



BOX PARISH COUNCIL

A MEETING OF THE BOX HILL & RUDLOE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE WAS HELD ON 19th FEBRUARY 2024

1. **Present:** Councillors: D. Wright (Chairman); R. Davies; D. Dorey
N. Ingledew; I. Johnston; S. Roche; M. Tye; B. Walton
Cllr. D. Walters
2. **Apologies** Cllr T. Walton
3. **Public Question Time:** There were no members of the public present.
4. **Declarations of Interest:** Nil
5. **Walk round:** Members of the Committee had walked round prior to the meeting.
6. **Minutes:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th October 2023 were taken as read and signed as being a true record
7. **Risk Assessment and Forward Plan:** Both the Risk Assessment and Forward Plan had been circulated. The Risk Assessment was reviewed. This links in to the Forward Plan.
 - a. **Insufficient resource available to deliver the Box Hill Common & Lacy Wood Management Plan:** The Groundsmen are now spending more time on the Common. This, together with the work carried out by the Community Payback Team; Cotswold Wardens and Community Volunteers has improved the situation.
8. **Matters Arising from the Minutes:**
 - a. **Albion Terrace – Dry Stone Wall:** Four quotations had been sought but only one had been received. This was discussed. There will be £8000 in the budget for 2024/25

Recommendation that the quotation from Marcus Mitchell for the restoration of the retaining wall at Albion Terrace in the sum of £18,400, spread out over four phases, (phase 1 - £7200; phase 2 - £3.300; phase 3 - £2.900 and phase 4 - £5.000) be accepted and that the work to the first phase at a cost of £7.200 be carried out – to be funded from the 2024-25 budget.
 - b. **Albion Terrace:** Request received from a resident for permission to create a small vehicle turning circle on the middle common adjacent to Albion Terrace and install a EV charging point adjacent to the parking area.

This was discussed. The Council agreed to the installation of the EV charging point as this is not on Council land.

However, it was **recommended** that that the request to create a turning circle on the middle Common adjacent to Albion Terrace be

refused.

A further letter will be sent to residents reminding them of the peppercorn rental that is payable and asking them to remove any articles that have been installed on the Common.

- c. **Erection of seats on the Common:** Both seats had been installed at a cost of £2280.11 + vat for the seats and £943.93 for the concrete bases. Contributions for the seats and bases received in the sum of £2880.11

It was reported that non-native flowers had been planted and left in pots by one of the seat. Whilst the Council appreciates the reason for this it was agreed to write and ask for them to be removed, particularly the primulas which could be at risk of cross-pollination. It was also agreed offer them a meeting with the working groups to discuss native plants that might be acceptable.

- d. **Lacy Wood Management Plan:**

Recommendation that the quotation from Tree Parts Ltd for the second phase of the work in Lacy Wood be accepted in a sum not to exceed £5,000

- e. **Thoday Wood Management Plan:** 20 Ash trees suffering with Ash dieback have been felled together with 32 Hazel stools. 900m of dead hedge has been created. Next year 10-15 more Ash trees will need to be felled together with removing some of the holly.

- f. **Interpretation Boards:**

Recommendation that the designs for the Interpretation Boards to go on the lower Common and at the Orchard be accepted. The work will be carried out by idverde

9. Management of the Rudloe Area:

- a. **Rudloe Community Centre:**

Cllr Dorey reported that the Rudloe Community Association was still in negotiation with Wiltshire Council re the terms of the Lease. They had been offered a 7 year lease with a 2 year break clause. They will have to get the services reconnected and had been quoted £10K for the work to the gas and £1800 for the reconnection of the electricity. They are looking at alternative energy sources. The repairs to the roof will be covered by the Baptist Church at a cost of about £5000, together with the running costs and the funding of a Facilities Manager, but they are not prepared to cover the cost of the utilities.

Recommendation that the £12,000 currently in the budget as a Fund for Rudloe be used by the Rudloe Community Association towards the start up costs relating to the reopening of the Community Centre. This money can be used for matched funding from the Area Board etc.

The Clerk reported that she had received a letter from Wiltshire Council setting out the terms of the Lease and stating that a scheme for 100% affordable housing will be explored.

- b. **Rudloe Play Area:** It was agreed that the Parish Council could not invest any money long term in the Play Area until the issue of the Community Centre had been resolved. A meeting had been held with Wiltshire Council

where it was stated that if the Council surrendered the current management lease it would not have to upgrade the equipment. It had also been stated that the bridge and boulders could be removed and the area reinstated with grass/wood chippings.

It was agreed that Cllr Wright would speak to the Community Payback Team about removing the bridge etc and to obtain a quote from Wot a load of rubbish at Corsham for removing the debris, together with a quote for the cost of a membrane and wood chippings – these costings not to exceed £5,000

Action: DW

- c. **Rudloe Green:** No further update
- d. **Rudloe surgeries:** These are held regularly at the MoD Community Centre.
- e. **IdVerde:** Letter of thanks to be sent to idVerde for supporting the Rudloe Litter Pick and also for the work on the interpretation boards.

10. Correspondence:

- a. Letter received from Gigaclear requesting permission to dig a trench across the Lower Common to install broadband to three properties. This had been discussed at the Full Council meeting where an alternative route had been suggested which would avoid digging across the Community Orchard. This was put to Gigaclear who had replied stating the route suggested by the Council increased the amount of digging required which in turn increased the cost, possibly by enough to make it financially non-viable so they would need to review it if the Parish Council feel there's no route across the front of the 3 properties.

It was agreed that the Council would write to the three properties concerned explaining why an alternative route had been suggested.

- b. **Easter Egg hunt on the Common:** Letter received requesting permission to re-establish the charity easter egg hunt on Sunday 31st March at the Common. The event will be in aid of Cancer Research and run by local volunteers. They will put "by kind permission of the Box Parish Council" on all posters and advertising.

Recommendation that permission is granted.

- c. **Car Park:** Letter from a local resident regarding the condition of the car park and the parking of motor homes. It was agreed that the Parish Council cannot enforce who parks there. It was suggested that a dead hedge could be put up to define the entrance and a note could be put on the vehicles requesting that they be moved.

11. Items of report and future agenda items:

- a. **Grant made to Rudloe Community Group:** It was agreed to ask where the £100 grant made by the Parish Council to the group was spent as the event it had been intended for had been cancelled.
- b. **Walkrounds:** It was agreed to hold the walkrounds on the Friday afternoon prior to the meeting.
- c. **Roundwood:** It was reported that trees had been felled. A felling licence has been acquired and this is outside the remit of the Parish Council

12. Date of next meeting: 22nd April

Meeting closed at 8.20 pm

Chairman