



EMERSONS GREEN  
TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee

7 July 2020

Held via Skype due to Covid-19 restrictions

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

**Attendees** – Richard Hull - Committee Clerk.

### 117. Apologies for absence –

No apologies were received. Members noted that Cllr S Bassett was co-opted at Full Council on 11 June to replace Cllr J Adams.

Councillors P Morgan, R Nichols & C Wilkins were absent from the meeting.

### 118. Declarations of Interest under the Localism Act 2011

No interests were declared at this time.

### 119. Public participation (not to exceed 5 minutes)

No members of the public joined the Skype meeting.

### 120. Minutes 5 May 2020

It was agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2020 are a true and accurate record of the meeting and these will be signed by the Chairman at the next opportunity.

### 121. Outstanding Items from these Minutes

75. Seeding Emersons Green common;

Quotes to be obtained for sowing in the autumn.

91. Three small trees at Vinney Green common;

Quote requested to remove damaged guard and for any other recommended work.

### 122. Brandon Trust Summer Maintenance

Members noted that apart from cutting back vegetation on one footpath the Summer Maintenance is up to date.

### 123. Quotes to reinstate the ground at Rodway Common following damage caused by the creation of BMX tracks

Two quotes were received both gave a daily rate for the work. Cllr Somers proposed acceptance of the quote of £250 + VAT per day from S Bracey General Building Ltd with a maximum of 3 days' work, Cllr Johnson seconded the proposal and it was unanimously **Resolved** to accept the quote. The **Committee Clerk** will instruct the contractor.

It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will invite the members to a site visit after the work has been done and the situation with the common will be reviewed at the next meeting on 1 September.

Cllr Hill joined the Skype meeting.

#### **124. Underground leak at the allotments.**

Members noted that the Committee Chairman and the Town Clerk had agreed, under section 4.1 of the Financial Regulations, to accept a quote of £250 + VAT per day from S Bracey General Building Ltd for urgent work to trace and fix the leak.

#### **125. Trees overhanging nearby residential properties from Green Lane.**

Members noted that SGC have received the Town Council's application to prune the trees.

A resident of Cave Grove has asked for further pruning to one of the trees to increase the light to his property. It was **Resolved** to decline the request as this could set a precedent for other residents, the **Committee Clerk** will inform the resident.

#### **126. A survey of the trees at Rodway Common with recommended work.**

The committee clerk explained that the survey was done by Ian Monger of Barton Hyett Associates and that the committee had seen previous surveys by Ian Monger in a similar format. For three of the trees the report states they have bird nesting and bat roosting potential and an ecologist should advise on the recommended works and the timing. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will get a quote from an ecologist followed by quotes for the recommended work on the various trees.

#### **127. Dibden Lane allotments**

- a) Accumulation of general rubbish in the car park and hiring a skip for the tenants to use for green matter;

It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will obtain a quote for the removal of the rubbish and to proceed if it was no more than £200 + VAT. An email will be sent to the tenants stating that if it is necessary to pay for rubbish removal in future the allotment rent will need to be increased to cover the cost.

It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will obtain a quote for the hire of the skip and proceed with that, after the removal of the rubbish, provided the cost was no more than £300 + VAT.

- b) A tenant suggests that lighting fires at the allotments should be phased out;

It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will consult the allotment tenants committee.

- c) A resident next to the allotments has pointed out that weeds and brambles had grown through the fence into his garden. He also asks if a tree near his fence can be pruned; It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will ask Brandon Trust to spray weed killer along the walkway parallel with the fence provided the cost does not exceed £50 + VAT.

It was **Resolved** to decline the request for the tree to be pruned and the **Committee Clerk** will inform the resident.

- d) To consider a suggestion from a tenant to let other tenants know which plots are not in use because people are shielding;

It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will put this suggestion to the allotment tenants committee in case they want to raise the issue on their Facebook page.

#### **128. Planters for Blackhorse Road and “no parking” signs by Elmtree Avenue.**

The committee clerk apologised he had overlooked bringing an email of 6 January from SGC to the committee's attention. The email explained that the Town Council could apply for a Planting Licence to install planters on highways land adjacent to Blackhorse Road. Cllr Somers stated that cars parking near the junction of these two roads were restricting visibility and that a cyclist had been knocked off their bike by the junction. The committee clerk pointed out that it is not the Town Council's responsibility to install planters, however SGC no longer install posts or bollards to prevent parking on footways or verges and the

members are concerned about safety. Members noted that a breakdown truck was often parked in the area and sometimes parked on the section of pavement that pedestrians use before crossing to the central island. Cllr Palmer had spoken to Emily, a PCSO, who said she would make a house call about this, but she did not let Cllr Palmer know the outcome.

