

Selattyn and Gobowen Parish Council

Minutes of the Amenities and Services Committee held on 27 September 2023 at Gobowen Pavilion commencing at 7:00pm

In the Chair: Cllr Crow
Present: Cllr Dyke, Cllr Emery, Cllr McKenna, Cllr Mellor.
In attendance: Mrs B Laraway, Parish Clerk & RFO
Apologies: Cllr Macey
Absent: Cllr Evans, Cllr Westwood-Bate

AS / 503. To receive apologies and reasons for absence

RESOLVED: Apologies were received from Cllr Macey.

AS / 504. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

- a. Cllr Crow declared a personal interest in Item AS509i
- b. There were no applications for dispensation

AS / 505. Public Participation session

There were no members of the public present.

AS / 506. To confirm the minutes of the 28 June 2023 & 26 July 2023 meetings

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meetings held on 28 June 2023 and 26 July 2023 were confirmed as true records of the meetings.

AS / 507. Reports

- a. Clerk's progress report (Appendix A)

The Clerk gave a verbal update to the report as follows:

- The Cemetery noticeboard has now been ordered.
- The Planters have now been ordered
- Replacement parts for the cradle swing seats have been ordered.

The Clerk was asked to write to Network Rail to thank them for clearing the CCTV camera.

- b. Notes from annual meeting with Gobowen Allotment Society Committee.
The report was noted.

AS / 508. Correspondence

- a. Christmas decorations in the village – **to consider**

RESOLVED: To reply to the correspondence asking for permission to pass the suggestion on to Gobowen Community Group as the organisers of the village Christmas tree.

AS / 509. Allotment matters arising from the annual meeting with Gobowen Allotment Society committee – to consider

- a. Update to Allotment Management agreement to remove the requirement that the allotments are to be self-funding.

RESOLVED: To remove the requirement that the allotments are to be self-funding as this is not current practice during the Council's budget setting process.

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- b. Waiting list length and policy on purchasing additional land
RESOLVED: Not to introduce a policy at this time. To be re-considered each year as part of the budget setting process.
- c. Process and resource for clearing overgrown plots when a tenant leaves.
RESOLVED: To clear overgrown plots within two weeks of a tenant leaving and cover with horticultural membrane.
RESOLVED: To write to the Gobowen Allotment Society committee to ask if they are able to carry out the work within this timescale.
RESOLVED: To donate any deposit paid by the outgoing tenant to the Gobowen Allotment Society for plot clearance work if it is required.
- d. Policy on planting non-fruiting trees and shrubs
RESOLVED: To permit the laurel hedge in question to remain on the plot subject to its size being contained to 30cm wide and 45cm high.
- e. To increase the deposit required from a new plot holder to £50 for a full plot.
RESOLVED: To increase the deposit required from a new plot holder to £50 for a full plot. Half plot deposits to remain at £25.
- f. To increase the frequency of plot inspections to monthly throughout the year.
RESOLVED: To increase to monthly inspections with immediate effect and to review this annually.
- g. To make the following additions to the rule about materials spread or laid on allotments:
- i. Not to allow cardboard or artificial grass
RESOLVED: Not to permit cardboard or artificial grass to be spread or laid on allotment plots.
 - ii. To allow wood chippings to be used for narrow paths and as mulch
RESOLVED: To permit wood chippings to be used for narrow paths on allotments and as mulch around fruit trees and bushes.
 - iii. To permit horticultural membrane to be used on more than 25% of the plot during the months of November to March.
RESOLVED: To permit horticultural membrane to be used on more than 25% of the plot during the months of November to March. Usage to be restricted to less than 25% of the area of any tenanted plot during the remainder of the year.
- h. To introduce a new Tenancy agreement with effect from 1 January 2024 incorporating the changes agreed under agenda items AS/509 a-g and including a term allowing the Parish Council to increase allotment rents.
RESOLVED: To draft revised tenancy agreement for approval by Council.
- i. To agree £25 donation to Gobowen Allotment Society for plot clearance
RESOLVED: To agree £25 donation

