



EMERSONS GREEN  
TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Open Spaces & Allotments Committee

**6<sup>th</sup> November 2018, Council Office, Emersons Green Town Council**

**Present** – Councillors: D Somers (Chairman), S Hill, C Johnson, P Morgan, & R Nichols

**Attendees** – Mr R Hull (Clerk's Assistant)

### **183 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors J Adams, C Hunt, & P Todd.

### **184 Declaration of Interests under the Localism Act 2011**

No interests were declared at this time.

### **185 Public participation -**

There were no members of the public present.

### **186 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2018.**

It was **Resolved** that the minutes are approved and signed by the Chairman as an accurate record of the meeting of 4 September 2018.

### **187 Outstanding items from these minutes.**

These were discussed under the agenda items.

**188 To consider a request from an allotment tenant to prune an ash tree, an oak tree and some blackthorn trees as they are shading his and his neighbour's plot. An SGC tree officer has agreed the Town Council can carry out the following work; remove the two lowest branches of the ash and lift the remainder of the crown to six metres; to cut back the oak to its previous pruning points; to cut back the blackthorn.**

It was **Resolved** that quotes the **Clerk's Assistant** will obtain quotes for this work.

**189 To note an email from an allotment tenant whose shed was broken into, along with other sheds, and items were stolen.**

This was noted.

**190 To consider a quote to reinforce the metal gate at the allotment site.**

The quote is £481 supply and bolt to the gate approximately 26 triple pointed "W" section palisade galvanised pales. It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant and Cllr Somers** will inspect the area either side of the gate to see if it is necessary to install further pales. It was **Resolved** that if this work is deemed necessary the **Clerk's Assistant** will obtain a quote for all the work from the contractor that provided the existing quote. If the new quote is not for more than £1,000 the **Clerk's Assistant** will instruct them to do the work.

It was noted that from the Richmond Road development there are S106 funds available for the allotments; £800 for capital and £1200 for maintenance, the maintenance funds can be used for capital if required.

**191 To consider a request from an allotment tenant to be considered for another plot as he is finding it difficult to manage the excessive amount of bindweed encroaching from the perimeter land and the plot is affected by the large trees nearby.**

It was **Resolved** that quotes the tenant can go on the waiting list for a different plot. The **Clerk's Assistant** to inform the tenant.

**192 To consider a request from the tenant who has just taken on ¼ plot 40M for the Town Council to remove two tubular metal structures about 5.5 feet by 3 feet.**

It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will ask the previous tenant to remove the structures if they belong to him. If they do not then the **Clerk's Assistant** will ask if C&R Fencing will remove them without charge.

**193 To consider the terms offered by Jay Millers circus to provide family entertainment at Rodway Common over Easter 2019 and a request to hold one or two shows on Easter Sunday.**

It was **Resolved** to accept the terms offered being a payment of £375 for the use of the common and £1000 of free tickets which will be distributed to the 5 local primary schools. It was **Resolved** not to allow the request for any shows on Easter Sunday as this is considered to be the most religious day of the year and comments from local residents in the past have been against any entertainment on the common on this day. The **Clerk's Assistant** will inform the circus.

**194 To consider the comments from a contractor and his surveyor following a concern from a councillor about the way a branch of a tree at Rodway Common was cut.**

The comments were noted.

**195 To note an email from Zurich concerning the outcome of case heard by the Court of Appeal relating to a case against Witley Parish Council.**

The email and legal case comment were noted.

**196 To consider a tree safety plan and risk assessment of the trees in Green Lane.**

It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will obtain quotes for the work listed on page 13 of the report in respect of a group of 12 dead elm trees and a further three oak / ash trees.

It was **Resolved** that quotes will be obtained for a further tree safety inspection in 2022 as recommended. The following comment by the surveyor was noted; "In the meantime, any reports of tree-related hazards arising from informal observations by neighbours or members of the public (such as after a storm or heavy snow) should be acted upon".

**197 To consider again a request from a resident to have two oak trees pruned which are in Green Lane next to his property.**

The Clerk's Assistant had previously circulated a note listing the applications that the Town Council had submitted for work on trees in Green Lane in 2005, 2007 and 2013. The note also stated that when the last application was submitted this did not include the two trees the resident has asked about, but it was not clear why they were not included. Discussion was had over whether consideration should be given to all the trees that overhang residents' properties being cut back or just the two in question. It was **Resolved** that **Cllr Somers & the Clerk's Assistant** will inspect the area and report to the committee.

**198 To consider an annual inspection of an oak tree at the allotments as recommended in a tree report obtained in January 2018.**

It was noted that the Clerk's Assistant had obtained confirmation from the surveyor that in section 6.11 of his report he meant "biennial" [every two years] for future inspections rather than "bi-annually" [twice a year].

It was **Resolved** that the oak tree labelled T06 will be inspected annually as recommended in section 6.9 of the report. The **Clerk's Assistant** will obtain quotes for this work.

**199 To consider obtaining quotes to remove two stone plinths on Rodway Common near to Manor Grove.**

It was noted that the plinths are concrete rather than stone and they previously had a bench attached to them. It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will obtain quotes for the plinths to be removed.

