



Bishopstoke Parish Council

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**Members of the Assets Committee are summoned to attend a meeting on
Tuesday 26th March at 7:30pm at Bishopstoke Methodist Church, Sedgwick Road.**

AGENDA

PUBLIC SESSION – Residents are invited to give their views and question the parish council on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the chair. Members of the public may not take part in the meeting itself.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To adopt and sign Minutes of the Assets Committee meeting held on 23 January 2024
3. Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
4. To agree the open space specification for tender
5. To receive an update on asset transfers
6. To receive an update on the Memorial Hall
7. To receive an update on the War Memorial
8. To amend the rules on kerbsets at Bishopstoke Cemetery
9. To discuss the future layout of Underwood Road allotments
10. To receive the Clerk's report, including all areas delegated to the Committee
11. Date, time, place and agenda items for next meeting

D L Wheel
Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council
19th March 2024

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Assets Committee
held at Bishopstoke Methodist Church
commencing at 7:30pm on 23rd January 2024**

Present: Cllrs Francis (Chair), D McKeone (Vice Chair), Harris, Hillier-Wheal and Winstanley

In Attendance: Mr D Wheal (Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council)
Mrs A Luck (Assets Officer for Bishopstoke Parish Council)
Cllr Daly (Bishopstoke Parish Council)

Public Attendance: 0 members of the public were present.

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Public Session

27 Apologies for Absence

27.1 All members were present.

28 To adopt as a true record, and sign, the Minutes of the Assets Committee meeting held on 28 November 2023

28.1 The Minutes of the above meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting.

28.2 Cllr Harris noted that Minute 24.1 should refer to a report on street furniture, not the cemetery and closed churchyards. Cllr Hillier-Wheal also noted that the meeting start time should have been 7:30pm, not 7:45pm and requested that Cllr D McKeone's name be amended to include the "D" to distinguish him from Cllr C McKeone.

28.3 Proposed Cllr Harris, Seconded Cllr D McKeone, **RESOLVED** with one abstention that the minutes of the Assets Committee meeting held on 25 July 2023, as amended in Minute 28.2, be adopted as a true record.

Action: Clerk and Chair – to sign and publish the minutes and document pack

29 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

29.1 No interests were declared or requests made.

30 To review the terms of reference of the Assets Committee and recommend their adoption

30.1 The current terms of reference had been included with the document pack for the meeting.

30.2 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RECOMMENDED** unanimously that the Assets Committee terms of reference be adopted, unchanged.

31 To review the Tree and Bee Corridor Action Plan

31.1 The Action Plan had been emailed to all Cllrs with the supporting papers for the meeting.

31.2 Cllrs generally were impressed with the Plan and its scope but had some comments to feed back to the Borough Council. These were: that given the aim is to provide mostly edible planting care should be taken with chestnuts as they can be fatal when eaten raw and may lead to some believing they can also eat horse chestnuts; that there needs to be a better understanding of how damage to trees can be reported, to whom it should be reported, and how that will be dealt with and paid for; that there needs to be a plan to deal with any rotting fruit left on the ground; that consultation should be early, widespread and ongoing with both residents and parish councils and that Parish Councils should be made well aware of the ongoing costs they will be expected to incur prior to sites being included in the final plan.

Action: Clerk to feed back to Helen Brown and the Tree & Bee team

32 To decide on the potential use of Stoke Common Cemetery car park for visitors to the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace at Stoke Common farm

32.1 A report on the proposal had been included with the supporting papers for the meeting.

32.2 Cllrs raised concerns about the distance from the car park to the SANG and whether that would mean that people using the SANG would park on the road closer to it and cause problems for local residents; about the accuracy of the information provided on the potential impact on the car park; whether the car park would be expected to be the main parking place for the SANG or whether it is envisaged as an overflow car park; the impact of the increase in both foot traffic and vehicle traffic on local roads and residents and the potential impact on funerals and mourners generally.

32.3 Cllrs also wished to know whether the bridleway is still being widened; what other options had been considered for parking; whether signs will be installed to direct people along the best route from the car park to the SANG and what funding will be provided to assist the Parish Council in making any modifications or additions to the Cemetery car park for SANG use.

32.4 Proposed Cllr Francis, Seconded Cllr Winstanley, **RESOLVED** unanimously to defer a decision on allowing SANG users to park at Stoke Common Cemetery until the concerns and questions of Cllrs have been answered.

Action: Clerk – Feedback to Borough Council with concerns and questions

32.5 Cllrs noted that there are currently no disabled bays at the car park and requested the Clerk include providing at least one in the Council's plan to set up the site.

Action: Clerk – Include disabled bay provision in future site plans

33 To receive an update on war memorial location

33.1 A brief update had been included with the supporting papers for the meeting. The Clerk confirmed that the application is now valid on the Borough Council Planning Portal with the consultation ending on 7th February and a decision by 8th March. The Assets Officer noted that the Diocese is expected to meet in March and the Council should receive their decision by April.

