

Open Spaces Working Group Notes
26th September 2024 at 10.00am

Action points are in ***bold italics***

Report Author: Parish Clerk
Present: Councillors ID Clarke and Mary Sheppard (Co-chairs), Ann Davies and Andy Scarisbrick

Apologies for absence

None.

Declarations of Interest

None.

Notes of Meeting Held on 29th August 2024

It was noted that issues arising from the notes of the previous meeting would be addressed as part of substantive agenda items.

Parish Clock - Plaque

Following further investigation, two companies had been identified who would, theoretically, be able to reproduce a plaque in oak. However, the design of the plaque and the size of lettering would be fundamental to establishing whether or not this would be feasible in practice. Although the initial cost of an oak plaque was likely to be higher than a brass equivalent, this initial cost would need to be set against a less onerous/costly maintenance regime than a brass plaque.

It was agreed that ***Councillor Davies and the Clerk produce an initial draft design for the plaque and establish costs associated with both oak and brass finishes.***

Planting Schemes

In respect of Jubilee Gardens, it was noted that Cllr Clarke was progressing the previously agreed action.

It was recognised that there would need to be a more structured discussion before the end of Autumn to establish planting requirements for next year. Planting this year had been well supported by a group of dedicated volunteers. However, the single biggest barrier had – and was still likely to be – watering. Some of the pots, both in terms of size and location, presented a greater challenge in terms of watering and if the Council wanted to continue to support the number of pots currently in circulation it would likely have to consider funding watering. The recent decision of the Council to instal water and shade into the polytunnel would enable

plants to be brought on from seed/plugs but there would need to be clarity regarding the type/number of plants to enable orders to be placed before the end of the calendar year.

Councillors also considered whether or not to introduce different approaches/extend the planting season. To this end, it was suggested that the laybys might benefit from Spring/Summer flowering bulbs rather than planted pots. As a consequence, ***the Clerk was asked to investigate costs associated with planting bulbs in the two laybys.***

Yellow Lines at the Bottom of Celtic Way

Following a request from Councillor Sugg, the Clerk advised that further discussions had taken place with North Somerset Council regarding the possibility of placing double yellow lines at the bottom end of Celtic Way. The only criteria under which the current position might be challenged would be if there was evidence of dangerous parking. As a consequence, if the Parish Council was able to provide a photographic log of dangerous parking over an extended period of time, then North Somerset Council would be prepared to consider whether there was sufficient grounds for a Traffic Regulation Order to be issued.

Councillor Sugg would be asked to consider this issue.

Increase in Reporting to North Somerset Council

The Clerk advised that, in the previous two weeks, some 40 issues had been raised with North Somerset Council (NSC) under that Council's reporting procedures. There were some significant challenges with NSC's reporting process. Chief amongst these was that: Two different sets of reference numbers were allocated to each report which made tracking challenging.

Different responses had been received to identical scenarios – sometimes in the same stretch of road.

It was standard practice for NSC officers to consider the reported incident 'complete' having instructed their contractors as opposed to when the work in question had actually been completed.

There was no means of follow up or replying to an issue. As a consequence, where action had not been taken or had been taken incorrectly e.g. by a contractor, the only way of resolving was to raise it as a new report.

The reports would now form part of a modified monitoring arrangement for Councillors.

Project and Maintenance Schedule

The Clerk introduced a modified system of recording and monitoring maintenance tasks and minor works and advised that a similar process could be adopted for larger scale projects if Councillors found the revised arrangements useful. Councillors welcomed the changes and

the introduction of colour coding which enabled them to quickly identify works which were fully complete and those which required escalation.

Councillor Davies requested that the possibility of installing a mirror at the junction of The Barton and Bridge Road also be added to the schedule.