

WASHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



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Washington Parish Council

Open Spaces, Recreation, Allotment, Footpaths and Conservation (OSRA) Committee

MINUTES of the OSRA Committee Meeting held on Monday 17th February 2025 at
Washington Village Hall (Doré Room)

PRESENT: Cllr S Buddell, Cllr B Hanvey, Cllr T Keech (Chairman) and Cllr G. Lockerbie.

ALSO: Clerk to the Council and two Governors from St Mary's C.E. Primary School in the
village.

The meeting was opened by the Chairman at 7:30pm

O/02/25/1 Apologies for absence

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **RECEIVE** and **ACCEPT** apologies from Cllr Dillaway.

O/02/25/2 Declarations of Interest.

There were no declarations of interests on any items on the agendas as defined under
the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Council's Code of Conduct.

O/02/25/3 Minutes of the last meeting on 20th January 2025

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of the last OSRA Meeting on 20th
January 2025

O/02/25/4 Public Speaking

A parent governor at the village school, Mrs Sally Shillingford, asked if the
Committee would consent to the hedge being reduced in the Council's car
and provide painted parking bays.

Mrs Shillingford explained that these combined measures could help free up
more parking space, relieving parking pressures at peak times of the school
day and hopefully reduce erosion of the verges along School Lane. She
suggested that Kia garage could be asked to contribute to some of the costs as
it was felt they added to the problem by regularly parking their sales and staff
cars around the village.

Mrs Shillingford reported that her husband was willing to assist volunteers from the community and the school with the hedge work, and had the necessary expertise as a builder and landscaper, with equipment and public liability insurance. She had also spoken to a local National Trust warden for the adjoining field "Jockeys Meadow", who had suggested the boundary hedge could be laid with retention of some of the larger trees. Mrs Shillingford had not yet approached the hall but thought that this method would let in more light which could benefit their solar roof panel project. She had reported a persistent flooding issue in School Lane to WSCC but they had not yet confirmed when this would be addressed.

Members asked a number of further questions about the proposals and the Chairman thanked Mrs Shillingford and her fellow school governor at the meeting. He brought forward the agenda item to formally consider the proposals and welcomed both governors to observe the discussion.

0/02/25/4 Village Hall Car Park

To Consider an invitation from parents at the village school to discuss car parking issues at the hall and possible solutions.

Members discussed the school parent governor, Mrs Sally Shillingford's proposals to help address the parking issues she reported in the public forum. Written details were also circulated with the agenda before the meeting.

It was noted that the groundsman annually cuts the Council's side of the hedge in its car park at the end of the summer and no permit is required from WSCC because the land is privately owned and not part of a public highway.

There was a discussion about ownership of the hedge and whether it was part of the National Trust's field next door, known locally as Jockey's Meadow. If so, any height reduction by hedge laying, and removal of trees on the NT land would be their responsibility.

Members agreed there was still a potential for more parking space if the hedge is cut back and if it is not obstructed by the culvert. They were mindful that the works should not result in increased maintenance costs to the Council as it had a limited budget.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree that the hedge is cut back on the Council's side of the car park, under the following terms:

- to be carried out by volunteers under the supervision of a suitably qualified person with required public liability insurance, and outside the bird-nesting season.
- Names and addresses of all the volunteers to be provided to the Clerk to notify the Council's insurers as required under the policy.
- That all vegetation and rubbish is responsibly removed from site.
- To ensure that the works do not conflict with the village hall bookings. Clerk to notify the Hall Trustees.

- To ask Cllr Marshall (WSCC) to enquire when the gully will be cleared by the car park. Clerk to action.

The Committee further **RESOLVED** to monitor the effectiveness of the changes and review the proposal for parking bays at a later date.

O/02/25/5 Actions and Matters Arising

To Receive Actions and Matters arising from the last meeting.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to **NOTE** the following updates and matters arising from previous meetings:

FC/23/11/10 (FC meeting 6th Nov 2023 meeting) MUGA Lighting:

Case Electrical will contact the council about the SDNPA's recent advice that planning consent is required for the proposed lighting. It was noted that the Council had already agreed the contractor's £4,680 quote for the project and that the contractor had previously agreed to make the planning application if required. Noted.

