

**WEST HILL PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 25TH FEBRUARY 2020 AT 1.00PM
AT THE NARTHEX, ST MICHAELS, BENDARROCH ROAD**

Present:	Chairman Cllr Alan Cook (ABC), Cllr Amanda Townsend (AT), Cllr Margaret Piper (MP)
In attendance: Apologies received from:	Anne Oliver Parish Clerk, 4 members of the public plus Mike Brown (DCC Highways Neighbourhood Officer) attended the meeting Cllr Alison Carr (AC), Cllr Quentin Tailford (QT)

Item (a)	Discussion and decisions (b)
20/001	<p>Welcome and Election of Chairman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting started at 1.00pm. The Clerk welcomed everyone and reminded everyone that the meeting was being recorded. Cllr Alan Cook to be Chairman was proposed by Cllr MP and seconded by Cllr AT
20/002	<p>Election of Vice-Chairman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr AT to be Vice-chair of the Committee proposed by Cllr MP, seconded by Cllr ABC
20/003	<p>Apologies. To receive apologies and approve reasons for absence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies were accepted from Cllr AC and Cllr QT
20/004	<p>Public question time (3 minutes)</p> <p>From 1.00pm residents are invited to give their views and question the Open Spaces Committee on issues on this agenda or raise issues for further consideration at the discretion of the Chairman, before the start of the Open Spaces Committee meeting. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting itself.</p> <p>1. Lower Broad Oak Rd – Flooding and Parking</p> <p>Two residents attended the meeting to report problems on Lower Broad Oak Road near the entrance to Broadoak Plantation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cars parking on the verge opposite Broadoak are churning up the grips dug by Highways to drain water off the highway. In addition there may be a blocked drainage pipe in the area. As a result flood water has taken a new route across fields towards the residents house (and other houses) . <p>Mike Brown (Highways) confirmed that people are allowed to park on the verge. He also commented that Highways do not have the funds to clear the grips again this season.</p> <p>Action : To check the verge and surrounding area to review the problem and identify possible actions. Cllr ABC.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cars parking on the verge immediately outside the entrance to Broadoak have created gullies either side of the manhole cover. This is becoming a risk to cars and possibly pedestrians. <p>Cllrs noted that the manhole is on the verge rather than tarmac and is on land owned by The Woodland Trust.</p> <p>Action : To contact Tilhill/Woodland Trust to alert them to the problem. Cllr AT</p> <p>2. Footpaths</p> <p>West Hill Footpath Warden Eileen Perkins provided an update on the Annual Footpath Survey. Two matters had been reported</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footpath 87 gate/gatepost - The Parish Public Paths (P3) scheme will incur the cost for this repair. Footpath 40 Flooding – This is just outside the West Hill Parish. Richard Spurway (P3) has contacted the landowner and will be seeking to resolve this problem. <p>Councillors confirmed that they will not be progressing the proposal to link the footpaths either side of the B3180.</p>
<p>20/005</p>	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>a. Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests.</p> <p>b. To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature. To declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda and their nature (Councillors with DPLs must leave the room for the relevant items).</p> <p>None declared</p>
<p>20/006</p>	<p>To review the Highways guidance advisory note regarding resident's responsibility for ditches, verges & hedges and to consider any implications for West Hill.</p> <p>Cllr ABC suspended Standing Orders for this item to allow discussion with the meeting attendees:</p> <p>Cllr ABC invited Mike Brown (Highways) to comment on Highways recent advisory note concerning Draining Maintenance Responsibilities.</p> <p>Mike note that confusion often arises as title deeds may show the property boundary as the middle of the road however Highways have rights over the tarmac and verge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibility for the tarmac and verge lies with Highways. Responsibility for ditches and hedges lies with the landowner/householder. <p>Highways do have rights to clear ditches, cut hedges etc under certain circumstances such as Road Safety.</p> <p>Mike Brown reminded the Cllrs that the Parish Council does not have the same rights as Highways to take action regarding verges and ditches. Cllr ABC confirmed that the Parish Council would always contact the landowner in the first instance.</p> <p>Action : Put the Highways Advisory Note on the WHPC website and include an item on the next WHPC newsletter.</p>
<p>20/007</p>	<p>To consider a proposal from West Hill's Snow Warden to address 2019 snow gritter failures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is West Hill registered on Highways Snow Warden Scheme? Consider fee proposals