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AS / 510. *Playing Fields*

- a. To consider cutting down the hedge between the playing field and Fernhill Avenue (delegated from 13.9.23 Council).
RESOLVED: To cut the hedge down as near to the ground as possible and install temporary barriers in the space until permanent fencing can be installed. The Clerk was authorised to proceed up to a total cost of £1000.
- b. Unofficial bike track – **to consider** any action
RESOLVED: To consider options for a bike track or similar facility at the budget meeting in November.
- c. Request for use of playing fields for rounders – **to consider**.
RESOLVED: To grant permission subject to a month's notice of dates of play and copies of appropriate insurance and risk assessment being provided. The Council reserve the right to not permit rounders games to take place during the Graham Edwards tournament.
- d. August 2022 tree inspection – annual review of report and actions
The Council received the following verbal report:
- Dead branches from the mature oaks have been trimmed in the last week or so.
 - Ash dieback on the two ash trees on the playing field assessed at 30%.
 - The small oak at the edge of the river wasn't removed due to the impact that it would have had on river bank integrity.
- e. Playing Field Path – **to consider** report from working group
RESOLVED: To estimate costs to replace with tarmac path and consider at the budget meeting in November.
- f. Memorial Plaque – **to agree** to write to GR contracting
RESOLVED: To write to GR contracting and request the installation or return of the memorial plaque.

AS / 511. *Pavilion*

- a. **To consider** and agree policy for free use of Pavilion for fundraising events and community initiatives
RESOLVED: To agree free use of the Pavilion building for community initiative events subject to no charges or subscriptions being charged or donations requested to attend the event. Fundraising events will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- b. **To consider** request to run a tuckshop during Gobowen Celtic home games (delegated from 13.9.23 Council).
RESOLVED: To agree the request on a trial basis until the end of January 2024, with the following conditions:
- Sales to be made from a table at the door, not in the Pavilion building.
 - All rubbish and recycling to be taken away from the premises.
 - Table, kitchen surfaces and sink to be wiped down after use
 - Pump flasks will be made available for use and must be emptied, cleaned and returned the same day.
 - Additional charge of £5 to be added to Pavilion hire fee.

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- c. **To authorise** the Parish Clerk to sign a Letter of Authority for Energy Prices Direct to obtain energy price quotes on behalf of the Parish Council.

RESOLVED: The Clerk was authorised to sign the Letter of Authority.

AS / 512. Hengoed Cemetery

- a. Memorial Safety inspection report – **to consider**.

The report and actions taken were **noted**. The Clerk reported that the safety measures had been removed from one of the graves and had to be re-instated. Expert advice was being sought.

- b. Levelling and Turfing quote - **to consider**

RESOLVED: To agree the quote of £485 to level and turf 15 plots, funded from the Cemetery maintenance reserve.

RESOLVED: To agree the quote of £175 for ground preparation and turfing in between headstones in the front row of Quarter 2, paid from the Cemetery maintenance reserve.

RESOLVED: To agree the quote of £195 to remove the non-native blue bells, prepare the ground and turf the area next to the tap in Quarter 1, paid from the Cemetery maintenance reserve.

- c. August 2022 tree inspection – annual review of report and actions

The Council received the following verbal report:

- Grass cuttings are piled against the tree in the 4th quarter and need removing.
- The ivy has not yet been cut back from the tree in the 2nd quarter.

- d. Quote for removal of tree next to shelter – **to consider**

RESOLVED: To agree the quote of £275, funded from the Cemetery maintenance reserve.

- e. Removal of mature Skimmia shrub in the headstone space of Grave 157 – **to discuss**.

RESOLVED: To write to the grave owner and request that the shrub is removed. The Clerk will arrange removal if the shrub remains in situ at the end of January 2024.

- f. Interments of ashes in the Elizabeth Garden – **to agree** casket specifications

RESOLVED: Caskets must be an unlined box made of cardboard or an equivalent rapidly biodegradable material with a maximum size of 18"x14"x6" to fit within the dimensions of an Elizabeth Garden plot.

- g. General grounds maintenance (weeding, sweeping etc) – **to discuss**

RESOLVED: To add a monthly winter maintenance visit to the Cemetery Maintenance contract.

RESOLVED: *To suspend standing order 3x to allow the business of the meeting to be concluded.*

AS / 513. Maintenance Contracts from April 2024

- a. **To consider** and agree the work specifications and contract length for the following Parish Council maintenance contracts.

