

Gerrards Cross Town Council

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

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Minutes of the Commons Committee

Meeting held 7pm on Monday 7th September 2020 at Gerrards Cross Memorial Hall

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

In Attendance: Cllr E Surkovic, Cllr P Roberts and Sue Moffat, (Town Clerk).

1. Apologies for Absence – None.

2. Public Participation – None.

3. To receive Health and Safety reports and Updates as follows:-

East Common – JW reported: - (i) Collected 20 bags of litter; (ii) The commons are still being widely used and appreciated; (iii) Concerned at the close proximity of the adult training session with the play area which takes place on a Saturday in the area between the parked cars and the play equipment; (iv) The homemade bike track is out of the way and the users behave very responsibly. They keep a look out for members of the public. This is on a path seldom used by the public as there is another just alongside which they can use therefore not dangerous; (v) Several times JW has witnessed groups of Mums collecting litter and always thanks them; (vi) The underpass is now full of graffiti on the floor, walls and ceiling. It needs attention; (v) Plantlife have been contacted regards star fruit habitat and are looking for someone to come and visit the ponds; (vi) Birch trees have been felled and stacked. Whilst Fineland Forestry were doing this work, JW mentioned a broken, bent small oak next to a bench in the vicinity they were working and they responded and it has been cut to ground level; (vii) The bin opposite New Pond has graffiti on it; (viii) Wildwood bench was broken and mended very quickly. (thanks to our handyman); (ix) JO was thanked for moving the picnic bench which was uprooted by the travellers.

West Common – IB reported:- (i) Nothing further to report. There has been a request for a litter bin by the bench at Latchmore Pond. This was agreed. HO added there is a large dead oak along the boundary with A40 by New Pond. A quote for £1860 to remove this was agreed with the debris remaining on site to conserve wildlife. A quote of £140 to remove a number of leaning birch trees by New Pond was also agreed. **SM**

Play Equipment – JP reported that everything seems ok. JO raised concern about the quality and unevenness of the matting under the new outdoor gym. Agreed to monitor the situation. The yearly RoSPA inspection is being carried out soon and the outdoor gym will be included. Bicycle needs tightening up.

The Camp – HO reported:- (i) Valley Way steps, lower half on left hand side still to be repaired. (ii) Large limb fell off a veteran oak by Valley Way steps. Pyramid Consulting advised remedial work within 6 months which will be carried out by Fineland Forestry (£350). This was approved; (iii) Trees need attention along Windsor Road entrance, particularly one oak which looks as if it suffering and has a dead branch; (iv) Cut back vegetation around dog bins at entrance to the Camp from the bridleway to help prevent litter accumulating; **SM**

7.15pm Cllr Surkovic joined the meeting.

4. Request from West Common residents for (i) Confirmation of unanimous support from GXTC? HO responded that GXTC supports all residents' associations and treat them all equally; (ii) CCTV coverage and signage up to Latchmore triangle? JO responded that this would be dependent on the right technology being available in the future, surveillance permission being granted and available budget. IB commented that ASB is far worse at Latchmore Pond end of West Common than the turning circle end. It was agreed to consider CCTV at a later date, along with other areas, once the CCTV is installed in the town centre. JO reported that there is adequate CCTV signage displayed

for the present cameras. It was agreed to erect the spare sign near to the picnic bench by the bus turning circle; (iii) Common Byelaws posted in more prominent positions? HO responded that there are already 3 signs displaying byelaws which is adequate. However, it was agreed to install 'No BBQ' signs by the layby (opposite the Bull Hotel) and the picnic bench by the road. Signs to include reference to the appropriate bylaw; (iv) Encourage all incidents to be reported to TVPA? HO responded that GXTC already encourages residents to report all incidents to the Police and this applies throughout the whole town.

SM

- 5. Update on tree thinning on East Common to allow focal trees to grow to their full potential for the future** – Quote has now been received - £11,875 with possible extras of £1600+ if deemed to be required. HO reported that the work would include felling trees in East Common leaving focal trees to encourage the 'halo' effect. The felled trees would then be chipped and removed from site to be used for biofuel products. This would be a major operation to ensure public safety including trackways and a compound.

7.40pm Cllr Roberts joined the meeting.

It was agreed not to accept this quote as it would entail major work on the Common but to look at carrying out a similar exercise on a much smaller scale in the future to ensure the main focal trees are established in the woodland.

- 6. Ponds Update** – It was agreed to proceed with work on Latchmore Pond. Work on New Pond will wait until next year although the dam which mysteriously appeared this year will be removed so there are different levels of water to encourage different ecological habitats as recommended by Plantlife.
- 7. Request from the Royal British Legion** to plant a Common Beech and a Purple Beech trees on the Common to commemorate VE and VJ Day 75. This was agreed in principle and delegated to JW to advise on species of trees and locations for planting.
- 8. Request for our usual Fun Fair**, Irvin Amusements Ltd (IAL), to use West Common setting up on 21st September and open from 25th to 27th September. This was agreed and request a ramp is installed to protect rhino posts.
- 9. Request to use West Common to shoot a short film.** This was agreed providing dates of filming are provided and any damage is made good. Also ask for photos for VOICE
- 10. Outstanding works** – Noted. HO reported:- (i) Still waiting for the draft design of the Lidar sign for the Camp and will chase up; (ii) Valley Way steps repair to be added; (ii) Puddling by entrance to the Camp to be carried out now; (iv) SM still trying to find a reasonable quote to repair rotor arm.

JW

HO

SM

11. Common's Budget – Noted.

12. Projects to be proposed for next year's budget, 2021-22.

- To agree to carry out a Tree Survey at the Camp. Last survey was carried out in June 2018. Estimated cost £700. (last time cost was £650 and recommend every 2 years).
- Resurfacing under Zip Wire and slide.
- Lifting trees along boundary at West Common to stop encroachment on to grass area.
- Removal of water lilies on New pond.
- Holly mulching.
- Fosse clearance.
- Additional £2000 required to improve footpath along West Common from A40 to the football pitch.
- West Common – concrete around rhino posts as already discussed.
- Valley Way footpath renovation.
- New item of play equipment for small children (c £6k).

13. Report on the latest meeting of the Gerrards Cross Conservation Volunteers from Anna Sullivan – Anna had sent a report. GXCV cleared bracken and cut back vegetation along footpaths. JO added that ivy needs removing from trees at future sessions.

14. Review Footpaths – (i) JW - Footpath 23 the kissing gate still has a rope to fix it to the post.

15. Communication – None.

16. To note general information received in the correspondence at the Council Office.

- (i) 2 letters from neighbours at West Common in dispute regards the land providing right of access across common land. It was agreed that this was a civil matter between the 2 neighbours. Any issues should be referred to the Lord of the Manor; (ii) Congratulations on new gym equipment from a local resident.; (iii) Lord of the Manor has allowed owners of 21 West Common to fence

off a small part of the Common adjoining the access for the parking of contractor's vehicles whilst undertaking recent planning permission to create a new access over the Common (iv) Dangerous tree at Windsor Road has now been cleared; (v) WeAreGX are organising a British Clean up 11th to 14th September, 2020.

17. The date of the next meeting of the Commons Committee will be held on 5th October, 2020, 7pm at GX Memorial Centre.

Meeting closed at 8 pm

Signed.....

Date.....