

Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee

held in the Council Chamber, Emersons Green Town Council

1900hrs on Tuesday 7th March 2023

- Present:** Councillors Simon Budd (Mayor), David Somers (Deputy Mayor), Alka Mehta-Graham, Patricia Morgan, Roberta Sunderland.
- Absent:** Councillor Sadik Al-Hassan.
- In attendance:** Committee Clerk, Richard Hull.
- Apologies:** None.
- Public:** None.
- Notes:** The meeting began at 1900hrs. All resolutions are passed with a majority vote, by a show of hands, unless otherwise stated.
- OS_2022.48 Welcome and introductions.**
- Minutes:** Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) welcomed everyone present at the meeting and explained the emergency procedures.
- OS_2022.49 Declaration of interest – Localism Act 2011.**
- Minutes:** Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) reminded members of the requirement to declare an interest.
- OS_2022.50 To receive representations from the press and public.**
- Minutes:** No members of the press or public were present.
- OS_2022.51 Minutes.**
- Minutes:** Cllr Roberta Sunderland stated that the motion in the agenda had an incorrect date of 1st November 2022 and that the date should be 10th January 2023.
- Motion:** An amendment to the motion was moved by Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), supported by Cllr Patricia Morgan, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the 10th January 2023, copies having been circulated, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Minutes: The minutes were signed at the meeting by Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor).

OS_2022.52 Outstanding items from the previous minutes.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), the Committee Clerk referred members to a summary of the work undertaken as a result of the resolutions and action points from the previous meetings as detailed in the Committee Clerk's report which can be found at Annex A:

- The 6 small leafed lime trees have been planted at Rodway Common.
- The Committee Clerk reported that the proposed plaque on Rodway Common for HM Queen Elizabeth II memorial must be prepared in accordance with *Guidance on Memorialisation*, however the Royal Names Team in the Cabinet Office do not know when the guidance will be published.
- One quote has been obtained for clearance of the arisings on the allotment land at the rear of 51 Meadgate and another quote has been requested.
- A dual-purpose bin has been in Howsmoor Lane near to the west edge of Lyde Green Common.

After this Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) explained that South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) had arranged for a tree to be planted at Blackhorse Road common but that it was in the wrong place. The Committee Clerk confirmed that SGC have been instructed to rectify this matter.

Next Cllr Simon Budd (Mayor) expressed concern at how long it could take the Royal Names Team to provide *Guidance on Memorialisation*. The Committee Clerk confirmed that he had made a diary note to ensure that a reply is received.

OS_2022.53 Correspondence.

Minutes: There was no correspondence.

OS_2022.54 Portable Toilet for Dibden Lane allotments.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) the Committee Clerk referred members to the background and advice in the Committee Clerk's report which can be found at Annex A. He also explained that the hire can be on a rolling four-week basis so the Town Council is not obliged to keep continue the hire until the end of October.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Roberta Sunderland, supported by Cllr Patricia Morgan, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Open Spaces committee hires a portable toilet from Mendip Toilet Hire until the end of October 2023, documents having been circulated.

OS_2022.55 Contract - Estate Maintenance.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), supported by Cllr Alka Mehta-Graham, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Open Spaces committee accepts a quote from Brandon Trust for a one-year contract, documents having been circulated.

OS_2022.56 Grass cutting contract.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), the Committee Clerk referred members to the background and advice in the Committee Clerk's report which can be found at Annex A.
After this Cllr Roberta Sunderland suggested that for next year the Town Council explores with SGC the possibility of reducing the number of cuts and / or using cut and collect machinery.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), supported by Cllr Roberta Sunderland, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Open Spaces committee accepts a quote from South Gloucestershire Council for a one-year contract, documents having been circulated.

OS_2022.57 Bollards at Vinney Green Common.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) the Committee Clerk referred members to the background and advice in the Committee Clerk's report which can be found at Annex A.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), supported by Cllr Roberta Sunderland, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Open Spaces committee delegates authority to the Committee Clerk to commission the procurement and installation of recycled plastic bollards and a retractable metal post at Vinney Green Common, example documents having been circulated.

OS_2022.58 Gates in Green Lane.

Minutes: Cllr Roberta Sunderland explained that it would be useful to have gates at the Cave Grove crossing of Green Lane. This would allow movement, such as with wheel barrows, to the side of the existing kissing gates. Members noted that they will need to be secured with padlocks.

Action: Cllr Roberta Sunderland agreed to find out the cost to install the gates and to draft a motion to the Committee.