34 To note the completed installation of the new gates at Bishopstoke Cemetery

34.1 Committee members wished to pass on their thanks to Southern Metalcraft Fabrication for the construction and installation of the gates which have been well received.

34.2 Cllr Daly asked for the holes for the gate drop rods to be made more robust and permanent and also for the conifers adjacent to the gate to be cut back to allow the gate to open fully.

Action: Clerk to investigate possible drop rod solutions and requested tree work

34.3 Cllrs more generally requested the Clerk investigate the requirements for exhumations and how they relate to the current gates and Cemetery entrances, and what impact that will have on Stoke Common Cemetery in particular in light of the public footpath through the Cemetery.

Action: Clerk / Assets Officer to review the requirements for exhumations

35 To receive the Clerk's report, including all areas delegated to the Committee

35.1 The Clerk's report was included with the document pack for this meeting and was noted.

35.2 Cllrs requested that the delayed actions on adding Memorial Hall documents to the Cllr only section of the website, the disclaimers on play areas and bins be dealt with as a more urgent matter.

Action: Clerk to bring forward actions as requested

35.3 The Clerk was requested to engage further with the Borough Council to establish that the Parish Council owns the majority of bus shelters in Bishopstoke and to confirm whether any funding from the Borough that has been earmarked for those shelters should be passed on to the Parish Council.

Action: Clerk to contact Borough Council again to discuss ownership of bus shelters, providing scans of paperwork if needed

35.4 Cllrs noted that the Jubilee clocks had been put right but that the Whalesmead Clock was now clearly malfunctioning. The Clerk was requested to arrange for it to be repaired.

Action: Clerk to contact installation company with a view to arranging a repair

35.5 The Clerk updated the Committee on developments with the Memorial Hall since the last Assets Committee meeting. Permission for the demolition has not been fully granted, but is subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment being written, sent to Natural England, and receiving a response from Natural England. It is also subject to a Construction Environmental Management Plan being agreed with consultees. The Committee were disappointed by this. The Clerk also noted that the Land Registry now publishes estimates of time to complete various requests based on their complexity. The Parish Council's request to register three pieces of land for the first time and combine them is in the most complex category, with an estimate that "most requests of this type are completed in 14 – 16 months". The Parish Council's request was sent in 11 months ago so it is hoped that there will be no more than 5 months remaining until completion, although there is no guarantee of this. A plan is being discussed to see if the tree work can be approved and completed prior to March 1st and the start of the nesting season and Cllrs thought this would be good if it can be done. Cllr Harris informed the Committee that Memorial Hall windows with bars on remain unboarded and this could present complications if the tree work proceeds prior to the demolition.

Action: Clerk to check and arrange for further boarding if necessary

35.6 Proposed Cllr Francis, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RESOLVED** unanimously that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be excluded and for the record the business be regarded as confidential.

35.7 The Clerk updated the Committee on an incident at Underwood Road allotments.

36 Date, time, place and agenda items for next meeting

36.1 The next meeting of the Assets Committee will take place at 7:30pm on Tuesday 26th March at the Bishopstoke Methodist Church. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that if they wished to add items to the agenda they should ensure the item, with any supporting papers, is with the Clerk by March 19th.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8:55pm

Chair's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Clerk's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Open Spaces Specification

Contact starts April 1st 2022
3 year term

Companies are invited to tender for a 3 year contract, beginning 1st April 2022. The contract is to maintain Bishopstoke Parish Council's open spaces, including play areas, the Cemetery, allotments and general open space. During the course of the 3 years, there may well be additions to the contract that the Council will expect the winning company to also maintain. Those additional areas will be expected to be charged at the same rate as those that form the initial contract.

From time to time there may be specific, one-off jobs, such as clearing small fallen trees in the Cemetery, and it is anticipated that those would also be undertaken by the winning company and charged individually as they are completed at the same rates as those that form the initial contract.

Details of the areas to be included in the contract, and the required work for each area, are supplied in the following pages.

A breakdown of costs is required, including: cost per grass cutting visit at each site; hourly rate for leaf clearance; cost per weedkilling visit at each site and cost per litter picking visit at each site. Associated costs such as disposal of grass, leaves or litter should also be provided.

It should be noted that all areas covered by the contract receive significant use by residents, in particular, children and the elderly. Procedures for ensuring their safety, as well as that of employees, during any work carried out for the Council are essential.

I will, of course, be happy to take any interested parties around the various sites that make up the specification prior to any bid being submitted.

David Wheal
Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council
8th September 2021

Further details and requirements

The contract is initially for a 3 year period but, subject to possible legal limits, may be extended with the agreement of both parties.

The Parish Council reserves the right to reduce any or all of the requirements of the specification should circumstance dictate.

Any extra work or visits must be agreed by both parties in advance of the work being undertaken, at the same rates as those that form the initial contract.