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Hill Snow Plan – this document should identify which areas are covered. <p>Cllr ABC suspended Standing Orders for this item to allow discussion with the meeting attendees: Village resident Craig Williams attended the meeting to give an update on recent snow events and problems with the snow gritter. Craig explained the snow gritter “inherited” from the West Hill Residents Association has had many (costly) maintenance issues and can only hold a limited quantity of salt which required frequent time-wasting trips to re-fill with salt.</p> <p>As discussed at the previous WHPC meeting Craig proposed two options and Cllrs preferred a fee charging option. Craig provided further detail on the two options</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. West Hill Parish Council purchases a replacement 2. Craig purchases a replacement gritter with a machine more suitable for the West Hill terrain and with greater capacity. He will then charge the Council per “Snow Event”. He is currently evaluating two gritters (c£2,500 3yr warranty)/ (c4,800 5yr warranty but would expect 8-10yrs lifespan) <p>Action : Craig Williams to provide a detailed fee proposal for Cllr’s consideration, for 3rd March WHPC meeting if possible.</p> <p>Craig confirmed that the Salt is stored in a dry area in his warehouse and currently has sufficient supplies.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the need for a Snow Plan for West Hill detailing which roads are to be treated. There was some confusion regarding which areas are covered by DCC Highways. Grit bins were also discussed and Craig suggested that a bin was needed at the Bendarroch Road/B3180 junction. Mike Brown (DCC Highways) noted that Highways would not supply additional bins however there is a possibility that an existing bin could be re-located.</p> <p>Action : Check which areas are covered by DCC (Clerk) Action: Prepare a Snow Plan needs to be in place for discussion at the next OS Committee meeting and with Highways (a requirement of the Snow Warden Scheme) (Craig Williams)</p> <p>Cllr ABC asked whether Craig had registered on the DCC Highways Snow Warden Scheme.</p> <p>Action: Craig agreed to register on the DCC Highways Snow Warden Scheme</p>
<p>20/008</p>	<p>To receive a Clerk’s Report on actions and matters arising from the last meeting</p> <p>Actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Village Lengthsman – contract has been signed. Invoice process agreed. 2. Footpaths – Annual Survey and P3 Grant Application submitted 3. Litter/Dog Waste Bins – collections have been increased to 3 times per week. <p>Other matters</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Any urgent matters arising.
<p>20/009</p>	<p>Lengthsman</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. To approve the Grant application to Highways Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund. <p>The Clerk reported that Mike Brown(DCC Highways) had reviewed the draft grant application for a 2nd year of match funding for the Village Lengthsman. No issues were raised. However he reminded the Parish Council that it does not have the same rights as Highways to take action regarding hedges, verges and ditches. Cllr ABC confirmed that the Parish Council would always contact the landowner in the first instance.</p> <p>Action : Submit the grant application for a 2nd year of match funding for the Village Lengthsman (Clerk)</p>

<p>20/010</p>	<p>Playpark:</p> <p>a. To receive the WHPC Annual Inspection Report carried out by Cllr AT & Clerk and to agree actions required.</p> <p>Councillors accepted the reported submitted by Cllr AT /Clerk. Overall the Playpark was in excellent condition. The following matters were reported</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overhanging dead/decaying branch - reported to the Village Hall Trustees and they are taking action. 2. Playboat – some areas of rotten timber particularly on the lowest section of the supporting timbers. 3. A section of very muddy path near the entrance. <p>Cllr ABC had looked at the Playboat and considered it may need work such as raising the supporting timbers on steel pins in 1-2 years. Also, the muddy section of path may need a permanent solution such as a drainage channel to allow water to drain from this area.</p> <p>Action: Explore options and quotes to address the problems re pt2 Playboat and pt3 path drainage. (XXXXXX)</p> <p>Action: Commission annual timber treatment in the summer (XXXXXXX)</p> <p>b. To review quotes for the installation of a Picnic Bench in the Playpark and agree recommendation to Full Council.</p> <p>Cllr AT reminded the meeting that the Council had received a quote of £960.70+VAT for three picnic benches and fixing kits.</p> <p>Cllr AT reported that there was space in the Playpark (in the north west corner) for one bench but this would require a small section of bank to be removed. The Council had approached 4 contractors for a quote for installation and had received two quotes.</p> <p>Cllr ABC suspended Standing Orders for this item to allow discussion with the meeting attendees:</p> <p>Craig Williams had previously installed equipment in the Playpark and offered to install the picnic bench for a nominal fee. Cllr ABC thanked Craig for his offer and explained that the Council would need a formal response to the job specification.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to provide a copy of the job specification. (Clerk)</p> <p>Action : Provide a quote for installation of a picnic bench and ground works.(C Williams)</p> <p>Action: Recommend purchase and installation to Full Council on 3rd March 2020 (Cllr ABC)</p>
<p>20/011</p>	<p>Broadoak Plantation</p> <p>a. Picnic benches: To receive an update on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the installation of picnic benches (agreed at Full Council 4th February min 20/043) • Maintenance of the Glade and work on the decaying tree in the Glade. <p>Cllr AT reminded the meeting that the Council had received a quote of £960.70+VAT for three picnic benches and fixing kits. Tilhill's contractor had provided a quote for £300+vat for groundworks to level the site and assemble/install two picnic benches.</p> <p>There was discussion re the delivery of the benches.</p> <p>Cllr ABC suspended Standing Orders for this item to allow discussion with the meeting attendees:</p> <p>Resident Craig Williams suggested that the benches could be delivered to his yard. Cllrs thanked him for the offer.</p>