OS_2022.59 Mangotsfield Folly.

Minutes: Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) referred members to the background document, copies having been circulated, which details the concerns of a member of the public which included litter at the Folly on the former Mangotsfield railway station.

Action: Several members agreed to attend a site visit at the Folly at 1000hrs on the 14th March.
The Committee Clerk will email members with the background information.

OS_2022.60 Dibden Lane allotments.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), the Committee Clerk referred members to the background and advice in the Committee Clerk's report which can be found at Annex A.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor), supported by Cllr Alka Mehta-Graham, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Open Spaces committee delegates authority to the Committee Clerk to register the Town Council's ownership of the land at the East side of the allotments with HM Land Registry, documents having been circulated.

OS_2022.61 Litter problem at Coxgrove Hill

Minutes: Cllr Simon Budd (Mayor) explained about the issue of litter and rubbish along Coxgrove Hill that had been brought to his attention by a member of the public.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Simon Budd (Mayor), supported by Cllr Alka Mehta-Graham, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Open Spaces committee delegates authority to the Committee Clerk to investigate the litter concerns and report them as appropriate, documents having been circulated.

OS_2022.62 Dates and timings.

Minutes: Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) announced that the next meeting of the Open Spaces Committee was scheduled to take place:

Tuesday 23rd May at 1900hrs in the Emersons Green Town Council Chamber.

Finally Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) concluded the formal business of the meeting at 2003 hrs and announced that an informal 'roundtable' discussion would take place afterward.



EMERSONS GREEN
TOWN COUNCIL

REPORT OF:	Committee Clerk
TO:	OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
REPORT DATE:	3 March 2023

Contact Details:	Richard Hull
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COMMITTEE CLERK'S REPORT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide Councillors with official advice and recommendations from the Town Councils proper officer for the following meeting:

**Open Spaces Committee, The Council Chamber of Emersons Green Town Council,
7 March 2023 commencing at 1900hrs.**

AGENDA ITEM: OS_2022.52 Outstanding Items from the previous minutes.

To report that:

- The 6 small leafed lime trees have been planted at Rodway Common.
- The Committee Clerk has found out that the proposed plaque on Rodway Common for HM Queen Elizabeth II memorial must be prepared in accordance with Guidance on Memorialisation, however the Royal Names Team in the Cabinet Office do not know when the guidance will be published.
- One quote has been obtained for clearance of the arisings on the allotment land at the rear of 51 Meadgate and another quote has been requested.
- A dual purpose bin has been in Howsmoor Lane near to the west edge of Lyde Green Common.

AGENDA ITEM: OS_2022.54

Portable toilet for Dibden Lane allotments

Under the authority of the Town Council's Scheme of Financial Delegation Cllr David Somers (Deputy Mayor) and the Committee Clerk have sanctioned the hire of a portable toilet which will be delivered on 28 March. The hire is on a rolling four-week basis. The Town Council last hired a toilet for the allotments in 2019, when it was hired from Easter until the end of September but has not done so since mainly because of Covid restrictions.

LEGAL POWER OR DUTY TO ACT

- Small holdings & Allotments Act 1908, s23.

RECOMMENDATIONS, CONDITIONS, AND OTHER CONTROLS

Resolve that: "The Open Spaces committee hires a portable toilet from Mendip Toilet Hire until the end of October 2023, documents having been circulated."

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- To facilitate tenants use of their plots.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS & RISKS

The Council has budgeted £2,800 for 2023 / 24 for allotment maintenance which is adequate to cover the hire cost of £25 per week and £30 for delivery and collection, and for other allotment expenditure.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

Apart from the weekly servicing of the toilet the climate change impact is minimal.

AGENDA ITEM: OS_2022.55

Contract – Estate Maintenance.

A quote has been received from Brandon Trust for a one-year contract. Quotes were also requested from SGC, who explained that they are only taking on works that fits in with their core service, and from Prestige Grounds who did not reply.

LEGAL POWER OR DUTY TO ACT

- Open Spaces Act 1906, s9-10.

RECOMMENDATIONS, CONDITIONS, AND OTHER CONTROLS

Resolve that: "The Open Spaces committee accepts a quote from Brandon Trust for a one-year contract, documents having been circulated."

