**Washington Parish Council**

**Open Spaces, Recreation and Allotment**

 **(OSRA) Committee**

**Draft MINUTES** of the OSRA Committee Meeting held on Monday 15th September 2025 at the

Washington Village Memorial Hall (Doré Room).

 **PRESENT**: Cllr A. Dillaway, Cllr B. Hanvey, Cllr O. Jupp and Cllr T. Keech (Chairman)

**ALSO**: Ms Z Savill, Clerk to the Council. No members of the public.

**ABSENT**: 1

 The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:45pm.

**O/9/25/1 Apologies**

 The Committee **RESOLVED** to accept apologies from Cllr Brookes

**O/9/25/2 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations.**

 None declared as defined under the Localism Act 2011 and the Council’s Code of

 Conduct.

**O/9/25/3 Minutes of the last meeting**

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the OSRA Committee Meeting held on 21st July and were duly signed by the Chairman.

**O/9/25/4 Public Speaking**

 There were no public representations.

**O/9/25/5 Actions and Matters Arising**

 The Committee discussed the report (Appendix A), noting the following

 matters arising:

* Contractor has indicated that the new gates for the First Extension Graveyard should be ready by the end of October
* Architect will present final planning submission for the new MUGA lights once the lighting contractor has supplied details specifications. To be considered by the Council at the next meeting before submission to the SDNPA planning authority.
* £20 receipt confirmed for dog agility event on the grounds on 22nd July.
* Allotment Stewards have indicated that a £450 rubbish skip is not required for the site and would be too expensive to justify.
* Quote for wood varnishing London Road bus shelter, installing memorial bench and repairing Milford Grange noticeboard, not received in time for this meeting. Clerk to chase and arrange for replacement key to the noticeboard.

 The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the report and ongoing difficulties of

 getting timely repairs. It was agreed to keep on the lookout for a

 suitable contractor or handyperson who can be called upon for minor works.

 Clerk to contact the contractor advertising their services on the local Facebook

 page.

**O/9/25/6 Allotment: Site inspection**

 The Committee noted that there were no inspections findings to report.

**O/9/25/7 Allotment: Applications for vacant plots**

The Committee noted that there were no applications for vacant plots.

**O/9/25/8 Allotment: Rainwater harvesting**

It was reported that a meeting on 8th September with HDC’s Community

 Climate Fund Team, was organised and attended by a Plot Holder and one

 of the Stewards, to explore rainwater harvesting provision on the site.

 The Clerk had also attended as an interested observer.

 A full report of the proposal is anticipated from the Steward, seeking the

 Committee’s support in principle before a funding application is made to HDC.

 This was first subject to their own enquiries on whether there is sufficient

 interest from other Plot Holders.

 The Committee **RESOLVED** to defer this item until a full report is available with

 costings, including long term maintenance requirements.

**O/9/25/9 Allotment: Tenancy Agreements**

It was noted that at the last Council meeting it was agreed there was a need for

 clarity on certain issues in the Allotment Tenancy Agreements, namely

 compliance with animal welfare, storage for animal feed to discourage vermin,

 and the need for uniformity on infrastructure sizes. Holding deposits for each

 plot had also been overlooked in the 2021 revised agreements.

 The Committee reviewed the tenancy agreement, considering these points and

 feedback from Stewards.

 Following a discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full

 Council the following new terms, in accordance with the notice period of

 existing agreements and effective immediately for new agreements.

* Limit future shed sizes to 6 x 4ft and 8 x 6ft, in colours to blend with existing structure, subject to prior approval from the Committee. All other specifications of infrastructure to be determined upon application to Committee.
* Compliance at all times with all current animal welfare and environmental health legislation required for the keeping of poultry and rabbits.
* All animal feed to be stored only in rodent- proof metal containers.
* Deposit of £100 per plot, refundable at the end of a tenancy if the plot is in good order. The amount to be retrospective for existing tenancies, and charged according to the balance of £25 deposits already paid under the original agreements.

The Committee further **RESOLVED** that the Clerk drafts and distributes the

 amended terms to members before they are presented to Full Council.

**O/9/25/10 Allotment: 2026 Rent Review**

 The Committee conducted an annual review of rents for plots in 2026 in

 accordance with the tenancy terms (1d). The site Stewards were invited

 to comment (email 4th September). None were received to be taken into

 consideration.

