

WIGTON TOWN COUNCIL

A MEETING OF THE PARKS, OPEN SPACES AND ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE
WAS
HELD ON TUESDAY 23RD JANUARY 2024 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT Councillors Hamblin, Hodson, Clark and McCarthy.

POA/35/2024 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES & RECORD REASONS FOR ABSENCE
Councillor Scott

POA/36/2024 TO APPROVE PREVIOUS MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS
To approve the minutes of the Parks, Open Spaces and Allotment minutes from 25th October 2023.

RESOLVED

It was agreed there would be an amendment to **POA 32** as the contaminated land will be left and not dug over. Minutes were approved.

POA/37/2024 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS
None

POA/38/2024 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC
None

POA/39/2024 REVIEW PREVIOUS ACTIONS

Action	Person Responsible	Complete	Comments	Committee Approval/comments (Where necessary)
Put up East End signage	EI/SF	Y	Two boards have been printed and have been given to SF to install. Signs are printed but not yet installed.	
Put up signage at Wigton Park with updated wording	EI/SF	N	Wording was incorrect. Parakeet print has the new wording so waiting for them to be delivered.	
Purchase football goal posts	EI/SF	Y	SF to let EI know what size goals are	12FT X 6FT socketed goals are required.

			required then they can be ordered.	
Repair zip wire and fence to reduce noise	SF	Y	Complete	Committee recommended changing the green fence at East End and placing the existing fence in a different place. A new fence should be budgeted for in next year's budget. Alternative fences will be looked at between now and April and the office will investigate grants available.
Complete the application for Dalton Shelter grant	EI	Y	Complete and just waiting to hear outcome.	The committee discussed the different solutions for seating. Further research is required whilst waiting for the COF response.
Repair allotment road	EI/SF	Y	10 ton of road planings have been ordered, road will be temporarily repaired w/c 23 rd October 2023. Full road repair will be discussed at the finance meeting to be budgeted for in 24/25. Road planings have been delivered.	
Burnfoot – plot 1	POA committee/EI	N	A resident has been in touch to ask to take on plot 1 and has said they will safely remove the rubbish.	Town Council will pay to remove waste after the fence is erected by SF. Waiting for CS to check if tenant is willing to erect fence and for the

				office to speak to potential tenant.
Tree problem – Burnfoot plot 1	POA committee/EI	Y	CI a member of the parks team has the tree qualification to assess the trees. All trees that are the responsibility of WTC are checked annually by CI, Burnfoot trees have been added to the map to check in Autumn 2023. Need to order tree tags	
Tree problem – Alder Trees at Throstle Park	POA committee/EI	N	CI to check.	
Tree problem – Beech tree	POA committee/EI	Y	Has been checked and it is dead. Does the committee want it removed? Park staff will remove	Beech tree to be replaced with an alternative that is more suitable for the area.
Move IBC from Burnfoot	POA committee/EI/SF	N	Not moved yet but SF is to move to Phoenix Park, just waiting for Cllr Hamblin to confirm location.	
Cutting back trees at Procter's Row	EI	Y	FC approved CWB Forestry to carry out tree works. SC has contacted CWB Forestry to gain a copy of their PL and RA. Cost - £660 INC VAT Work being carried out 27th November 2023	
Renovating Bowling Club/Wigton Park Toilets	EI	N	The finance meeting agreed to allow EI to undertake research into purchasing a toilet cabin that is already built. Costs will be explored at the finance/budget	It was agreed that temporary toilets would be put in place for now.

			meeting and will be budgeted for in 24/25. Finance committee are discussing options.	
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POA/40/2024 BUDGET

The clerk provided the committee with the budgets for each area including:

- Allotments
- Flowers and Shrubs
- Replacement Planters
- Grass Cutting

POA/41/2024 ALLOTMENTS

8.1 To discuss any issues regarding Burnfoot allotments.

It was explained that a lot of work had been undertaken at Burnfoot allotments including a new fence to separate the allotments from the footpath, along with a gate wide enough to allow a machine access in the future if needed. There still needs to be a fence erected at the back of allotment 3 (a) which is in the grounds team’s diary. Cllr Hamblin requested expressed his gratitude towards the grounds team for carrying out a good job.