Prices should be quoted exclusive of VAT.

Either party may terminate the contract by giving three calendar months' notice.

Should the Parish Council deem the work undertaken by the contractor to be of a standard lower than that expected then the Council retains the right to terminate the contract with immediate effect.

The contractor is required to produce risk assessments for each site before the commencement of the contract, which will be provided to the Parish Council upon request. The requirements of the risk assessments must be followed at all times. All relevant protective clothing will be worn whilst conducting work for the Parish Council, and all safety procedures will be followed to ensure that both employees and members of the public are protected. Failure to do so may result in termination of the contract.

Only suitably competent staff will use machinery to carry out any work for the Parish Council. For example, anyone using a chainsaw must have successfully completed relevant training. The contractor is required to have all necessary and relevant licences and certificates, including but not limited to a waste disposal licence, weedkilling licence and chainsaw certificate.

The contractor is required to have a minimum of £5 million of Public Liability insurance, details of which will be provided to the Parish Council prior to the 1st April 2022, and every year upon renewal of the insurance.

Copies of all licences and certificates held, the Public Liability insurance certificate, all other relevant insurance documents, a relevant staff list, a relevant equipment list, company details and account details will need to be provided at the same time as the submitted bid. If the intention is to hire staff or purchase equipment once the contract is awarded, then those details should be provided too.

The price quoted by the company should indicate whether it is fixed for the life of the contract. If not, then the price for each year of the contract should be specified in advance in the submission from the company. The price of the contract for each year will be split into 12 equal amounts, to be paid monthly at the end of each calendar month.

Preference will be given to local companies employing local people. Preference will also be given to companies who are already using rechargeable electric equipment, or who are transitioning towards it.

Please note that Bishopstoke Parish Council does not allow the use of glyphosate based weedkillers. Bishopstoke Parish Council is in the catchment of the River Itchen, a Special Area of Conservation, and we have a duty to use chemicals responsibly. Further chemicals may be restricted at a later date.

List of items to be provided by applicants

- A letter introducing the company.
- Cost per year to the Parish Council of the contract as a whole excluding VAT, for each of the three initial years of the contract, and an indication of future costs should the contract be extended.
- A breakdown of costs covering the rate for each job at each site, including associated costs such as off-site disposal of grass, and an hourly rate for each type of work.
- Copies of all relevant and necessary licences and certificates.
- Copies of all necessary insurance documents, including the value of Public Liability insurance held.
- Current relevant staff numbers, including any specific qualifications (e.g. chainsaw licence holder) and indicating if any further people would be employed should the contract be awarded.
- A current relevant equipment list indicating any equipment that would be purchased should the contract be awarded. Particular attention should be paid to highlighting any rechargeable electric equipment.
- Company details – including but not limited to how long the company has been in operation.
- Account details.
- Examples of current and previous work, including contact details for at least two references to be taken up.
- An indication of willingness to take on the potential additions to the contract.
- Details of any of the possible ad hoc jobs the company is unwilling or unable to undertake.
- Any further information the company feels would be relevant to the bid.

Standard Play Area Specification

Grass cutting: To mow the grass, including strimming where necessary, within each bounded area shown on a roughly fortnightly basis, although there is scope for staggering the frequency to take account of high growth and low growth periods. 18 visits per year for each site beginning no later than March and going through until November. If the grass cannot be mown due to the weather or ground conditions, then the site should be visited as soon as is practical after the original visit date. Within each enclosed play area itself the grass cuttings are to be collected, removed from site and disposed of responsibly off site.

Leaf collection: A minimum of 3 visits per site, as required, between November and January to ensure regular clearance. Ground to be left clear of all fallen leaves by the end of leaf falling season. All leaves collected to be removed from site and disposed of responsibly off site.

Weedkilling and edging: The paths through each bounded area, and the enclosed play areas to be weedkilled and edged as necessary through the mowing period.

Litter picking: All bins (excluding dog waste bins) in each bounded area to be emptied 3 days per week (Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday) throughout the year. Litter picking in each area to be carried out on the same basis. All rubbish collected is to be disposed of responsibly off site. As the number of bins is variable and subject to change, please quote a price per bin. Currently there are approximately 20 bins across all the various sites.

Health and Safety: Basic weekly health and safety check, by eye only, completed for each play area, reporting on any obvious broken equipment, issues, graffiti, broken glass etc. The Council is moving to an app-based inspection system for which full training will be provided, however it currently has an inspection sheet which can be provided upon request. At present, the Council's sheet, or similar, is expected to be used for the inspections, and returned to the Parish Council at the end of each month. Should any issues be found during the inspection then the Council is to be notified as soon as possible, and the company is expected to make reasonable efforts to secure the area.