O/4/24/5 (OSRA meeting 22nd Apr 2024): First Extension Graveyard:

The next Committee meeting (17th March 2025) will consider a quotation of £450 from an RICS surveyor in Storrington to inspect the wall of the closed burial ground and advise on the safe removal of ivy near Banks Cottage. Noted.

O/9/24/6 (OSRA 16th Sep 2024) A consulting solicitor for the SLCC kindly responded to the committee's query on allotment fencing with the following:

"There is no statutory obligation on an Allotments Authority to fence land which is used for allotments. Authorities frequently do fence to avoid each allotment holder fencing the individual plots (producing a pattern of disparate fences) or where animals such as rabbits or deer are a problem."

O/11/24/13 (OSRA meeting 18th Nov 2024) Bus Shelter project:

Awaiting Highways Authority to confirm suitable locations for the shelter in Old London Road. This item is on the OSRA meeting agenda (17th February 2025) for discussion. Noted.

O/01/25/05 (OSRA meeting 20th Jan 2025) Cricket hire request by West Chilmington and Thakeham cricket club on the Recreation Ground: Awaiting the Club's firm proposal subject to their enquiries on costings to restore the square and hire the village hall facilities. The Council's Groundsman agreed to advise on the costs for additional cuts of the outfield. Noted.

O/01/25/7 (OSRA meeting 20th Jan 2025) Allotment tenancies: New tenancy agreements had been signed for Plots 8 and 11B on the Council's site, and the rents paid. Noted.

O/01/25/9 (OSRA meeting 20th Jan 2025) First Extension Graveyard: quotes for painting and installing the new double gates had been received. To be considered at this meeting with a separate quote for supplying the gates. Chanctonbury Church PCC has written to the Council (14th Feb 2025) offering £2,000 towards the costs, upon invoice, once work is completed. The letter was shared with the committee prior to this meeting. Members noted the information and thanked the PCC for their generosity.

O/01/25/12 (OSRA meeting 20th Jan 2025) Trees in the First Extension Graveyard: A quote of £150 had been received from Gareth Morley/Sawing Heights (17th Feb 2025) to cut back ivy on several trees identified in the Council's annual trees inspection report. To be considered at the next OSRA meeting on 17th March.

O/02/25/6 Allotment Notices

To Receive and Accept notice to vacate Plot 6

The Committee **RESOLVED** to accept the notice dated 22nd January 2025 from the Tenant to vacate Plot 6 on the Council's Allotment. Clerk to notify the Stewards to assist in advertising the plot. Notices were already published on the council's website and noticeboards.

O/02/25/7 Allotment Rent

The Committee **RESOLVED** to note that £294.65 rent was received for 2025 and all up to date.

O/02/25/8 Allotment Inspections

To Nominate and agree a Committee member to assist the Council's quarterly inspections.

The Clerk reported that the common areas of the allotment and vacant plots are the responsibility of the Council. It has a duty to manage these areas in order to fulfil its health and safety obligations, and address any issues which may arise. Cllr Perkins, previously nominated to carry out the quarterly inspections of the whole site, had recently resigned from the Council and the role is vacant. Stewards assisted with interim reports and Tenants are required by the Tenancy Agreements to have a public liability policy for their plots.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Chairman would assist the Clerk with the next quarterly inspection at the end of March. It was also agreed to defer further inspection arrangements pending a review at the next Council meeting. The Clerk was instructed to seek advice from the insurer on legal requirements of their policy for inspections to help inform the Council's decision.

O/02/25/9 First Extension Graveyard:

To Nominate and agree a Committee Member to conduct the Council's monthly inspections of the closed burial ground.



The Clerk reported that the Council had previously agreed to manage the burial ground which is still in Church Ownership. The Council therefore has a duty to ensure that it is kept in a reasonable state of repair. Cllr Scovell, who had previously performed the monthly inspections, had recently resigned from the Council and the role is vacant.

