

## **Gnosall Parish Council**

### **Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7 February 2012 at 7.30pm**

Present Cllr T Simkin (in the chair) Cllr D Willetts Cllr G Payne  
Cllr M Deegan Cllr J Tomkinson Cllr J Cook Jayne Cooper

And Tony Barrow, Gnosall Allotments Association representative

#### **PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

Nothing raised

#### **1 To receive apologies and record absences.**

Apologies received from Cllr Wilkes-Mellor, Cllr Greatrex, Cllr Abbott, Cllr Boston

#### **2 To receive and confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 7 December 2011**

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

#### **3 To consider any matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda**

- **Additional bollards** - it was agreed to put this on hold for the remainder of the financial year and reconsider next year.
- **Crushed aggregate** - it was agreed to not take any action until the Acres Project and repairs to allotment roads had been completed.
- **Water pipe project** - it was reported that the water main, to which the new pipes in the allotments was to be connect to, was not live therefore Severn Trent Water had been working along the allotment road, towards the A518 to make a connection to another main. This work to be monitored taking into account that the water supply would be needed at the allotment site in March.

#### **4 To receive an update on The Management of The Acres project including invoices received for completed work**

Members received a report giving an update on Phase 1 as detailed in the attached report (Appendix 1). This was discussed in detail and it was noted that the tree felling project was successful and completed on time, the wetland project is nearing completion and already has had a positive impact on the brook which has resulted in many positive comments being received from parishioners. The next part of the project would see the installation of the boardwalk (starting on 9 February), new fencing and the planting of a hedgerow which the children at St Lawrence School and Allotment Association members would be involved with.

A representative from Staffordshire County Council's Funding Department had visited the site and commented favourably on the project. Further site visits would be planned. A press release is planned as well as a site open day.

It was agreed that all councillors should visit the site to see how the project has developed. The date to be put to Council was agreed as Saturday 10 March at 10am.

Cllr Deegan was thanked for overseeing the project as it has developed.

## **5 To receive an update on Allotment renewals**

The Clerk reported that the renewals process in January 2012 had gone smoothly. Three full plots and one half plot had been relinquished and offered to those on the waiting list.

It was reported that some allotment holders are depositing waste vegetation outside of their plots within the pathways and roadways creating the allotment area to look untidy. It was agreed that a skip be arranged (to be funded between parish council allotment income and GAGA) for one day to allow allotment tenants to dispose of rubbish. This would be followed up by a letter from the parish council instructing tenants to keep plots and the surrounding area tidy, in line with the agreement and to compost their own waste vegetation where possible. It was felt strongly that disposing of rubbish outside of plots is fly-tipping which could carry fines. Tony Barrow, GAGA Chairman, confirmed GAGA would work with the parish council and encourage tenants to compost waste and to keep plots and the area tidy.

It was agreed that the surplus soil deposited on the allotment site from the Acres Project was welcomed by members. It was noted that there is still quite a lot of soil left therefore GAGA would send out a communication informing tenants that they have until 17 February to help themselves then the soil would be removed. The Contractor would be asked to repair any damage caused to allotment roads and maybe top-dress with a suitable material.

## **6 To report on outstanding Open Spaces actions including:**

### **a) Agree an action plan for the BT phone kiosks in Outwoods and Knightley**

A report, previously considered by OS members was revisited. It was agreed that kiosks in Knightley and Bromstead be repainted by the Handyman and the surrounding area tidied. The kiosk in Outwoods needs attention to straighten it which was discussed in detail. Health and safety regulations to be taken into account when plans are made. Cllr Simkin agreed to visit the site to understand what is required; other councillors were encouraged to do the same. The contract, following the adoption of the kiosks from BT to be reviewed.

### **b) Outstanding work at the Lock Up in line with English Heritage agreement**

The Clerk informed members that the £180 grant from English Heritage was for a period of 3 years and not to be received annually as initially thought. It was agreed that the Clerk asks the Handyman to ensure that the trench, already dug at the front of the Lock up, is continued all the way around to aide drainage, subject to permission from the land owner. The funds for lining the trench be used from the £180. It was agreed that the Lock up is an asset to the parish council and should be “on show” therefore English Heritage to be contacted asking if it would fund an Information Board to be located next the Lock Up displaying some of the detail retained in the files.

