



EMERSONS GREEN TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee

5 November 2019, Council Office, Emersons Green Town Council

Present – Councillors: S Budd, S Hill, C Johnson, D Somers (Chairman), M Palmer & C Wilkins

Attendees – Richard Hull, Committee Clerk; Cllr R Hunt.

Members noted the evacuation procedures.

41. Apologies for absence –

Apologies were received from Councillors J Adams & P Morgan
Councillors S Bassett & R Nichols were absent from the meeting.

42. Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011

No interests were declared at this time.

43. Public participation (not to exceed 5 minutes)

There were no members of the public present.

44. Minutes 3 September 2019

It was **Resolved** that the minutes are approved and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of the meeting.

45. Outstanding Items from these Minutes

The Committee Clerk confirmed that all outstanding matters have been completed or are on the agenda for this meeting.

46. Parking around the junction of Blackhorse Road and Elmtree Avenue.

Cllr R Hunt arrived at 19.07, Cllr S Hill arrived at 19.20

Members had a lengthy discussion about two concerns that a resident has raised with Cllr R Hunt. Cllr R Hunt has communicated with CH, a member of the Traffic Management team at SGC about the concerns;

a) Parking very close to the junction of Blackhorse Road and Elmtree Avenue;
CH has stated the verge parallel with Blackhorse Road is public highway and that SGC policy is not to install bollards to prevent parking on footways or verges but that this location could be added to the next area wide parking review so they could consult on introducing enforceable restrictions.

Members are concerned about safety at the junction partly because parked vehicles restrict visibility for pedestrians crossing Blackhorse Road and for road users coming out of Elmtree Avenue. Also, there has been an accident involving a car and a cyclist.

Members would like to install two large planters, with a tree in each one, on the verge of Blackhorse Road. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will take the following action;

- Write to CH seeking his thoughts on the Town Councils' wish to install the planters and the process for consulting with / informing people in the area.
- Obtain quotes for the planters.

Cllr M Palmer will raise this issue at the police beat surgery.

Cllr C Wilkins will raise this issue with Resound.

b) Parking on the grass alongside Elmtree Avenue which is churning up the grass; CH has stated that the south side of Elmtree Avenue is not part of the public highway. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will ask CH if he has signs that either he or the Town Council can install asking people not to park on the grass.

47. Bins near Lyde Green common

Cllr R Hunt explained that GreenSquare are not responsible for installing bins in this area and that SGC are not installing bins at present. Members discussed that bins may be need in other parts of Lyde Green and are agreeable to considering installing one or more bins.

It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will ask the Lyde Green Open Spaces group where they think bins are needed.

Cllr R Hunt left the meeting at 19.42.

48. Replacement of two wood steps on Rodway Common

Cllr S Hill had identified that two of the wood steps leading from Manor Road to the top of the common were badly rotted leaving the metal supports exposed. A quote of £260 from ASB Landscapes has been obtained to supply and install two hardwood steps.

It was **Resolved** to accept the quote and the **Committee Clerk** will instruct the contractor.

49. Seeding Emersons Green common with wildflower seeds

The Committee Clerk explained that he has requested two quotes for this work. It was noted that if we proceed with one of these the work will be done around the spring.

50. Wildflower hot spots

SP, the South Gloucestershire Council biodiversity officer, had provided areas that could be used for wildflower hot spots. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee** will consider this again after we see how the Emersons Green common seeding project works out.

51. Grass verge cuts

Members felt that there was little benefit from reducing the number of verge cuts and that residents expected these areas to be kept neat, however consideration will be given to marking out parts of the commons to leave uncut. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will seek quotes for a three-year contract commencing April 2020.

Cllr M Palmer has contacted Avon Wildlife Trust and is waiting to hear back from them as to whether there are any initiatives the Town Council could consider.

52. Beehive at the allotments; funding to make eco-friendly beeswax food wraps in schools; not using pesticides

The Committee Clerk had circulated an email from a beekeeper (AH) stating that it would not be appropriate to site a beehive on an open space accessible by the public but that having a hive on an allotment site is a safer option. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will ask the allotment tenants' committee to seek the views of the tenants about having a hive on a plot when one becomes available.

AH is interested in going into schools in South Gloucestershire to make beeswax food wraps; It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will suggest to AH that she may wish to contact SGC.

AH is encouraging people to reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will ask the summer maintenance contractor to trim around bollards in future rather than using pesticides.

