

# Gerrards Cross Town Council

South Lodge, East Common, Gerrards Cross SL9 7AD 01753 888018

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## Minutes of the Commons Committee Virtual Meeting held at 7pm on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021

**Present:** Cllrs H Orme (Chairman), N Barnett, I Bayliss, C Brown, J Chhokar J O'Keeffe, J Palmiero, A Wood and J Woolveridge.

**In Attendance:** Cllr T Scott and Sue Moffat, (Town Clerk).

- 1. Apologies for Absence** – None.
- 2. Public Participation** – None. **Action**
- 3. To receive Health and Safety reports and Updates as follows:-**
  - East Common** – JW reported: - (i) Collected 15 bags of rubbish this month. She met a South Bucks Waste Operative on the Common who says that there has been a huge amount of extra work with the increase in litter during Covid; (ii) Gayhurst School have pinned notices to trees without permission; (iii) Congratulate WeAreGX for their contribution to the Keep Britain Tidy campaign last September that has been publicised in recent Bucks Council's article; (iv) Evidence of people drinking in the subway especially in wet weather. Also, there is some more graffiti; (v) Read in a recent article of Country Life that 'gorse' is a hall mark of a Common; (vi) Need another dog bin along East Common, opposite Mill Lane junction. This was agreed; **SM**  
**SM**
  - (vii) AW commented that East Common looks good where it has been holly mulched with a good balance of openness and bushes. HO added that she spent a lot of time talking to people about the holly mulching work. HO and SM had a meeting with 2 complainants but 2 passers' by at the time commented that they liked the work, so there is a balance of views.
  - West Common** – IB reported:- (i) All looks good. The woods have been very wet but now the water table is subsiding; (ii) Vast amount of rubbish left last Saturday night. IB spoke to the new PCSO on Sunday who says GX is high profile on the police radar so we should keep reporting any anti-social behaviour (ASB). IB will make suggestions at the next Council meeting of ways of combatting ASB so there is not a re-occurrence like last summer; (iii) NB suggested another litter bin by the dog bin by the information board. IB reported the bins along West Common (bus turning circle end) get emptied every day but sometimes those at Latchmore Pond end are overlooked. It was agreed to purchase an additional 'woodland style' bin for the Latchmore Pond area; (iv) AW reported that a lot of rubbish, bottles and sticks have been thrown in to New Pond. SM to arrange for ATC to clear this up. **IB**  
**SM**  
**ATC**
  - Play Equipment** – JP reported:- (i) Still well used and everything looks fine. Monitor the 'ditch' around grass matting at the Adult Gym.
  - The Camp** – HO reported:- (i) Looking mostly good. One side of the bridleway has been trimmed back but not the hedge on the other side; (ii) One step of the upper level of Valley Way steps needs repairing; (iii) The flooding of the Fosse has now gone; (iv) One property along Camp Rd keeps dumping garden waste on to the Camp.
- 4. Agreed the proposed playground survey** – This was agreed and with a closing date of 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 (8 weeks). Links to the survey will be published on the web site, in VOICE, Council noticeboards and around the playground. **HO**
- 5. Agreed to review, update and renew (e.g. every 5 years) our Woodland Management Plan** which will then be available to view on GXTC's website. SM is seeking advice from Pyramid Consulting and Defra about this.
- 6. Agreed that all Main Commons projects are communicated proactively** (1 week before start) by the Clerk/Deputy Clerk on our website with links posted on other main platforms i.e. Next Door, facebook, twitter. Information to include Project; Location; details and disturbance factors with start/finish dates. Laminated signs will be installed on site when work commences.

- It was also agreed to put a list of proposed future projects, without dates, on the noticeboards and web site. Also agreed to purchase a new green noticeboard near to the bus turning circle, West Common, for advertising GXTC's work. SM
7. **Updates on the ditches** by the side of the carriageway at the crossroads at Oxford Rd and Packhorse Rd. The contractor unexpectedly started work this morning. A balancing drain was found underneath about 12 years of debris. This has now been exposed and cleared which should assist greatly with the drainage. It was agreed that £4300 from the Common's budget to be used to clear the ditches and £1006 from Highways budget to expose the underground drain and relay kerbstones. Also it was agreed to inspect and maintain, if necessary, the ditches on an annual basis. This will be included in the works diary as a re-occurring event.
  8. **Request from Gerrards Cross Cricket Club** to mow a strip of grass on the Common for younger players to play some matches after lockdown. It was agreed that the best location was on West Common opposite the Bull Hotel. However a number of queries were raised:- (i) Is a soft ball to be used; (ii) If other people started using this strip for cricket, could there be unintended consequences as not allowed to fence off the area; (iii) Is the correct insurance and risk assessment in place? To investigate further and report back. SM
  9. **To review outstanding projects:** Noted. Add Wild flower beds to projects. Applied for grant funding for this work from the Community Board which has been agreed in principle. Work on the flower beds needs to start in March for a flower display in the summer. It was agreed to proceed with this work funding the cost of £2486 upfront by GXTC until the grant is received. JW added that the Wildflower notice proposed by HO should have less words. HO and SM will adjust accordingly. A quote for £1100 has been received to top up footpath along West Common. This was approved and it is well within budget. Also agreed to add remedial works to vehicle marks left in ground in East Common after the holly mulching HO/SM  
ATC
  10. **Common's Budget** – Noted. JC reported that the 2 biggest expenses this month was £5k for Fosse work and £6740 for the holly mulching.
  11. **Report on the latest meeting of the Gerrards Cross Conservation Volunteers** – No meeting held due to Corvid-19 restrictions.
  12. **Review Footpaths** – (i) JW reported that the gate at the entrance Hedgerley Lane footpath is still tied up with string but working.
  13. **Communication** – None.
  14. **Correspondence:-** (i) Request from Little Kickers to use the Common for 18 months to 5 year olds on Saturday mornings 8.45am to 11.45am. Insurance and Risk Assessment received. It was agreed to allow this group to use West Common opposite the Bull Hotel. Their offer of a contribution towards the upkeep of Common accepted; (ii) Request from Mentmore Homes Development at West Common, to clear scrub by blue hoarding and plant small shrubs. This was agreed once details have been received of the shrub planting (iii) Resident from West Common requesting additional bin by relocated bench Latchmore Pond, new dog waste bin opposite 29 West Common and double yellow lines along West Common to stop parking. HO and SM to investigate bins. JO reported that double yellow lines along West Common have not been included in the latest Parking Review consultation; (v) A local resident complained about illegal parking along West Common. Any illegal parking should be reported to the Parking Enforcement Team; (vi) HO has been approached by the Charity, MAD (Make a Difference) to hold a Shakespeare Play on West Common in June, subject to Covid guidelines. This would be a 2 hour ticketed play starting at 4.30pm. Any casual onlookers would be invited to make a donation. This was agreed and HO offered to liaise with MAD. HO/SM  
  
HO
  15. **The date of the next meeting** of the Commons Committee will be held on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Meeting closed at 8.06 pm

Signed.....

Date.....