[Cllr Bassett left the meeting as echoing meant he could not hear what was being said.]

It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will arrange a site visit to consider what type / size of planters might be suitable and the precise location.

The Committee Clerk explained that the land immediately next to Elmtree Avenue is unregistered and the land next to that is owned by SGC. The site visit will also consider the issue of the “no parking” signs and will proceed once 3 councillors accept and the **Committee Clerk** will invite Cllr R Hunt as she had been communicating with the resident who raised the issues.

#### **129. Problems caused by vehicles parking on Vinney Green common.**

Members noted that vehicles being driven and parked on the common have damaged the grass particularly when the ground is wet. Under the byelaws vehicles are not permitted on the common. Prior to the meeting the committee clerk had distributed a note with some possible options. It was **Resolved** to delegate to Cllrs Budd, Palmer and Somers authority to agree the wording and design for three “No Parking” signs and the **Committee Clerk** will liaise with them. The **Committee Clerk** will check with the Planning Inspectorate whether the installation of the signs are works that need consent.

#### **130. Wildflower seeding of two roundabouts and strips of verge alongside the ring road.**

Members noted that the wildflowers that SGC had sown at a roundabout in Yate had looked very good although they had deteriorated after the hot dry spell we had earlier this year; this is a downside with wildflowers.

The quote suggested two areas by the roundabout where Bishop Road meets Emerson Way and the roundabout where Emerson Way meets Westerleigh Road (referred to as the Meadgate roundabout. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will seek two further quotes for seeding and maintaining wildflowers at the Meadgate roundabout.

#### **131. Report from a resident of Home Field Close that a wall between the close and Emersons Green common is crumbling very badly in places.**

The committee clerk explained that on the side of the common the wall is a dry-stone type wall but that on the side where the houses are in Robbins Court and Home Field Close it is all or mainly made of bricks. The committee clerk has not been able to find any information in the Town Council’s records as to whether or not the wall is on the common. The committee clerk reported that the minutes for the Open Spaces minutes of 17 November 2015 stated, “The Clerk confirmed that the Town Council did not own the Common.” The committee clerk has emailed the SGC Commons Officer to see if he can clarify / confirm this. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will arrange a site visit to inspect the wall, the visit will proceed once two councillors are able to attend.

#### **132. Maintenance of our three bus shelters.**

Cllr Budd reported that one of the black stoppers on the end of one of the seats was missing. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will get a quote to replace this and to arrange a site visit to assess what maintenance the bus shelters need such as painting.

#### **133. A report from Cllr Budd about litter bins / dog bins that are overflowing.**

Members noted that anyone identify an overflowing bin can report it to SGC, Cllr Palmer provided a link for this.

#### **134. Signs that refer to Mangotsfield Parish Council and to consider erecting a sign by Vinney Green pond to show that we maintain the pond.**

Cllr Budd reported that he had seen an increase in the number of people visiting the pond. It was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will ask the company who have cleared the pond previously if they would supply some wording, about the animals and plants in the pond, that could be used for a noticeboard.

Cllr Budd reported that one of the fence rails at the pond is broken. Members are concerned the broken rail is a safety hazard; the **Committee Clerk** will chase the contractor for a quote and seek sanction for that under "Emergency Expenditure". The **Committee Clerk** explained he had an action to assess which signs refer to MRPC. He will progress this and if necessary agree a timescale for the assessment with the Town Clerk in the light of other priorities.

**135. An out of date sign, that says "Patrol" that is near to St James church hall.**

This was reported by Cllr Budd and a sign nearby that says "School", it was **Resolved** that the **Committee Clerk** will ask SGC to remove the signs as they presumably relate to the school that was previously in Richmond Road.

**136. Correspondence**

1. An email from Gary Meddick stating an issue had been raised by a member of the public regarding the use of weed killer around Vinney Green common. Our contractors have confirmed it wasn't them – *noted*.
2. An email from a resident of Home Filed Close asking if a path, similar to the shale path in the park, can be laid across Emersons Green common – *Members agreed that the **Committee Clerk** will put this on the agenda for 1 September.*

**137. Items from Members to report**

- Cllr Johnson raised a concern that residents are cutting down trees on their properties. **Cllr Johnson** will provide some information about a covenant on her property and the **Committee Clerk** will include an item on the agenda for 1 September.
- Cllr Palmer has reported to South Gloucestershire Council that a street sign and a blue pedestrian / cycle sign by the Shell garage have been damaged.
- Cllr Budd reported that there was information on the Mangotsfield Matters Facebook page about tents on Rodway common. Cllr Hill was not aware they were still there.

**138. Next Meeting**

1 September 2020 at 19.00 via Skype or in the Council Chamber of Emersons Green Town Council

The chairman closed the meeting at 20.48