

**REPORT OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 7TH NOVEMBER 2017**

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

Chairman: * Tony Edwards

Councillors

- * Jo Clark
- * Raj Khiroya
- * Jill Leeming
- * Alison Preedy
- Martin Trevett**
- * Steve Watkins (ex officio)
- * Sarah Wright
- * Jane White (ex officio)

* Denotes members present

Officers present

Yvonne Merritt – Clerk
Claire James– Deputy Clerk
Laura Hamilton – Admin Assistant

There were three members of the public present.

17/45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Martin Trevett.

17/46 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION

None

The meeting was suspended at **7.32** to allow, with the Chairman’s permission, a member of the public to address the Committee.

Anne Pearson addressed the Committee on the process of the confidential business taken at the end of the meeting of the Committee of 11th July 2017

The meeting was reconvened at **7.35pm**

17/47 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee and Allotment Users meetings held on 12th September 2017, be approved as a true and correct record.

17/48 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising.

17/49 FINANCIAL COMPARISON STATEMENT 2017/18

The Clerk advised that the ‘%of budget’ column had been added to the report following comments at other committees.

17/50 OFFICER’S REPORT

The report was considered in detail.

Christchurch Car Park: It was noted that travel time by the contractor had not been factored in to the extent that would have been necessary given the traffic delays caused by the roadworks on the A404 at the time the work was scheduled.

Virtual Fencing Replacement: The Clerk confirmed that the quote of £4680 plus VAT was for complete replacement of the virtual fencing and included a replacement energizer. She also advised that it had not been possible to use the cable laying machine from Epping Forest following Rangers advice that the Council tractor did not have the correct tyres for use with this type of equipment. In response to a Member’s question on the Grounds Maintenance budget the Clerk advised that there was nothing else planned this year that would use the budget.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the quote for the repair of the virtual cattle fencing be accepted and the work programmed in.

This was proposed by Cllr Steve Watkins, seconded by Cllr Raj Khiroya and carried unanimously.

Golf Club Winter Works: Members were advised that the Golf Club would be getting a contractor in for the crown reduction work but had requested help from the Rangers for the felling work. The Ranger present explained the benefits of the proposed works.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To give permission to the Golf Club for the proposed works.

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

Common Users Group: The Clerk clarified the previous membership of the Group.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Common Users Group be re-instated.

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the Officers report

ALLOTMENTS

17/51 OCCUPATION

The continued availability of allotment plots at all sites was noted.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the occupation

17/52 WAITING LISTS

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the details on the waiting list.

17/53 ALLOTMENT REPORT

Copmans Wick Clearance: In response to a question from the Chair, Members were advised that the work required at Copmans Wick was part of the Winter works programme and completion would be weather dependant.

Water Tap Timers: Members agreed that timers on the water taps were neither practical nor cost effective and would therefore not be progressed.

Allotment Competition: It was noted that only a small number of winners of the allotment competition turned up to collect their prizes and some members felt that the council was very generous with the prizes which represented a significant percentage of the allotment income. Members agreed the following alternative:

- Winner at each site to be given their plot rent free for the following year.
- Certificates would be issued for the 2nd and 3rd winners at each site
- A novice prize to be continued.

Allotment Tenancy Agreement: Members agreed that the revised agreement was a considerable improvement on the current version. It was confirmed that anyone can take on a plot but that during times of high demand residents of Chorleywood are given priority.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To adopt the updated Tenancy Agreement as presented.

This was proposed from the chair and carried unanimously.

LAWN CEMETERY

17/54 INTERMENTS

The Committee

RESOLVED

To note the number of interments that had taken place.

COMMON AND GROVEWOOD

17/55 DRAFT COMMON GREEN SPACE ACTION PLAN

The Clerk explained that the document reflected the basis of what would form the plan and was not the plan itself, further adding that it had not yet gone to consultation. She advised that as the Stewardship agreement was now in place this needed to be tied together with the plan. The report was reviewed page by page and a number of amendments noted for feeding back to the author. Members agreed that the Council would not be seeking Green Flag award status at this stage. In terms of consultation the Old Shepherd Public House was added to the list of Consultees and the Gate Public House removed as the later was not directly affected by works on the Common. Christchurch was also added to the list of consultees. The Clerk advised that the Parish Council Website would be used for consultation, with paper copies also available at the Library. There would also be a poster on the Council Notice Board advising of the consultation.