 Following a discussion, the Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend that rents be

 increased by the minimum amount according to the allotment terms 1d. This

 would be 4.2 %, rounded, based on July’s Household Consumer Price Index

 figures, the latest to be published at the time of the meeting.

 It was noted that rents would therefore be increased to the following from

 1st January 2026 as follows:

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* Full plots: £35
* Half plot: £17.50
* Plot 13 for the keeping of hens only: £27

 It was agreed that the recommended increase be presented to the next Full

 Council meeting to be ratified.

**O/9/25/11 Allotment: Application for shed**

 The Committee considered an application from the Tenant of Plot 6

 for a 7 x 9ft shed and various other requests. Following a discussion the

 Committee **RESOLVED** the following:

* To decline the proposed shed because it is considered too large, and to invite the Plot Holder to submit a revised application which meets the new specification requirement of either 6 x 4ft or 6 x 8ft.
* To decline the request for financial assistance in removing greenhouse panels on the plot from a prior tenancy, as plots are offered in their

current state

* To permit the re-alignment of the irregular boundary fencing of the plot

so long as it does not reduce the pathway or negatively impact the neighbouring plot.

* To permit the cutting back of vegetation on the common land behind Plot 6, outside the Council’s scheduled cut which takes place earlier in the spring/summer

**O/9/25/12** **Washington Recreation Ground Charity: Safety inspections**

 The Committee reviewed the report of a quarterly RoSPA inspection of the Play

 Area carried out on 8th July last.

 It was noted that there were several low to medium risks identified in some of

 of the equipment and infrastructure which required monitoring.. One

 moderate risk of the picnic bench was identified with a recommendation for its

 replacement. The Clerk advised that the bushes on all the swings at the top of

 the chains had been replaced earlier in the year.

 The following quotations for the repairs and replacements recommended

 or suggested in the report, were considered. It was noted that Contractor A

 was unable to price the supply and labour for each item because this would

 have significantly increased the cost:

 **Contractor A:**

 Option 1: Supply and fit new picnic table with 2 x benches, infant swings with

 frame, adjust 2 x self-closing gates, replacement Ryan slide base panel:

 £7, 013.02 + vat

 Option 2: all the above except picnic table and benches: £5,222.20

 Option 3: Picnic table with 2 x benches and safety surfacing underneath (red)

 £3,166

 **Contractor B**

 Option 4: Price to replace the 2 slats on the Goatcher’s memorial bench, new

 fixings will be £140. Stained and finished.

 Option 5: The crack to the panel (Ryan Slide) is repairable (if still the same as

 when I last visited). This repair is £70 inc re-stain finish.

 Option 6: The picnic bench leg repair and fixing bracket - £60. The Committee

 noted that the contractor has since confirmed that more work is required and

 that replacement is advisable. They have not provided a quote in time for this

 meeting

 Option 7: The new fence rail to replace broken at SouthEast gate by play area

* £60

 Option 8: Both 'Washington Tea Room' benches require ground anchoring

 with all new fixing plates. - £95

 The Committee agreed it was not necessary to spend the quoted amount

 by Contractor A for the high specification replacement bench with aluminium

 legs. It was considered that the existing timber bench had lasted several years

 and may have lasted much longer if it had been on a solid base such as

 concrete pavers to prevent strimmer damage.

 The Clerk drew the Committee’s attention to the inspector’s findings under

 item 8 regarding splits in the timber structure of the infants swings and the

 advice to replace all affected timber parts. The Committee considered the

 report and agreed that the timbers could be monitored and that it was not

 necessary to replace the swings and frame at this stage.

 Following a discussion, the Committee **RESOLVED** the following:

* Seek quotation for a replacement timber picnic bench to be secured to concrete pavers or similar
* Cllr Jupp proposed and it was agreed that he would replace the Goatcher’s bench (in front of Village Hall) if it is the one installed in memory of his late grandfather. Clerk to check. Otherwise, Committee agreed quotation of £140 for its repair (Option 4).
* Agree quotation of £70 to repair cracked top panel of Ryan Slide tower (Option 5); monitor the timber erosion on the top rail of the base panel, as advised in the report.
* Agree quotation of £60 (Option 7) to replace broken fencing rail
* Agree quotation of £60 (Option 8) to anchor the two Tea Room benches to the ground surface.
* To continue monitoring the play equipment and infrastructure and

carry out necessary repairs or replacement if required.

**O/9/25/13 Washington Recreation Ground Charity: Grounds maintenance 2026**

 This item was cancelled. Grounds maintenance contract to be reviewed when

 it expires in October 2026.