**200 To consider an email from a member of the public concerned about the number of cyclists using the grass areas of Rodway Common, he states that this is damaging the turf and they are building jumps with branches.**

It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will inform the resident that the committee members noted his comments.

**201 To consider issues arising from the allotments evening.**

- Green bins and / or a communal area for green matter that isn't suitable for composting; It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will get quotes for a three-sided enclosure possibly made with railway sleepers (not the sort that might leak oil). It would be approximately 2/3 the size of a standard garage but this could be adjusted based on the length of the sleepers. The car park was considered a suitable location on the basis that it isn't usually full and enquiries can be made to check that the material could be mechanically removed using a grabber parked in Dibden Lane.
- Potholes in the car park; It was **Resolved** that this will be kept under review.
- Several tenants were concerned about the security of the site; this is being addressed as referred to under item 190.
- Tenants committee; It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will email the four volunteers individually to inform them about the proposed action for the allotment gate and to seek their consent to pass on each other's email addresses. The committee could appoint a representative to attend Open Spaces & Allotment committee meetings as necessary and it was noted that a Town Councillor would be willing to attend a meeting of the allotment committee.
- Possibility of a toilet at the allotments; It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will inform the tenants committee that they can seek further feedback from the tenants as to whether they want a toilet and if so what sort. The committee will need to take the initiative on this matter and if appropriate provide recommendations to the Open Spaces & Allotment committee.

**202 To review the allotment rent for 2019 / 20.**

This was discussed by the members and it was **Resolved** that the rent will remain at £48 for a full plot and pro-rata for smaller plots.

**203 To consider regular jobs that can be done by an odd job / maintenance person.**

It was **Resolved** to continue using the existing contractors.

**204 To note that the litter picking contract was last re-tendered in 2016. To consider continuing the contract with Brandon Trust for 2019 / 20 and re-tendering in late 2019 to start in April 2020.**

It was noted that the contract was last re-tendered in 2016. It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will inform Brandon Trust that the Town Council will continue the contract for 2019/20 and that it will be re-tendered late 2019.

**205 To consider a request from the Royal Pigeon Racing Association [RPRA] to use Rodway Common in 2019 on the same terms as this year.**

It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will inform the RPRA that they can continue to use the common in 2019.

**206 Correspondence.**

1. Chris Bolton of Downend & Bromley Heath in bloom phoned on Tuesday 16 Oct. They have been donated 4,000 crocus bulbs by the Rotary club which they will be planting in grass by our notice board on the Badminton Road.
2. An email from Cate Biggs copied to the Town Council on issues relating to Lyde Green Common; "No response from developers [about materials they could donate to deter motor bike riders] but I will raise it at the next opportunity. We're also looking into funding for improvements like this - it's all taking a lot of time to get stage 1 of the plan (ecological survey and desk studies) funded but I'm still working on it. Fingers crossed this can be sorted soon so that I can apply for larger funding grants to improve boundaries, paths, mitigate pollution and install additional provisions for wildlife (i.e. bat boxes, more wildflowers)." *It was noted that a meeting has been arranged with the South Gloucestershire Council commons officer to discuss the bund.*
3. An email from the resident who asked for a bin to be installed near the junction of Guest Avenue and Emerson Way thanking the Open Spaces & Allotments committee for implementing his suggestion.
4. Cllr Cannard has received a number of complaints regarding litter being left by the bus stop opposite Sainsbury's petrol station. Donna Simmons has asked South Gloucestershire Council if they will consider installing of a bin by the bus stop.
5. An email from a representative of HML group (a property management company) asking for the grass verge in Hill Close to be cut. Also, a reply from Lee Hayward at SGC explaining he had only been instructed in August to cut this verge, but it will be cut in future.
6. An email from a member of the public concerned that grass cuttings that are left in the corner of the Blackhorse playing field are a hazard to users of the field especially dogs as she stated that it could be dangerous if they eat rotting grass. Also, a reply from Jonathan Munslow, SGC, explaining that leaving the grass on site has benefits for biodiversity and rotting grass is not a particular hazard to dogs if they eat it.
7. At the committee meeting on 6 March the members agreed that the Clerk's Assistant would deliver a leaflet to the houses opposite Vinney Green common stating that it is illegal to park on common land. A leaflet has been delivered to the houses numbered 17 – 47 and this seems to have resulted in cars only very occasionally parking on the common.
8. An email from the Avon Organic Group stating that subject to any objection they propose to put a notice on the allotment gate of their 2018 – 19 programme.
9. An invitation to comment on the Open Spaces Society's draft strategic plan for 2019 – 2024.

### **207 Items from Members to Report.**

Cllr Hill informed the members;

- Two lots of rubbish have been left on Rodway Common and SGC are investigating to see if there is evidence of who it belongs to with a view to prosecuting the offender.
- The new bench has been installed on Rodway Common.
- There are two bollards missing at Rodway Common by the parking area. It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** get a quote and arrange for them to be replaced.

Cllr Nichols informed the members that one of the bollards at Blackhorse Road next to the road is at an angle. It was **Resolved** that the **Clerk's Assistant** will inspect the bollard and report to the committee.

### **208 Date of next meeting: Tuesday 8 January 2019**

Noted.

The chairman closed the meeting at 20.30