53. Summer maintenance

The Committee Clerk had circulated emails from SGC stating that they cut back the vegetation on footpaths MA1 and PMR17. Whilst SGC do not routinely cut back PMR27 any requests would be prioritised; this is a cycle / footpath. It was **Resolved** not to do any maintenance on these three paths in future.

Cllr C Johnson stated that despite continued requests SGC have not yet cut back the brambles that are restricting part of PMR21.

Members noted that the quote from Brandon Trust for the summer maintenance for this year was considerable cheaper than the other two companies; It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will request a quote from Brandon Trust to cover the next three years.

54. Dibden Lane Allotments

- Legionella assessment; the members considered a report on the standpipe at Rodway Common which recommended that the outlet is run for 2 minutes on a weekly basis. The only time the standpipe is used is by whoever provides family entertainment on the common once a year; It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will arrange for the outlet to be run shortly prior to their arrival each year. A report has also been received on the allotments; the contractor provided a quote of £425 for compliance remedial work - it was **Resolved** to accept the quote and the **Committee Clerk** will instruct the contractor.
- Hiring a toilet; At the allotments evening on 17 October about half the attendees were in favour of a toilet being hired until the end of October next year. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will get two quotes to hire a toilet from April to October inclusive.
- Requests made by some of the tenants at their "Get together" on 17 August;
 - Some non-green waste has accumulated in the car park. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will contact the tenants' committee for them ask the tenants to address this issue as it is contrary to the terms of the tenancy agreement. Members noted that the skips hired in April and September had filled very quickly; It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will obtain two quotes to hire a skip for April.
 - A notice board was requested for tenants to leave messages; It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will inform the tenants' committee that they may wish to use their Facebook page to publicise such matters.
 - A bulk order of compost was requested; It was **Resolved** to decline this request and the **Committee Clerk** will inform the tenants' committee.
- Rent review for 2020/21; The Committee Clerk had circulated information showing; expenditure on the allotments for the last 12 months was approximately £5,600, income was £2,700 and the rent was last increased from £45 for a full plot to £48 in 2016. It was **Resolved** to increase the rent to £51 for a full plot (and pro-rata for part plots) and the **Committee Clerk** will implement this change from 1 April 2020.

55. Request from a resident to SGC for a footpath to be created from Blackhorse Road to Guest Avenue

The Committee Clerk explained that SGC have told the resident that if he wants to request a formal public footpath facility he would need to submit a Highways Investigation

Request Form with the support of the local ward member or parish council. Members noted SGCs' comments that the wood bridge, which forms part of the route, is not maintained by SGC. Cllrs S Budd, C Johnson and D Somers have walked the route and some of them commented that part of the route is very steep and even though it was August it was also very slippery. It was **Resolved** not to support a request for this path and the **Committee Clerk** will inform the resident.

56. National Tree week

It was **Resolved** that **Cllr S Hill** and the **Committee Clerk** will visit Blackhorse Road common to see if there are any suitable places for one or more trees to be planted. However, if this proceeds it will not be part of National Tree week as there is not enough time before it takes place 23 November – 1 December.

The **Committee Clerk** will;

- make enquiries about whether permission is needed to plant trees on common land
- add an item to the agenda for the meeting in January to consider an area wide consultation

Cllr M Palmer agreed to contact CB, a member of the Lyde Green Open Space group to ask their views about trees being planted.

57. Correspondence

To receive and respond to correspondence as per the schedule.

1. 8th October; An email from South Gloucestershire Council re litter in a wooded area of Blackhorse Road playing field. This has been marked as complete and South Gloucestershire Council confirm that as they have cleared litter there before it looks as if this area falls under their jurisdiction;
*Cllr Budd stated that there is again rubbish in the area. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will ask Streetcare for this to go on a regular litter pick.*
2. Lyde Green Open Space group; A flyer showing events the group is organising (this was sent to all councilors 3 October); The group have put in an application for a free tree / hedging pack (420 whips) to thicken up hedgerows. - *Noted*
3. Open Space magazine Autumn 2019; To note that the Open Spaces Society was successful in its challenge to Dorset Council's decision to deregister part of Leigh Common to allow development. In July we donated £100 to this legal challenge. - *Noted*

58. Items from Members to Report

Cllr M Palmer reported that Lyde Green Community Centre would like a community notice board; it was suggested that they apply to the Town Council for a grant.

59. Next Meeting

7 January 2020 at 19.00 in the Council Chamber of Emersons Green Town Council

The chairman closed the meeting at 21.02