### **c) Agree action plan for 4 benches obtained from SBC and the memorial bench**

It was agreed that one bench be sited in Knightley Church Yard, one in Moreton and two in Gnosall. Details to be placed in Mobstead News asking Moreton residents to suggest suitable locations. It was agreed that one bench be sited next the Lock up and the bench already there be relocated to the Village Green land. Suggestions from councillors required for the remaining bench. Minor repairs to the benches to be carried out over the winter months by the Handyman.

The Memorial Bench would be collected and sited in the play area at the beginning of March. A concrete plinth to be created during February.

**7 To receive an update following a meeting with Dog Enforcement Officer regarding dog fouling in Gnosall**

Notes of the meeting were received. It was acknowledged that the dog fouling problems had worsened over the past few months and the Clerk had received many complaints. SBC Dog Enforcement Officer would support GPC in efforts to tackle the problem although it was acknowledged that this problem is difficult to solve.

It was agreed that the Clerk places a further notice in GPN asking for help in identify persons responsible and problem areas and once this information is received the Enforcement Officer would be asked to make spot visits to the areas. The Clerk to ask St Lawrence School to help in spreading the message via newsletters. The Clerk would placing notices wherever possible and arrange for information to be added to the website.

A request had been made for dog waste bins in Moreton however SBC had responded that the request could not be met as no complaints had been received. Moreton residents, via Mobstead, to be informed and encouraged to raise their concerns direct to SBC.

**8 To receive any correspondence received in relation to Open Spaces**

The Best Kept Village Entry form for 2012 had been received and is to be submitted by 23 February 2012.

**9 To confirm the time and date for the next meeting**

Full Open Spaces Committee meeting	22 May 2012 at 7.30pmn
Acres Working Group meeting	1 March 2012 at 7.30pm
Councillors site visit to The Acres	10 March at 10am

The meeting ended at 9.15pm

## **Acres Regeneration Project Update**

### **Wetland**

The wetland works went well with the felling completed before Christmas and the ground works completed before the end of January.

All of the old fencing & abandoned allotments has been removed and a series of small pools created. The silt-trap pool has been excavated on the Hollies brook and the Doley Brook re-graded. Soil and tree stumps have been used to create two deflectors within the course of the brook. These will not impede flow, but erode the bank to recreate gentle meanders.

Much of the excavated soil has been used to build a protecting low earth wall (bund) around the allotments and further downstream on Western Power's land to further defend the sub-station. The Parish Council also provided some of the rich soil excavated for allotment holders to use.

The bunds will be re-seeded with grass at the end of the overall works. The contractor is being asked to carry out an extra few days work to clear the extensive rubbish and materials left over from the former allotments or from recent dumping.

STW has agreed to replace the lid and sealing on the sewage chamber in the brook. STW has also finally agreed to allow the boardwalk contractor to use their compound to store materials.

### **Boardwalk**

Installation of the boardwalk has been delayed because of problems with the delivery of plastic to the contractor. This will now start by the latter part of this week. In the meantime, the connecting limestone footpath has been started by Foxley Earthworks, with Will Fletcher installing the plastic edging boards.

Extra drainage has had to be installed in the corner of the Acres by the playground as the path runs through a subterranean wet flush/flow. When the path is completed, the areas of bare earth will be re-seeded with grass.

### **Fencing**

The post and rail fence will be installed to replace the old fenceline down the access track (from the A518) and around the allotments carpark. New fencing will be erected to separate the fen from the former allotments and also along the boundary with the allotments. A short section will also be installed around the silt-trap pond.

A mixed hedgerow (of local provenance stock) will be planted with the new fenceline between the allotments and wetland. The Wildlife Trust has been asked to help spend a day with St Lawrence's schoolchildren to plant the hedgerow – if possible, any surplus might be planted with the GAA.

### **PR**

New maps were prepared and printed before Christmas. A draft press release has been prepared for distribution. Regular notices and updates have also been posted on site as well as on the website.

### **Admin/Funding**

The Parish Council has signed contract agreements with EA & the LEADER Fund and a number of follow up meetings will be taking place over the next month.