- i. Playing field grounds maintenance
- ii. Cemetery grounds maintenance
- iii. Parish general maintenance

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- iv. Pavilion caretaking and cleaning
- v. Streetlight maintenance

RESOLVED: To agree the work specifications for these 5 contracts subject to minor amendments discussed and agreed at the meeting.

RESOLVED: To set a 3-year contract length.

- b. **To consider** and agree the terms and conditions of the contracts

RESOLVED: To agree the general terms and conditions of the contracts.

- c. **To consider** and agree the tender and contract award timetable.

RESOLVED: To agree the timetable. It was agreed that the tender invitation documents do not require approval by Council.

AS / 514. Streetlights

- a. **To consider** quote for streetlight labelling.

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

- b. Streetlight SG85 Old Whittington Road – **to consider** permanent removal or installation of metal column and re-siting of streetlight (delegated from 13.9.23 Council meeting)

RESOLVED: To permanently remove the streetlight at a cost of **£1777** +vat

AS / 515. Five year plan – to consider and agree any updates.

This item was deferred to the next meeting

AS / 516. Future Agenda Items

None.

AS / 517. Future meetings

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 22nd November 2023 at 7:30pm at Gobowen Pavilion (Budget meeting)

AS / 518. Closed Session

RESOLVED: That in accordance with s1(2) Public Bodies (Admission of Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public and press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the following item to be considered involves the likely disclosure of confidential information.

AS / 519. To confirm the Confidential minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Amenities and Services committee held on 26th July 2023.

RESOLVED: To confirm the confidential minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Amenities and Services committee held on 26th July 2023.

Meeting closed 21:19

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Appendix A Clerk's Report

1. Bus Shelter

The Highways permit has been granted and the contractor has scheduled to start the base construction on 2nd October.

2. Station car park CCTV

Network Rail arranged for the trees that were obscuring the view of the camera to be cut back on 23rd August. This was approximately 6 weeks after the issue was reported to them..

3. Playground Inspections

Playground inspections were carried out on 27.6.23, 4.8.23, 4.9.23.

A high risk issue was identified on 4.8.23 – there was glass in the spinning dish and scattered all over the play area. The playground inspector cleared it up during the inspection.

A new medium risk issue has been identified on 4.9.23 – the crotch braces are damaged on two of the cradle swing seats and require replacing. This repair is in hand.

Earlier in the year one item has been re-assessed from low risk to medium risk. A trip hazard caused by a lip in the path where the tarmac path meets the gravel path. The Committee is asked to look at this during the playing field walk around in advance of the 27th September meeting.

Copies of the playground inspection reports can be provided to Councillors on request.

4. Planters

The payment from the insurance company has not yet been received. The Clerk is awaiting payment before placing the order for the replacement planter / parts.

5. Flower bed Gobowen Station car park

The Clerk has been in correspondence with Network Rail requesting that some maintenance work is carried out. Their response of 16th August reads as follows:

“We are currently prioritising safety tasks. We won't be looking to manage the vegetation at the entrance to the carpark. We are however happy for this to be done by the local community if that's something they would like to do”.

6. Pavilion Maintenance

The light fitting in the store room was replaced on 18th September as it had been reported as not working.

Repairs had to be carried out on the home changing room toilet on a number of occasions during the last month. Thanks are due to Phil Crow for his support in sorting this out quickly.

7. Allotment Tenancies

There have been two changes in allotment tenancies. The tenant of Plot 26 gave notice and the tenant from half plot 13a has moved to plot 26. A new tenant has taken on the vacated half plot 13a.

Thanks are due to volunteers at Gobowen Allotments for clearing Plot 13a ready for the new tenant.

8. Cemetery Noticeboard

The Clerk is in correspondence with the supplier regarding delivery options associated costs before the order is finalised. The default delivery option included in the standard delivery fee is anytime between 8am-6pm with no advance notification of more information.

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9. Adult Exercise Equipment

The Clerk met a supplier at the playing field to seek their advice on possible equipment and location options. They are providing design options which can then be considered by the Council as a starting point to the quote / tendering process.

The Clerk has been contacted by a member of Oswestry Olympians regarding the project and there is a potential local personal trainer that might be available to deliver 'welcome' and 'bootcamp' sessions using the equipment and the larger playing field.