The number of bins in each play area is subject to change. Please quote a price per bin for emptying and disposing of the waste

Otter Close Play Area – SO50 8NF



Additions / Modifications to standard play area specification

None

Templecombe Road Play Area - SO50 8QJ



Additions / Modifications to standard play area specification

Hedges to be trimmed 3 times per year: September, end of November, end of February, with all trimmings to be collected and disposed of responsibly off site. Height and spread of hedges to be agreed in advance.

Hedges to be regularly checked for encroaching brambles and nettles, and cut back to hedge line by hand if necessary.

Any large bushes within the bounded area are to be kept in shape and back from paths or drives.

Church Road Play Area – SO50 6DT



Additions / Modifications to standard play area specification

Hedges to be trimmed 3 times per year: September, end of November, end of February , with all trimmings to be collected and disposed of responsibly off site. Height and spread of hedges to be agreed in advance.

Hedges to be regularly checked for encroaching brambles and nettles, and cut back to hedge line by hand if necessary.

Although there is no enclosed play area, The grass cuttings are to be collected, removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

Sayers Road Play Area – SO50 6GW



Additions / Modifications to standard play area specification

From April 1st each year to September 30th, litter picking and bin emptying is to be done 7 days per week.

Hedges (and bushes) to be trimmed 3 times per year: September, end of November, end of February, with all trimmings to be collected and disposed of responsibly off site. Height and spread of hedges to be agreed in advance.

Hedges to be regularly checked for encroaching brambles and nettles, and cut back to hedge line by hand if necessary.

Although there is no enclosed play area, the grass cuttings are to be collected, removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

Glebe Meadow inc. Play Area - SO50 6LQ



Additions / Modifications to standard play area specification

Whilst the play area forms only a small part of this site, the rest of the open space in this area is to be treated the same with the same frequency of grass cutting, hedge trimming and leaf clearance.

From April 1st each year to September 30th, litter picking and bin emptying is to be done 7 days per week.

Hedges (and bushes) to be trimmed 4 times per year between September and end of February, with all trimmings to be collected and disposed of responsibly off site. Hedge trimming to include the road side of the hedges.

Height and spread of hedges to be agreed in advance.

Hedges to be regularly checked for encroaching brambles and nettles, and cut back to hedge line by hand if necessary.

Brookfield Estate and Play Area - SO50 8RB



Additions / Modifications to standard play area specification

Whilst the play area forms only a small part of this site, the rest of the open space in this area is to be treated the same with the same frequency of grass cutting, hedge trimming and leaf clearance.

Hedges to be trimmed 3 times per year: September, end of November, end of February, with all trimmings to be collected and disposed of responsibly off site. Height and spread of hedges to be agreed in advance.

Hedges to be regularly checked for encroaching brambles and nettles, and cut back to hedge line by hand if necessary.

Any large bushes within the bounded area are to be kept in shape and back from paths or drives.

There are banks and gullies along Blackberry Drive that have been allowed to grow wildflowers. These banks and gullies are only to be trimmed when directed by the Council. Care must be taken to preserve the wildflower growth.

Anything overhanging the pathways within the marked areas should be trimmed back.

Old St Mary's Churchyard – SO50 6HF



Grass cutting: To mow the grass, including strimming around headstones and elsewhere if necessary, on a roughly fortnightly basis, although there is scope for staggering the frequency to take account of high growth and low growth periods. 18 visits per year beginning in March and going through until November. If the grass cannot be mown due to the weather or ground conditions then the site should be visited as soon as is practical after the original visit date. All grass cuttings to be collected, removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

Leaf collection: 2 visits in November and 2 in December to collect and clear leaves. Ground to be left clear of all fallen leaves by the end of leaf falling season. All leaves collected to be removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

Hedges to be trimmed 3 times per year: September, end of November, end of February, with all trimmings to be collected and disposed of responsibly off site. Height and spread of hedges to be agreed in advance.

Hedges to be regularly checked for encroaching brambles and nettles, and cut back to hedge line by hand if necessary.

Litter picking to be carried out once per week throughout the year with the rubbish being bagged, removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

St Mary's Church – SO50 6DR



Grass cutting: To mow the grass, including strimming around headstones and elsewhere if necessary, on a roughly fortnightly basis, although there is scope for staggering the frequency to take account of high growth and low growth periods. 16 visits per year beginning in March and going through until November. If the grass cannot be mown due to the weather or ground conditions then the site should be visited as soon as is practical after the original visit date. All grass cuttings to be collected, removed from site and disposed of responsibly. Care should be taken to avoid disturbing weddings, funerals, or other important church services.

Leaf collection: A minimum of 3 visits per site, as required, between November and January to ensure regular clearance. Ground to be left clear of all fallen leaves by the end of leaf falling season. All leaves collected to be removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

Hedges to be trimmed 3 times per year: September, end of November, end of February, with all trimmings to be collected and disposed of responsibly off site. Height and spread of hedges to be agreed in advance.