	<p>Action: Recommend purchase and installation of two benches in Broadoak to Full Council on 3rd March 2020 (Cllr ABC)</p> <p>b. Noticeboards & dog code notices: To receive an update on the installation of notices in Broadoak.</p> <p>Cllrs had previously discussed installed notices in Broadoak reminding dog walkers of their responsibilities. This had been discussed and approved by The Woodland Trust (WT). Cllrs agreed to use a notice drafted by WHPC rather than the generic WT notice.</p> <p>Action: Contact Tilhill to request the installation of two ??? posts for the notices (Cllr AT)</p> <p>Action: Order two notices (Clerk)</p>
<p>20/012</p>	<p>Landmark Tree</p> <p>a. To consider arrangements for the Landmark Tree planting in Courtfield Close on Monday 23rd March at 9.30am. To include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planting • Attendees • Letter to residents in Courtfield Close. • Publicity <p>Cllr ABC reported that the Landmark Tree will be planted on Monday 23rd March at 9.30am. Children from West Hill School will be attending plus there may be representatives from EDDC.</p> <p>Cllrs agreed a letter to residents of Courtfield Close advising them of the date and time.</p> <p>Cllr ABC explained that the tree is supplied with a rabbit guard etc but may need additional protection. Cllrs agreed to install wooden posts and netting to protect the young tree.</p> <p>Action: Circulate a press release re the Landmark Tree planting (Clerk)</p> <p>Action: Purchase wooden posts (Cllr ABC)</p>
<p>20/013</p>	<p>Himalayan Balsam</p> <p>a. To receive an update on the 2020 Plan to clear Himalayan Balsam along West Hill Road.</p> <p>b. Grant Application: To consider a Grant application to Highways Maintenance Community Enhancement Fund.</p> <p>Cllr MP updated the meeting on outline plans for the 2020 Himalayan Balsam project. The project's aim is to remove the HB along the section of West Hill - from the junction with Lower Broad Oak Road for approx. 600m towards Ottery St Mary. The recommended method for tackling the Himalayan Balsam is to pull it up and then lay it down to rot. This work has to be done before the seeds have set so the target date is end June/early July.</p> <p>The proposal is to schedule a day (probably Sunday to minimise disruption) and to close one lane of West Hill Road. The work may not be completed on one day and may need to be done on a second Sunday some weeks later. Highways have been consulted and advise their preference for traffic lights rather than Stop/Go boards to control traffic. Suitably qualified people are required to operate the traffic management. A limited number of free training places are available to the Council.</p> <p>Action: Confirm the date of the School Fete (Cllr AT)</p> <p>Action: Submit a grant application to the HMCEF fund for match funding to cover hire of traffic lights, contractor weekend working and safety equipment. (Clerk)</p> <p>Cllr ABC suspended Standing Orders for this item to allow discussion with the meeting attendees:</p> <p>The Footpath Warden reported that Tipton St John had successfully removed an area of HB and may be able to offer advice.</p>

<p>20/014</p>	<p>Trees</p> <p>a. To consider a proposal to cross-check the trees listed in the Special Trees of West Hill Report (or sections of the list) against EDDC's schedule of TPOs.</p> <p>CLr ABC updated the meeting on a suggestion to cross-check the trees listed in the Special Trees of West Hill Report against the EDDC list of TPOs. The project team propose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update the report with this information. • To identify significant trees without TPOS and to liaise with EDDC Tree Officers. <p>CLrs supported this proposal</p>
<p>20/015</p>	<p>Finance and invoice tracker</p> <p>Invoices received – for approval:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. St Michael's – room bookings Invoice to be paid monthly @ £15 per month <p>Noted</p> <p>Paid invoices – for information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. n/a <p>Budget report and tracker 2020/2021</p>
<p>20/016</p>	<p>Councillors questions, reports and items for future agenda</p> <p>Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. <i>Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.</i></p>
<p>20/017</p>	<p>Next meeting:</p> <p>To confirm the date of the next meeting which is scheduled for Tuesday 31st March 2020.</p>

Signed *Anne Oliver* 26th February 2020
 Clerk to West Hill Parish Council