The Clerk advised that once the consultation had been completed, Cllr Tony Edwards as Chair of the Open Spaces Committee would present the plan to the TRDC Environmental Forum. If accepted it would have the added benefit of works being able to go ahead without having to seek permission on each occasion. It was noted that the Golf Club were keen to buy into the plan to demonstrate it's commitment to the environmental work of the Parish Council.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Common Green Space Action Plan be accepted with the amendments as recorded by the Clerk during the course of the debate.

This was proposed by the Chair and carried unanimously.

17/56 WINTER WORKS PROGRAMME

Given the forthcoming departure of one of the Rangers, Members were advised that the Winter Works programme had been pared down. It was also noted that the programme was weather dependant, if it gets very wet then the work at Copmans Wick may be started earlier than planned. The clear up was a significant piece of work estimated at three Rangers for a period of two weeks. Once the work was done at Copmans Wick, the Clerk suggested that a letter be sent from the Committee advising that any subsequent dumping of rubbish at the Allotment site would result in tenants being recharged the clear up costs.

It was hoped that the replacement of the virtual fencing would be completed before the Common Ranger left the Council.

The Committee

RESOLVED

To accept the Winter Works Programme as outlined in the report

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

17/57 GROVEWOOD TREE MANAGEMENT PLAN

It was noted that one tree highlighted as requiring urgent action had already been actioned and the tree was due to be felled on the 20th November. A new contractor was being used, chosen on a cost basis and the work would be monitored. The quality and comprehensiveness of the Tree Survey report

was noted. The requirement to repeat the survey every two years using this report as a base was highlighted

The Committee
RESOLVED
To note the report.

GENERAL

17/58 REVISED BUDGET 2017/18

Following discussion on the figures presented

The Committee
RESOLVED
To approve the revised budget

This was proposed from the Chair and carried unanimously.

17/59 FEES AND CHARGES

Members agreed the 4% increase to Fees and Charges for the Memorial Plaques, Allotments and Licence to use the Common and Foundry increase for the Memorial Plaques but wished to discuss the Lawn Cemetery Charges in greater detail. Members considered the actual costs to the Council of the work involved in an interment by both the Rangers and Officers and the key additional capital costs associated with the cemetery. Comparison was made of the charges of other cemeteries in the area. Members also discussed the fact that parishioners paid an element towards the Lawn Cemetery as part of the rates and discussed what the appropriate charge for non-parishioners should be, the current being two times the parishioner rates. It was agreed that the Council was providing a service but also had a duty to cover costs. It was also noted that the ongoing maintenance costs for the length of the Exclusive Right of Burial were not included. It was noted that with increased numbers of graves and plaques the maintenance of the Cemetery was becoming more labour intensive as more strimming than mowing was now required.

The Committee
RESOLVED
To increase Lawn Cemetery Fees and charges to cover actual costs and Non-parishioner costs to increase to three times the parishioner costs, with all other fees and charges to increase by 4%. (see Appendix 1 for full list of agreed Fees and Charges)

This was proposed by Cllr Jane White, seconded by Cllr Jill Leeming and carried with four votes in favour, three votes against and one abstention.

17/60 DRAFT CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGET 2018-19

It was noted that the figures in the report would now need to change to reflect the resolution in the previous agenda item (Fees and Charges). The report therefore represented worst case scenario and less would be put on the precept as a result.

The Committee

REFERENCE	RESOLUTION / ACTION	ACTION REQUIRED	BY WHOM
OS 16/76	Action	To write an article for the next edition of Chorleywood Matters explaining the CiL rules and the use of the initial monies received for the Nature Trail. <i>Ongoing: target the October issue of Chorleywood Matters</i>	Cllr Raj Khiroya
OS16/87	Action	To look into the costs of strimming and rotavating vacant plots and the costs of weed suppressant membrane for plots given up. <i>Completed</i>	Allotment Administrator
OS 16/89	Action	To analyse the actual costs incurred by the officers in the preparation of a grave for burial and the ongoing maintenance to input to the meeting of the Open Spaces that discussed the fees and charges for 2018/19. <i>Completed: Costs presented to the November meeting.</i>	The Deputy Clerk
OS 16/89	Action	To research the charges made at other Cemeteries in the surrounding area for the next committee meeting that discusses the 2018/19 Fees and Charges <i>Completed: Comparison presented to the November meeting</i>	The Deputy Clerk
OS 16/89 & 17/06	Action	To arrange a parish paths meeting to move the leaflet forward. A meeting to be held with the residents who had volunteered to assist with documenting the parish paths in Chorleywood. <i>Ongoing: Action points combined and progress update to be given at next meeting</i>	Deputy Clerk
OS 17/06	Action	Formal letters to be sent to Sky Vision and the local Taxi company that were abusing the parking arrangements in the permissive parking areas. <i>Ongoing: The Clerk advised that the taxi company had been approached and were no longer parking at Shepherds Bridge. Cllr Martin Trevett advised that he was trying to get the parking restriction signage replaced outside the station.</i>	Clerk / Cllr Martin Trevett
17/22	Action	The Clerk undertook to investigate the area of fencing allowing deer into the Copmans Wick Allotment site. <i>Completed: Rangers to address the issue as part of the Copmans Wick clearance work in the Winter Works Programme</i>	Clerk
17/22	Action	To investigate the cost of timers for the taps	Allotment