Plots 4 & 5 were discussed in relation to having them cleared in the autumn when the grounds team were finished with grass cutting. An alternative to this is to rent the allotments to tenants who are willing to clear the site themselves and in return pay no fee for 12 months.

It was pointed out that there had been some issues with the allotment list as it did not always have the correct tenant information or include necessary information such as dates, this is being rectified by the assistant clerk.

8.2 To discuss any issues regarding Longthwaite Road allotments.

Members discussed allotments that had not met the requirements and next steps. It was agreed that there would be a review into which tenants had previously received letters requesting they improve their allotments and whether there had been any improvements made. To ensure all tenants are aware of the rules it was agreed that a copy of the rules along with a letter would be sent along with invoices as this would make it simpler to terminate tenancies where necessary. It was also decided that a notice would be placed on the website and social media sites asking whether those on the list wish to stay on the list and to get in touch of their contact details had changed.

A councillor asked whether allotment fees could be increased for those tenants who have larger plots or whether these plots could be split so that all tenants had the same size allotment. It was pointed out that any increase in fees had to be done in time to

give tenant holders a year's notice and that it would be unfair to reduce the size of a current plot who had a tenant. It was agreed plots could possibly be split but only when the tenant wished to terminate their contract.

8.3 To discuss and agree on recommended allotment fees for 2024/2025.

This was added to the agenda so that all members were aware of the rules and legislation relating to local government allotments. Fees should be set by the finance committee, but this committee can put forward their recommendations. It was agreed that there would be no proposal to raise the allotment fees next year. Members were also informed that any recommendation to increase the fee would need to be passed to the finance committee to allow enough time to give tenants 12 months' notice.

The clerk explained some of the Allotment Act 1950 to members; The Allotment Act 1950 states the rent is commonly fixed by the tenancy agreement, which means that it cannot be altered without the consent of the tenant. This in turn means that it may be necessary to give a tenant notice to quit in order to increase the rent. However, there is nothing to prevent a tenancy agreement including a rent review clause allowing an alteration of rent after a period of notice. For example, the agreement states that the rent may be increased after giving up to 12 months' notice to the tenant.

ACTION – To check allotment rules and update wording if required.

8.4 To set inspection dates for 2024/2025

Inspection dates were set for:

25th April 2024

4th July 2024 – to confirm best allotments

19th September 2024

POA/42/2024 WIGTON PARKS

9.1 To provide an update regarding all signage.

East End signage has been printed and will be erected by the 19th January 2024. The signage for Wigton Park needs to be revised as there had been some errors.

ACTION – El to liaise with Parakeet Prints to resolve the error.

Other signage had been discussed and submitted under the Borderlands application but there has been no further updates to report back.

9.2 To discuss progress related to the Dalton Shelter project.

There were no updates to receive, the application to the Community Ownership Fund has been submitted but there has been no outcome yet.

9.3 To discuss progress related to toilets at Wigton Park.

The finance committee have asked for a temporary solution to having park toilets until more time could be spent investigating and researching other options. The long-term options are to rebuild the current toilet block or to remove this block and purchase a cabin style toilet which would be placed in the car park. This needs to be researched to ensure services are able to reach the toilets and that the expense does not outweigh refurbishing the current toilet block. The temporary option is to place a Portaloo in the car park so that all visitors to the park have access.

9.4 To discuss and make recommendations on next steps regarding the mushroom in Phoenix Park.

It was reported that there was a crack in the mushroom, so the first task is to have this inspected to ensure it is safe. **ACTIONS** – arrange for the mushroom to be checked, contact Futamura to ask if any volunteers are available to paint, obtain quotes for painting.

9.5 To be provided with an update regarding all trees.

Members discussed the dead Beech tree at Phoenix Park and whether it should be replaced with another type of tree that is hardier.

ACTION – To ask Cllr M. Huntington what the tree in Speet Gill is.

9.6 Discuss and agree on purchasing 12x6ft socketed football goals.

Members discussed the need for socketed goals along with H&S considerations.

RESOLVED

Purchase socketed goal posts for East End Park with no nets up to the value of £800.

POA/43/2024 PARK PLANS

The chairman of the POA prepared a park plan, outlining the short-, medium- and long-term plans for all the parks. **ACTION** – create an electronic copy of the plan and share with committee members.

Meeting ended 7.43pm

Date of next meeting: TBC