

Gerrards Cross Town Council

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

Clerk to the Council - Mrs S Moffat clerk@gerrardscross.gov.uk

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Minutes of the Commons Committee Virtual Meeting held at 7pm on Tuesday 6th April 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: Sue Moffat, (Town Clerk), Amy McCreary (Deputy Clerk).

1. Apologies for Absence – None.

Public Participation – Peter Harding Pyramid Consulting Ltd

Action

2. To agree review, update and renew (eg every 5 years) our Woodland Management Plan

The current plan is on the shared drive and was produced in 2013. PH confirmed that it should run for 10 years when another application for a grant of £1000 can be made to renew the Woodland Management Plan. PH confirmed that all the current grant has been spent and the following items discussed:

- A new felling licence has been received.
- Holly removal is a big issue and explore alternative ways of doing this in the future.
- An open space on East Common is planned and PH confirmed that no holly bushes will be removed on the boundary. Need to grade the margins from shrub, larger vegetation and then full tree canopy. **PH**
- JW reported that the Millennium yew was suffering. PH will examine it again and select a new leader. **PH**
- CB raised concerns that the woodland is edging out into the grass area. PH explained if the tree cutting is under 75mm in thickness so it can be cut without any permission.
- HO pointed out that it has already been agreed that no chemicals are used on the Commons.
- HO reported that thinning for firewood production was investigated but was rejected as too much like an industrial operation.
- Everyone agreed that the forestry school was a good idea. PH to provide contacts. **PH**
- PH did not believe the Camp is on the Rural Land Registry. It was agreed that the Camp should be kept separate from the current plan and possibly added when the Management Plan is renewed. JW confirmed that the trees are currently on the Ancient Tree Registry.
- Veteran trees need to be chosen. PH responded that the commons have trees all of a similar age. If trees are identified the aging process can be speeded up by removing the lower branches.
- It was agreed that halo working should be in the Management Plan.
- It was agreed that PH would update the current plan and it will be uploaded to the website for public viewing. **PH**
- The Committee will start a new Woodland Management Plan in 2022 ready for submission in 2023.

3. East Common – JW reported: - (i) Collected 6 bags of rubbish this month. She has received positive feedback from the public on the up keep of the Common; (ii) Polyacre pond has some rubbish to be removed; (iii) There is no more additional graffiti on the subway.

West Common – IB reported:- (i) All looks fine; (ii) The police were called out six to seven times due to the noise on Friday 1st April 2021. IB has sent an email regarding the incident. (iii) CB reported some wooden posts are loose outside Cottages on West Common and 2 posts

ATC

are missing by the building works near Latchmoor Pond (iv) JP raised concerns that the bins were not being emptied. HO confirmed the bins are emptied twice a day. However, they are still overflowing; (v) The BP Garage will not replace their bin that has been removed because it has become a dumping ground. There was some discussion regarding whether new bins are required. It was agreed that this item should be discussed at the next meeting because COVID rules are being lifted, meaning the public will have more places to go so may be less litter; (vi) AW informed the Committee that Keep Britain Tidy campaign litter picking for Gerrards Cross is scheduled for 28th to 31st May.

Play Equipment – JP reported:- (i) The upkeep is fine. SM confirmed that a new chain has been ordered for the missing toddler swing and the issue with the roundabout has been reported. The surface under zip wire needs to be replaced and funds are available in the new budget for 2021-22. All of the play equipment requests need to be added to the outstanding project list. SM

The Camp – Update on the contractor to bale the grass this August/September. HO stated that she has found a machine to cut the grass but it does not bail. AW's contact would prefer not to have the job but may be willing to do the bailing part. SM to contact farmer Whitby to see if he wants the job. NB has a contact if the other two decline the work. SM

4. **Playground survey** – The Committee approved HO's request to upgrade survey monkey at a cost of £25 so she can view all 80 responses. The free version currently only allows her to access 40 responses.

5. **MAD Shakespeare in the Garden** – The Committee agreed for this event to take place 12th June 2021. HO confirmed that she would be overseeing the event and will police the signage. People are permitted to bring a picnic and they are hiring an ice cream van. They do not have a licence to sell alcohol. The Committee agreed that no suggestions of venues for alcohol purchases should be made because this is unfair to other hospitality businesses in the area. SM to officially confirm the event with the organisers. HO
SM

6. **Request for Fun Fair to use West Common** – SM to confirm that the funfair can use the common in July. SM

7. **Request to hold outdoor Yoga Classes on West Common** – Everyone agreed that these classes can take place. SM to confirm to the instructor via email. HO will oversee any issues. HO/
SM

Cllr J Chhokar declared an interest in the following agenda item:-

8. **Update from Gerrards Cross Cricket Club** – The Cricket Club have confirmed that they will be using a soft ball and a removable wicket. AW raised concerns that other children may use the strip after the sessions with a hard ball, which means there is a risk of cars being damaged. Therefore it was agreed that this can go ahead on a one month trial basis, but it will be stopped if other people abuse it. SM to find out what time the sessions will take place. SM

9. **To review outstanding projects:** The Camp signs are still outstanding, HO to follow up. The overhanging conifers has only been cut on one side of the bridleway SM to follow up. Top up footpath along West Common is now complete.

The ditch by Crabb Hill will be cleaned out once it has dried up.

The wildflower areas will be done at the end of the month.

The funding for the bins and wildflowers has been granted. SM has emailed a map indicating the location of the additional bins to the Waste Manager and is waiting for a response.

SM to follow up on the painting of the subway railings. SM

The flag pole requires a new plastic sleeve and ropes.

10. **Common's Budget** – Noted. JC reported that the expenditure is within budget. £4598 was paid out of the Commons budget for the ditch clearance along Packhorse Road.

11. **Report on the latest meeting of the Gerrards Cross Conservation Volunteers** – No meeting held due to Corvid-19 restrictions.

12. **Review Footpaths** – Noted.

13. **Communication** – Final version of the VOICE will be sent for review 7th April 2021.

14. **Correspondence:** - (i) Details from Rev Forward regards the Easter Story Trail on the Common; There was some concern about the size and design of the posters. In future St James Church must send posters for approval prior to any other events. The Easter signs need to be removed 7th April 2021. (ii) Suggestion from one of the GXCVs to use logging horses when felling and removing trees on the Common; This is not possible as do not carry out a large amount of felling but only as and when a tree is dangerous. (iii) Lord of the Manor reported that Swish Fibre will be running a cable under the thin strip of Common between West Common Road and the adjoining houses and then the track by Latchmoor Pond; (iv) Offer from resident in CSP to plant some trees; It was agreed that there is sufficient trees at present,

but the resident should be thanked for their offer and it will be considered should the need arise. (v) West Common resident has enquired if GXTC has charged the Construction company for parking along West Common track. The Committee confirmed no charges have been made. (vi) Resident wrote in to congratulate the Council on variety and quality of the Adult /gym; (vii) West Common resident has enquired if GXTC if the Construction company will renovate the track before they leave. Some members of the Committee have noted potholes are repaired by the Construction company when required.

SM

- 15. The date of the next meeting** of the Commons Committee will be held on Tuesday 4th May 2021.

Meeting closed at 8.05 pm

Signed.....

Date.....