		at the allotment sites. Completed: Committee agreed neither practical or cost effective to install timers.	Administrator
17/22	Action	To review the current allotment Tenancy agreement, including other Council's agreements in the review. A revised agreement to be brought to the September meeting of the Open Spaces Committee Completed: Revised Tenancy agreement brought to the November meeting and agreed.	Allotment Administrator
17/35	Action	To advise and explain the legislation covering cycling on the common to local schools for further dissemination and use social media and the Parish Council website to further support this action to discourage cyclists from using the Common. Ongoing	Clerk
17/35	Action	Faulty gate bolt preventing the gate being held open to be repaired. Completed	Allotment Administrator
17/35	Action	Review of allotment competition prizes to be included in Allotment report for the November meeting. Completed: Reviewed at November Meeting and alternative prize structure agreed.	Allotment Administrator
17/35	Action	To write to the appropriate officer at TRDC expressing the Parish Council's appreciation for the completion of the fence at Copmans Wick. Completed	Clerk / Allotment Administrator
17/35	Action	A tool to report issues with Parish Paths be built into the new Parish Council website currently under development. Ongoing	Deputy Clerk

FEES AND CHARGES 2018-19

7.1 CHORLEYWOOD LAWN CEMETERY – FEES & CHARGES 2018/19

INTERMENT CHARGES 01/04/18 – 31/03/19

EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF BURIAL

2018/2019	Parishioners	Non-Parishioners
Exclusive Right of Burial Full Interment	£735	£2205
Exclusive Right of Burial Ashes/Infant	£515	£1545

FULL INTERMENT*

2018/2019	Parishioners	Non-Parishioners
Single Depth	£565	£1695
Double Depth	£690	£2070

***For the interment of caskets an additional charge of £780 will apply**

ASHES

2018/2019	Parishioners	Non-Parishioners
Single Depth	£360	£1080
Double Depth	£360	£1080

Notes:

- 1. For interment charges purposes people who have left the Parish within the previous five years are considered Parishioners.**
- 2. Parishioner/non-Parishioner rates determined on the location of the deceased, not the purchaser of the Exclusive Right of Burial/grave.**
- 3. Infants – One charge for Exclusive Right of Burial only (no interment charges due).**

7.2 MEMORIAL PLAQUES:

The Foundry used by the Council for the supply of plaques increases its charges to the Parish Council effective from the 1st January 2018. Two phases of increase are therefore required.

STANDARD PLAQUE CHARGES 01.01.2018 – 31.03.2018

Foundry increase of 6% effective from 1/1/18 (rounded up before VAT)

12" X 12" - £546 ex VAT

24" X 12" - £992 ex VAT

7" x 2" - £76 ex VAT

STANDARD PLAQUE CHARGES 01.04.2018 – 31.12.2018

Inclusive of Foundry increase of 6% effective from 1/1/18 and 4% proposed increase (rounded up) from 01.04.18

12" X 12" - £568 ex VAT

24" X 12" - £1032 ex VAT

7" x 2" - £79 ex VAT

NB Plaque current & proposed charges do not include VAT (add 20%)

7.3 ALLOTMENTS

4% proposed increase rounded up to nearest 25pence

<u>2018/19 Proposed charges</u>	Allotment Charge	Water charge (no change)	Total Charge
Whole Plot	£37.50	£10.00	£47.50
Half Plot	£19.00	£5.00	£24.00
Pensioners Whole Plot	£25.25	£10.00	£35.25
Pensioners Half Plot	£12.75	£5.00	£17.75

Additional Charges (No Change)

New Tenant Admin Charge	£25
Key Charge for Copmans Wick, The Swillett & Dog Kennel Lane (non refundable)	£5
Late Payment charge	£10

7.4 LICENCE TO USE THE COMMON

The current charge to the two regular licensed users of the Common is £12.50 per hour. With a 4% increase this becomes **£13.00**, an increase of 50 pence.