Hedges to be regularly checked for encroaching brambles and nettles, and cut back to hedge line by hand if necessary.

Litter picking and bin emptying to be carried out once per week throughout the year with the rubbish being bagged, removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

Weedkilling and edging: The paths through each bounded area, and the enclosed play areas to be weedkilled and edged as necessary through the mowing period.

The Holly and The Ivy: Checks to be carried out monthly for ivy and holly growth. Any ivy rooted in church property to be cut at the base and removed if possible. Any ivy overhanging into church property to be cut back and removed. Holly bushes to be cut back except for specified bushes which should be kept at agreed heights (details to be determined in consultation with Parochial Church Council).

Bishopstoke Cemetery – SO50 6DX



Grass cutting: To mow the grass, including strimming around headstones and elsewhere if necessary, on a roughly fortnightly basis, although there is scope for staggering the frequency to take account of high growth and low growth periods. 18 visits per year beginning in March and going through until November. If the grass cannot be mown due to the weather or ground conditions then the site should be visited as soon as is practical after the original visit date. All mown grass cuttings to be collected, removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

Leaf collection: A minimum of 3 visits per site, as required, between November and January to ensure regular clearance. Ground to be left clear of all fallen leaves by the end of leaf falling season. All leaves collected to be removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

Hedges to be trimmed twice per year: September and end of February, with all trimmings to be collected and disposed of responsibly off site. Height and spread of hedges to be agreed in advance.

Hedges to be regularly checked for encroaching brambles and nettles, and cut back to hedge line by hand if necessary.

Litter picking and bin emptying to be carried out once per week throughout the year with the rubbish being bagged, removed from site and disposed of responsibly.

Weedkilling and edging: The paths through the Cemetery, and old kerbsets around graves, to have weedkiller applied, and be edged, as necessary.

Once per year, in March, to assist in the clearance of Christmas items around the graves.

Clearance of storm damage and fallen branches as necessary throughout the year.

Care should be taken to avoid working when funerals are taking place. The Parish Council will inform the company in advance of any such times.

Jockey Lane Allotments - SO50 6DX



Grounds Maintenance: There is an area no longer used for allotment plots which will require maintaining to avoid weed growth. This is currently approximately 250 square metres.

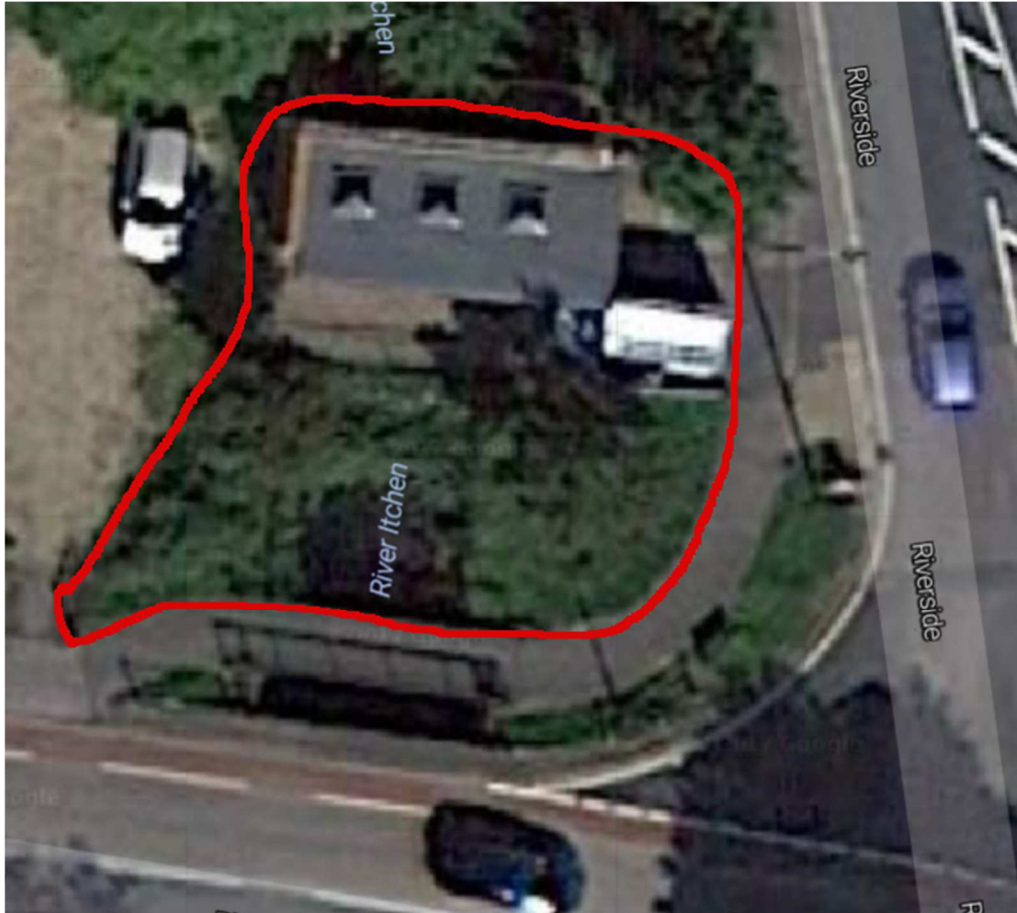
There is a bridleway cutting down the middle of the allotment area. The section of bridleway adjacent to the allotments will need to be strimmed regularly to keep growth from intruding onto the bridleway. This should be done fortnightly between March and November.

