas neglected as a result of plots

becoming vacant.

**RESOLVED** to seek quotation for the grass cutting and review at the next meeting.

***To Review the inspection arrangement of the Allotment Garden***

Members discussed ways to improve the inspection arrangement of the

Allotment Garden.

**RESOLVED** that the Chairman and Cllr Lisher would conduct the inspections.

Clerk to provide inspection form.

***For information only***

2018/19 rent outstanding from 2 tenants. Reminders sent.

1. **Recreation Ground and Parish Property**

*To Review closed graveyard inspection report*

Members received and discussed the monthly report of the First Extension

Graveyard by Cllr Lisher.

**RESOLVED** to **NOTE** there were no causes for concern at this time.

*To Review Play inspection report.*

Members considered the clerk’s verbal report of inspection of the play area and recreation ground.

They NOTED the email from the Village Hall circulated before the meeting, raising concerns about the state of the pathway from the play area which may be hazardous. The clerk reported some small splits in the tarmac which had not worsened since the play area was improved, but may require attention. A quotation for repairs from Paul Parker has been sought. No other areas of concern.

**RESOLVED** to consider quotation at the next meeting.

*To Consider quotation for Play Area repairs.*

Quotes from the following contractors to replace the rotting toddler swing guards which are highlighted in the annual inspection report:

* Contractor A: £1,780 net
* Contractor B: £425 net to replace only the damaged posts.

Clerk advised that the damage to the swing guard is not high risk and is not part of

the supporting structure of the swings. The play inspection company advised that

there is no requirement to replace the timber posts but a suitably safe and robust

timber structure, fit for purpose, would be sufficient.

**RESOLVED** to seek a quotation from Contractor B to provide a suitable alternative

swing guard for consideration at the next meeting.

*To Consider quotation for gate and fencing at the rear of the allotments*

Members considered the following quotations for a gate and fencing to woodland area at the rear of the allotments and NOTED that the gates specs are too large:

* Contractor A: £625 softwood or £785 hardwood option
* Contractor B: £500

**RESOLVED** to seek quotation for a smaller gate from Contractor B.

*To Consider request for payments of approved works*

Members NOTED the Council’s 2019 annual electrical inspection safety report

carried out earlier this month, and invoice

**RESOLVED** to approve £156 payment of invoice to J Electrical Services &

Installations.

*Members* ***RESOLVED*** *to* ***NOTE*** *the following:*

**Annual Electrical Safety Inspection**

# The certificate of compliance of the Council’s annual 2019 electrical safety

# inspection of the MUGA lights and street light earlier this month.

Inspection undertaken by J Electrical. No areas of concern.

**Defibrillators**

Fully charged.

**Ground Maintenance**

Grounds and hedges look tidy.

**Village Hall**

Nothing to report.

**Recreation Ground and Parish Property**

Rotary Club Bench

Members NOTED that the missing timber section to the bench seat opposite MUGA

will be replaced by Dom Kenbery later this month.

Jubilee Tree

Members NOTED that Andrew Gale advised to replant with a suitable tree and not a

cherry variety. To be considered for the Spring.

Chestnut Tree

Nothing to report.

Lime tree

Nothing to report.

**MUGA**

Nothing to report

**Children’s Play Area**

See inspection report.

**Vera’s Shelter**

The shelter’s handyperson has advised that he hopes to undertake the

refurbishment of the shelter in February/March.

**Bus Shelters**

Nothing to report

**Parish Noticeboards**

Nothing to report.

**First Extension Graveyard**

See earlier report.

1. **To Approve Payments**

Members NOTED the Council’s 2019 annual electrical inspection safety report

carried out earlier this month, and invoice.

**RESOLVED** to approve £156 payment of invoice to J Electrical Services &

Installations.

1. **Footpaths and Bridleways**

Nothing to report.

1. **Conservation Issues**

***To Note site meeting to discuss management works of the Triangle and Agree who will make a report to the next OSRA Committee.***

Members NOTED the clerk’s report of a meeting with Tom King, WSCC Highways Engineer earlier in the day to establish the area for proposed management works. Clerk reported that Mr King indicated he would be happy to issue the Planting Licence required and there would be no cost. He agreed to confirm this in writing and clarify the Council’s legal position. This will be considered at the next Open Spaces meeting for recommendation of approval by Full Council.

**RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the information.

1. **Any other Open Space, Recreation & Allotment and Footpaths & Conservation**

**issues that may arise OR items for the next Agenda (information only)**

1. Date of the next OSRA Committee meeting 18th February, 2019.

Full Council Meeting 4th February, 2018

**The meeting closed at 20:25 hrs.**

Signed………………………………………………..

Date………………………………………………….