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- To continue the maintenance of paths, common land, and allotment site.
- Corporate Priority 1 - Improve the management and maintenance of the parks & open spaces managed by the Council.
- Key objective A5 - Draw up maintenance plans and schedules to drive an improvement in standards within the parks and open spaces.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS & RISKS

The Council has budgeted £20,000 for 2023 / 24 for grass and path maintenance which is more than adequate to cover the costs of this proposal.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

The Council has a responsibility to keep public rights of way accessible and the current maintenance contract is minimalistic. However, there are opportunities for improvement, such as exploring alternative transport solutions for contractors. The Council does not currently have the capacity to bring this work in-house but this could be explored in future.

AGENDA ITEM: OS_2022.56

Contract – Grass Cutting (Localism).

At Full Council on 9th February it was resolved that; “The Council delegates authority to the Open Spaces Committee to negotiate a contract with South Gloucestershire Council for the additional maintenance of highway verges, up to a budget of £25,915.”

A quote has been received from SGC for a one-year contract for £12,580.

LEGAL POWER OR DUTY TO ACT

- Open Spaces Act 1906, s9-10.
- Localism Act 2011.

RECOMMENDATIONS, CONDITIONS, AND OTHER CONTROLS

Resolve that: “The Open Spaces committee accepts a quote from South Gloucestershire Council for a one-year contract, documents having been circulated.”

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- To continue the maintenance of grass verges.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS & RISKS

The Council has budgeted £20,000 for 2023 / 24 for grass and path maintenance which is more than adequate to cover the costs of this proposal and the Estate Maintenance contract.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

At Full Council on 9th February Cllr Roberta Sunderland expressed support for the motion, expressing the opinion that South Glos Council was undertaking the necessary research to consider the impact on biodiversity, and directed attention to the circulated briefing note *Verges and Public Open Space Grass Management Project Update (February 2023)*. Furthermore, it was argued that “cutting less doesn’t [always] cost less”.

AGENDA ITEM: OS_2022.57

Bollards at Vinney Green Common

At Full Council on 9th February Councillors discussed the fact that there is no deterrent to trespassers accessing Vinney Green Common along the sections that front Blackhorse Road and Richmond Road. Cllr Simon Budd (Mayor) expressed the view that the security situation warranted an immediate response. In response, Cllr Sadik Al-Hassan supported the opinion that the potential for trespassers occupying Council property had increased. In contrast, other Councillors disagreed and thought the threat was not imminent, suggesting that the item could be debated further at the Open Spaces Committee. Furthermore, Cllr Roberta Sunderland proposed that an alternative to bollards was explored, which could include the planting of fruit trees or other natural barriers.

It was resolved that; “The Council defers this item to the Open Spaces Committee.”

A site visit took place on 17th February attended by Councillors Budd, Morgan, Somers and Sunderland. The Committee Clerk will arrange a site visit with an appropriate contractor to explore the possibilities of planting hedging or other barriers along the section of the common that fronts Richmond Road.

LEGAL POWER OR DUTY TO ACT

- Open Spaces Act 1906, s9-10.
- Inclosure Act 1845.

RECOMMENDATIONS, CONDITIONS, AND OTHER CONTROLS

Resolve that: “The Open Spaces committee delegates authority to the Committee Clerk to commission the procurement and installation of recycled plastic bollards and a retractable metal post at Vinney Green Common, example documents having been circulated.”

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- To deter trespassers from accessing the section of the common that fronts Blackhorse Road

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS & RISKS

The Council has budgeted £16,000 for maintenance in 2023/24, which includes new bollards and replacements which is adequate for this work.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

The proposal is to use recycled plastic bollards for the section of the common fronting Blackhorse Road. However, other alternatives, such as strategic tree planting, which may offer a better solution for the climate can be considered for the much longer stretch that fronts Richmond Road.

AGENDA ITEM: OS_2022.60

Dibden Lane allotments

When the Town Council office moved to the current location in 2018 several items were stolen including a locked tin box. The box contained the title deeds of the unregistered land of the east side of Dibden Lane allotments.

To rectify this the Town Council's title needs to be registered with HM Land Registry.

LEGAL POWER OR DUTY TO ACT

- Small holdings & Allotments Act 1908, s23.

RECOMMENDATIONS, CONDITIONS, AND OTHER CONTROLS

Resolve that: "The Open Spaces committee delegates authority to the Committee Clerk to register the Town Council's ownership of the land at the east side of the allotments with HM Land Registry."

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- To protect the Town Council's title to the land.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS & RISKS

The administrative costs have not yet been quantified but unless solicitors need to be instructed the costs are expected to be minimal apart from office staff time in dealing with the matter.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

Minimal impact caused by use of office resources such as paper.