Manor Farm Allotments – SO50 6FZ (off Underwood Road)



Hedge trimming: Should be done in September and February each year. Area to be covered is northern end of the area, along the bridleway as it splits the allotment area.

Shears Mill - SO50 6LD



Litter Picking: Bin emptying and litter picking once per week throughout the year.

Grounds maintenance: Strimming the ground, including between railings, as necessary to maintain a good appearance. Leaf clearance three times per year, in November, December and January.

Possible additions to the contract

Currently within both allotments the site reps and the plot holders have responsibility for strimming lawn paths in between plots and mowing larger grass areas. Should that situation change, the open space contractor would be expected to provide the same service. Please provide an hourly rate for basic strimming and mowing.

The Parish Council will be taking over an extension to the Cemetery, two further sets of allotment plots, a section of open grassland (landscaped), an extra play area and a community orchard. The Council would expect all those areas to be added to the contract with a similar specification to that already provided. In order to allow the Council to fully cost the contract, please supply an hourly rate for basic mowing and strimming, leaf clearance, litter picking and bin emptying, detailing all associated costs such as disposal of rubbish.

Extra bins may be added to the litter picking / bin emptying requirement.

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Examples of possible ad hoc jobs

Removing bin bags of rubbish after Bishopstoke Carnival in September.

Removal of fallen tree branches.

Levelling, top soiling and seeding graves.

Replacing damaged or vandalised trees.

Pressure washing paths and play areas.

Cleaning of graffiti from play areas and bus shelters.

Snow clearance.

Assets – 26th March 2024

Item 05 – Transfer of Assets

Bow Lake Gardens

Bow Lake Gardens, which comprises proposed allotments, community orchard space, open space, woodland and a play area is still not ready to be offered to the Parish Council. The latest block has been caused by a question over whether essential drainage works have been completed to the required standard.

It remains the opinion of Council Officers that the allotment is not fit for purpose and requires a substantial sum of money spent on it to prevent it from becoming a financial millstone around the Council's neck. The Community Orchard is essentially a strip of paired fruit trees that run along the bottom of the allotment area and will also require money spent to make it usable.

The play area appears to be ready to transfer, but there are questions around the drainage for the surrounding estate which runs under the play area and may not be properly constructed.

Rose Close

The area of open space between Stoke Common play area and Rose Close is to be offered to the Parish. The bin and bench have been moved at the Parish Council's request to more useful locations. Whilst the space will provide no immediate benefit to the Parish Council it is a piece of open space in Bishopstoke that is not a roadside verge and so it would fit with the rest of the Council's open space portfolio.

Blackberry Drive

The situation at Blackberry Drive remains unchanged.

Sewall Drive

EBC have informed us that the only remaining stumbling block to the transfer of the allotments, cemetery extension and open space at Sewall Drive is agreeing with the developer how the sheds will be procured. Once that is dealt with the Borough will accept the land and seek to transfer it to the Parish as quickly as possible. The Borough have committed to installing standpipes for both the allotments and the cemetery as well as working with the Parish to convert part of the allotment building into temporary office space for the Parish to use. I am told that it is likely we will have possession of the land by the end of Summer.

Assets – 26th March 2024

Item 06 – Memorial Hall

The current status of the application to demolish the Hall is as follows:

At the November Local Area Committee meeting permission to grant the demolition of the Hall was delegated back to the Service Director for Planning & Environment, along with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee with a number of conditions attached. These were that a Habitat Regulations Assessment be written and sent to Natural England, a response to the HRA be received, and a Construction Environmental Action Plan be agreed. This was in addition to the requirement for a Tree Protection Plan, an Asbestos Management Plan and a site specific Method Statement dealing with pollutants, all of which need to be approved by the Planning Authority.

This is not, as was initially reported to the Parish Council, permission to demolish the Hall.

All of the listed documents now appear to have been prepared and approved, although I am unable to find the HRA on the Planning Authority website.

The Land Registry have still not completed the work we requested back in February 2023. The average time for most similar work to be completed is 14-16 months, although more complex work can take longer, and our application involves registering not one but three parcels of land for the first time and then stitching them together into a single parcel. The Borough was not able to provide me with a copy of the relevant policy they are relying on when they state that they are unable to grant permission for demolition unless land registration is completed. Instead I was eventually provided with a letter which stated their main worry was someone stepping forward during demolition to claim ownership of the land and an alternate way to mitigate against this would be for the Parish to indemnify the Borough against such a claim. We have asked our solicitor to offer an opinion as to the viability of this plan.

