

STRATTON ST MARGARET PARISH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee held at the Stratton Suite, Grange Leisure, Grange Drive, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon SN3 4JY on Tuesday, 4 April 2017 commencing at 7.00pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors Mrs T Page (Chair), S Benson, Mrs C Ennis, S Leach, Mrs A Murphy.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Deputy Clerk

OP21/16 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Miss A Bridges and JC Foley. No apologies were received from Cllr Tray.

OP22/16 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee held on 18 October 2017 were a true record of the meeting.

OP23/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

OP24/16 PUBLIC RECESS

There were two members of the public present. One resident had concerns the Parish Council would be using its resources to deal with fly tipping when the Swindon Borough Council still has a statutory obligation to manage it. The resident believes the Parish Council should reject all flying tipping. The Chairman thanked the resident for their comments and explained flying tipping is something the Parish Council is deemed capable of undertaking for amounts up the equivalent to fit into the average estate car boot. However the Borough Council has confirmed that the Parish Council is perfectly within its rights to report all flytipping to them when we are stretched

OP25/16 STRATTON AUTUMN SHOW - 16 SEPTEMBER 2017

Members **NOTED** the Autumn Show will take place on Saturday 16 September 2017 at Meadowcroft Community Centre. Members to put this date in their diary of events.

OP26/16 OFFICER'S REPORT

Members **NOTED** the report from acting Head of Open Spaces – available online and from the Parish Office. Members enquired about the fishing rights at Claridge's Pond and the Deputy Clerk confirmed the acting Head of Open Spaces was clarifying the matter with Swindon Borough Council and a further update would be available soon. Cllr Murphy asked if legal action has been brought

toward the skip company who attempted to deliver a skip by driving across Meadowcroft open space. There was no update at present on this.

OP27/16 **ACCOUNTS**

Members received and agreed the budget against expenditure for the Open Spaces Committee for the period April 2016 – February 2016. Cllr Leach enquired further about cleaning costs at Shenton Close, the rise in water costs and if the refuse budget included the extra waste from other litter bins that have been transferred to the Parish. The Deputy Clerk answered the queries satisfactorily and asked Members to speak with the Finance Team if they required any further clarification.

OP28/16 **STREETSMART**

Members received an update on the Streetsmart transition and Deed of Transfer. Members were given an email update from the acting Head of Open Spaces after a meeting on the 30 March with the Swindon Borough Council. Members **NOTED**:

- Fly tipping- the exact wording within the Deed states that a Parish Council shall deal with it if they are 'capable'. We have already been judged to be capable because we have men and vehicles and therefore we have verbally agreed to deal with it (in a separate meeting with Rob Core) for amounts up to 'the equivalent amount that could fit into the average estate car boot'. The Parish Council should honour this verbal agreement because it is in our interests to clear it from the Parish asap. It is however worth knowing that we are perfectly within our rights to report all flytipping to the Borough and when we are stretched with work we can do this.
- Time Limit - There was a lengthy debate about the 'get-out' clause (currently 10 years) and it seems this is going to be reviewed and another DRAFT of the Deed is going to be circulated with an amended time frame of 2 years. Smaller Parishes had more to complain about and there was discussion of having different rules for them but the Borough are keen to have the same Deeds for all Parishes so I believe it will be reviewed and changed to a 2 year 'get out'.
- Public Liability - Several Clerks from smaller parishes raised the point of whether the Borough would step in if a claim was made against a Parish that exceeded their Public Liability Limit. (If a Parish wasn't sufficiently covered to pay out a claim over £5 million liability. Most Parish's have 10 million PL so in fact it is a mute point. We also have £10 million Public Liability and are well covered.
- Footpaths – Maintenance of footpaths and bridleways is again (like flytipping) basically optional and comes down to capability. We have good capability and we should be doing what we can. We are perfectly within our rights to refer the work to SBC though. Any path that is tarmac comes under Highways and they have a small budget to help manage them. Incidentally it will tend to be litter and 'side vegetation' that will probably demand effort,



less so the ground surfaces. SBC are going to arrange a meeting to help educate Parish's on the various responsibilities that they have regarding footpaths and this can be expected in the next few weeks.

- New Draft Deed - to be issued soon with adjusted get out clause.

There being no other business the Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 7.40p.m.

CHAIR:

DATE