 Costings for restoring the cricket square and field, and upgrading the grounds

 surface were previously circulated for consideration as a future budget item

 later in the agenda.

**O/9/25/14 Washington Recreation Ground Charity: Hire request**

 The Committee reviewed a hire request from the Storrington Community

 Football Club to use the grounds for Under 11s and 12s training on Thursday

 evenings and Saturday morning matches for the 2025/26 season.

 Following a discussion the Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the hire for

 £450 to include up to 4 matches.

**O/9/25/15 First Extension Graveyard: Safety inspection.**

 The Committee considered Cllr Lisher’s September inspection of the closed

 burial ground. It was noted that there were no matters requiring further

 action. The contractor for the new graveyard gates had advised the Clerk

 that these would be ready before the end of October.

**O/9/25/16 First Extension Graveyard: Tree management**

The Committee reviewed the pathogen testing report for a multi-stemmed

 Sycamore tree in the graveyard.

 It was noted that the tree is infected with Phytophthoraspp. a fungus-like

 organism. The report advised that there is no cure and it would eventually kill

 the tree but there is sufficient intact bark around the lower stem. Should the

 ‘*exudations and staining fully girdle the tree and the tree decline, its removal*

 *may be necessary.’*

 The report advised that the tree is reassessed within the usual timeframe

 making reference to the extent of the condition during these inspections.

 The time-frame should be shortened in the event:

 o The tree’s local environment changes significantly

 o Fruiting bodies emerge from anywhere on the tree

 o After extreme weather events such as:

 ▪Wind gusts in excess of Force 8 on the Beaufort Scale–see Appendix1(of

 the report – i.e. gale-force)

 ▪After named extreme weather events

 The Committee **RESOLVED** to note the recommendation and to monitor the

 tree for any further deterioration and reassess as advised.

**O/9/25/17 Parish Tree Warden**

 The Committee considered an expression of interest for the Council’s

 advertised voluntary role of the Parish Tree Warden received from Mrs Patricia

 Mandeville. No other interest was received.

 It was noted that Mrs Mandeville had been unable to attend the meeting

 due to a prior commitment. But had spoken to the Clerk and received

 all supporting information about the role which is part of the National

 Tree Warden Scheme overseen by West Sussex County Council.

 The Committee agreed that Mrs Mandeville sounded ideal for the role, having

 described herself as passionate about trees, a keen walker and gardener, and

 keen to learn all aspects of being a tree warden. It was noted that she had

 understood this will require basic on the ground inspections of the

 Council’s tree stock on its land and that this is within the Network’s guidelines.

 The Committee **RESOLVED** that Mrs Mandeville be appointed as the Parish

 Tree Warden and to be invited to the next OSRA meeting to meet Councillors

 and discuss the role further.

**O/9/24/18 Budget 2026.27**

 The Committee considered possible projects and other budget

 requirements which are OSRA’s area of responsibility, to include in the

 Council’s forthcoming 2026.27 budget review in November.

 The restoration of the cricket pitch, provision of new pathways from

 the Play Area and around the Village Hall, and re-lining the basketball

 court were suggested. The Clerk advised of further possible expenditure

 requirements outside the budget, which may arise from the annual

 annual RoSPA inspection in November, and the need to build reserves for the

 replacement of equipment and maintenance of the closed burial

 ground.

 The Committee considered that projects might be funded from CIL

 receipts received and anticipated. But it was necessary to first establish from

 the Village Hall what earmarked CIL funds they still require for their own

 projects, before the Council can begin budget planning.

 Following a discussion, the Committee **RESOLVED** to ask the Village Hall to

 confirm its CIL funding requirements before the end of October in time for

 the Finance Committee’s budget review, otherwise it will be assumed that

 funding is no longer required. Clerk to action and find out when CIL funding

 is expected from the care home development at the former Clayton Kennels

 site.

**O/9/24/19 Any urgent Open Space, Recreation & Allotment and Footpaths and**

 **Conservation issues that may arise.**

Cllr Dillaway confirmed that they are now ready for the supply of the

 defibrillator, cabinet and grit bin at Milford Grange. Clerk advised that

 these can be ordered once there are sufficient funds in the Council’s current

 account, anticipated at the end of September

 **O/9/25/20 Date and Time of next OSRA Meeting**:

Monday 20th October 2025 at 7:45pm

 There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 9:11pm.

 Signed…………………………………

 Dated…………………………………;