In any case, we are now within nesting season and so it will certainly be more complex to arrange the demolition that had been hoped. Discussions are taking place between the Borough and their contractors as to whether the Hall can be taken down without also removing the trees in the first instance, so that all that is left to do at the end of nesting season is to remove the trees. Additionally, if it should come to pass that it can be established there are no nests in the trees adjacent to the Hall then we would be able to proceed anyway.

Parish Council Officers still need to provide amendments to the Borough's proposed tender documents for the construction of a new Hall, but as the Borough has indicated it will not start this tender process until the completion of the demolition there is still time for this to happen.

Assets – 26th March 2024

Item 07 – War Memorial

The current status of the application to install the War Memorial on Old St Mary's is this:

On 1st March 2024 the Borough Council granted planning permission to install the War Memorial on Old St Mary's, including a new wall for memorial plaques, reinstatement of footpaths and associated works. The only condition is that we provide an Environmental Method Statement including methods to prevent pollution and precautionary working methods to deal with stag beetles, bats and water voles.

No objections were received from the various specialists consulted, although there were two letters of objection from residents. It is suggested that we consider building the plaque walls higher to avoid the wreaths damaging the plaques as has happened before. The plan for sympathetic planting around the memorial and wall was approved of as well. We are also reminded to ensure we treat any disturbed fragments of bone appropriately and not leave them exposed.

We now await a decision from the Diocese. I have contacted the Diocese (most recently on 6th March) to ask for information and I will contact them again prior to this meeting.

The architect who worked with us on the plans for the application is now looking for a contractor to provide the EMS which we will then submit to the Borough.

Once these final two items are in place we will be able to swiftly proceed with installing the Memorial and getting it rededicated.

Assets – 26th March 2024

Item 08 – Kerb Sets at Bishopstoke Cemetery

Current regulations for Bishopstoke Cemetery state that kerb sets must be stone and installed by a stone mason. These are the regulations that have been in place since the cemetery was first opened. However, they were never enforced and were treated more as guidelines than regulations.

As a result, by 2020 there were more than 50 plots at the Cemetery that did not comply – some were wooden, some were garden centre fencing, all were cheaper alternatives than a stone kerb set. Having been warned of potential insurance claims, the Council decided that rather than continuing the longstanding policy of only dealing with kerb sets that had become dangerous the Council would seek to enforce the regulations rigidly.

Since that time successive Cemetery Officers have been unable to make any real progress in this matter. Many of the plots concerned had their sets installed decades ago and any contact details we were given are no longer valid. Additionally receiving a letter from the Council requiring the removal of a kerb set around a recently lost relative is likely to cause a great deal of distress.

It is the Clerk's recommendation that the Council no longer pursue the idea of rigorously enforcing this regulation as it appears to be largely unenforceable and often ignored. Instead, the regulation should be rewritten to allow surrounds of any kind provided that they are deemed safe, do not protrude into the surrounding paths, and are below a maximum height of say 12 inches above ground.

This change would allow the officers to focus on plots that present an actual health and safety problem rather than expending time and effort trying to contact a family who were last in touch over 50 years ago.

Assets – 26th March 2024

Item 09 – Underwood Road Allotments layout

As the buildings at Underwood Road allotments approach the end of their lifespan it is appropriate to consider the future layout of the site.

It is expected that the concrete & asbestos machine shed halfway up the track to the left of the entrance will be demolished along with the allotment shop, the Warwick shed next to it, and the toilet block.

On the site of the allotment shop and toilet block there will be a new building providing storage for Council-owned machines only, an allotment shop, a toilet block, and storage for the various supplies sold at the shop. It may be necessary to extend the footprint of the building towards the Warwick shed to achieve this but the only thing that will be sacrificed will be one or two parking spots.

The Warwick shed will give way to additional parking slots and potentially a communal compost area which will both mitigate the loss of parking from the extension of the shop building and also provide a useful community resource.

Where the machinery shed stands currently there is scope for additional parking and / or communal compost. It is also possible that the ground could be returned to a state to allow crops to be grown there.

At the top of the site there is a small area of gravel parking which is regularly encroached upon by soil and has to be re-scraped. It is suggested that tarmacked parking be provided there, with a barrier to prevent soil encroachment. Care would have to be taken to ensure this does not become a trip hazard but this should not be difficult to achieve.

A new water pipe network should be installed which will take care of the water pressure problem. Additionally, an underground storage tank could be installed to provide a back up in times of excessive use.

An architect is set to meet with the Clerk to discuss the allotment building itself prior to the meeting. It is recommended that quotes be obtained for the entire work as described above and then funding sought from developer contributions, grants, lottery funding etc, and that only if none of these prove accessible should the Council consider whether the project can be funded from the Parish purse. However, it is noted that the expected lifespan of the current buildings is no more than a few years and the Council has been recommended not to spend any more money on repairs unless absolutely necessary.

Assets Committee - Clerk's report 26th March 2024

Actions from previous meetings

ASSETS_2223_M05/45.3

Regarding the website and Glebe Meadow information

This has not yet been actioned.

ASSETS_2324_M01/6.6

Regarding a play area review

The timetable has not yet been drawn up. This action will be combined with the play area strategy and other overall play area actions in future updates.

ASSETS_2324_M01/7.3

Regarding the play area disclaimer and signs

The disclaimer has been drafted. Now exploring less expensive ways to add it to the signage without having to replace all play area signs again. Cllr Harris has provided a potential contact who may be able to do the signs

ASSETS_2324_M02/11.3

Regarding the play area strategy

This has not yet been drafted.

ASSETS_2324_M02/14.1

Regarding potentially providing an allotment rent discount for those on benefits.

This has not yet been actioned.

ASSETS_2324_M04/28.3

Regarding the minutes

These have been published on the Council website.

ASSETS_2324_M04/31.2

Regarding the tree and bee plan

These comments were fed back to Helen Brown. Helen is now planning to talk to Green Smile about quoting for the watering and maintenance work on the sites. Helen is hoping to include QR codes with some of the sites which could provide information on what is safe to eat as well as how to prepare it.

ASSETS_2324_M04/32.4

Regarding the use of Stoke Common Cemetery Car Park

Comments were fed back to the Borough Council on Feb 8th. As of the date of writing this report no reply has been received.

ASSETS_2324_M04/34.2

Regarding the cemetery gates

Green Smile have been asked about the drop rod holes. Terry Foster has been asked to take a look at the tree work – it does not appear to include TPO trees so should be relatively routine to complete.

ASSETS_2324_M04/34.3

Regarding exhumation procedures

Checking guidance from ICCM, the Environmental Agency, the Ministry of Justice and other sources, we are advised that the procedure should take place at a time when the cemetery is usually closed, most likely the early morning. Extra precautions such as fencing and access controls are only usually necessary when it is likely to take more than one day to complete. However, the use of the car park and path between cemeteries for early morning dog walkers suggests that it would be prudent to either fence off the access from Stoke Common Cemetery, or have someone stationed there to prevent passers by from entering the Cemetery. Similarly, the gates being closed and staffed will be sufficient

rather than needing them to be chained up. The advice from the Environment Agency is that only those who have to be there, and the families involved, should be informed ahead of proceedings.

ASSETS_2324_M04/35.2

Regarding previous actions on the Memorial Hall, bins and play

area disclaimers

Despite being made a higher priority these have still not been actioned as other events have clearly needed to be prioritised above them.

ASSETS_2324_M04/35.3

Regarding bus shelters

EBC have been provided with all the information Bishopstoke Parish Council have and have also been asked for an update on the Spring Lane shelter, which EBC and HCC have decided should be replaced by a new shelter.

ASSETS_2324_M04/35.4

Regarding clocks

A local clock company have been contacted to see if they can repair them and provide a regular maintenance service. If that fails then the original installers will be contacted.

ASSETS_2324_M04/35.5

Regarding the Memorial Hall

Following a site visit it has been decided that the barred windows are sufficiently protected that they do not need boarding.

Recommendations from previous meetings

ASSETS_2324_M04/30.2

Regarding the Asset Committee terms of reference

The Full Council accepted the recommendation of the Committee and adopted the Terms of Reference unchanged.

Assets report 26th March 2024

Play Areas

The latest maintenance and quarterly inspection reports have been received and are being gone through to assess what work needs to be ordered. The jet washing of Templecombe and Glebe Meadow by Infinity Playgrounds has been very effective.

Burial Grounds

No update since the last meeting.

Allotments

The shoring work has been completed at the top in Underwood Road allotments, as has the repairs to the tarmac by the allotment shop. The Clerk is meeting with an architect shortly to discuss plans for the new building, the layout, what purposes it needs to serve and so on.

Fixed Assets

The annual update to the fixed asset register was approved at Full Council in March.

Open Space & Trees

Work resulting from the tree survey is currently being priced up by Shawyers and will then be authorised. This means that it may be necessary to carry out work during the nesting season but obviously care will be taken to check for nests before work commences and if any are found then the work will be delayed.

Parish owned and managed buildings

The Players Shed behind the old Parish Office on the Memorial Hall site was subject to an arson attack and burned mostly to the ground. The fire department and police attended, as did the Clerk and several Councillors. Neither the Office nor the Hall appear to have been damaged, but there was damage to an outbuilding behind the pub.

War Memorial

This was updated separately on the agenda.

Bishopstoke Memorial Hall

This was updated separately on the agenda.