Following a discussion, members declined to put themselves forward and that it was likely the Council would have to employ someone for this if the inspections are a legal requirement. A Member questioned the extent of the Council's management responsibilities and whether this included a new wall if the existing one fell down. The Clerk advised on the insurance policy for this.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to defer the matter for review at the next Council meeting. The Clerk was instructed to seek advice from the insurer on legal requirements of their policy for inspections; and to investigate the extent of the Council's management responsibilities of the graveyard, to help inform the Council's decision.

O/02/25/10 First Extension Graveyard

To Agree quotation for relevening two headstones in the graveyard.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree a quotation of £300 for Gumbrell to releven two headstones in the graveyard, highlighted in a previous safety inspection report. Members agreed that the cost was very reasonable and that the monumental mason had previously carried out satisfactory repairs for the Council. Clerk to sign the contract agreement for the works.

O/02/25/11 First Extension Graveyard

To Agree quotations for replacing the damaged gates to the closed burial ground, repainting and installation.

This item was deferred from the OSRA meeting in November 2024, pending a quotation for fully inclusive costings for the new gates to include repainting and installation.

Following a discussion, the Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the £980 quotation From Ollyswood in the parish to supply the new gates and the £425 quotation from Delwood, the Council's approved contractor, to paint and install them.

The Committee further agreed a contingency of £90 from Delwood to replace the metal fittings if required. The Committee agreed that the quotes represented good value for money for the specialist work required.

The Clerk reported that the Chanctonbury PCC had very kindly offered £2,000 towards the project, subject to invoicing them on completion of works. A copy of their letter of offer dated 14th February 2025 was previously circulated. The Clerk was instructed to thank them for their generosity and to confirm that the quotes were agreed.



O/02/25/12 Recreation Ground

To Agree quotation to replace damaged MUGA goals

A copy of Delwood's quotation of £965 to replace the two 5 a side goals in the recesses of the MUGA, together with the RoSPA 2024 annual safety report were previously circulated.

Members discussed the report that the existing goals were unsuitable because they could easily be moved into the play area. The Clerk reported that the metal parts rusted, leaving sharp edges, and the frames easily collapsed, making it difficult to secure them effectively to the perimeter fencing.

The contractor had advised that both goals should be replaced, due to the *"fragility of the rusty metal parts. Both corners had perished and rusted through, and was beyond the reach of any welding repairs."*

He further advised that the proposed new *Aluminium Academy Goals*, measuring 12ft x 4ft x 4ft goals from the supplier at: www.live4soccer.co.uk are a modern, lightweight and robust variant built to British safety standards and should not rust. The existing nets could be re-used and would be secured with additional net ties.

Members considered the option of permanently removing the goals and not replacing them. But agreed they are a popular and well-used community facility. The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the £965 quotation for the replacement goals and that this represented good value for money. It agreed this should be funded from available CIL monies as the project met the criteria for expenditure on improvements to community facilities.

O/02/25/13 Recreation Ground

To Agree quotation to replace damaged MUGA kickboards

It was noted that the plywood kickboards are damaged and beyond repair. They were last replaced for £1,425.14 in 2022. Quotations of £590 for 6 OSB replacement boards or £710 for the hardwood exterior option were previously circulated. The Committee queried if all the boards are included in the cost.

Members agreed that the kickboards should be replaced as they are a popular and well-used community facility. Following a discussion, the Committee **RESOLVED** to agree the quotation of £710 from Delwood, the Council's Approved contractor, for the more robust option if this is to replace all the boards. Otherwise, a further quote to be sought for review at the next meeting. It was agreed this should be funded from available CIL monies as the project met the criteria for expenditure on improvements to community facilities

O/02/25/14 Bus shelter

To Nominate a working party or individual members to help with the Bus Shelter project in Old London Road for recommendation to Full Council

It was noted that Cllr Scovell's [Written Motion for a bus shelter](#) had been supported in principle by the Council subject to design and costs. He had kindly agreed to undertake the project with the Clerk's assistance but is unable to continue this following his recent resignation from the Council. He informed the Clerk that he would be willing to assist if a site visit is needed to agree on the best location of the shelter, or if more information is required. The Committee noted that the Highways Authority were yet to advise on their assessment of suitable siting options before a licence can be issued for construction.

WSCC's Senior Community Solutions Officer had confirmed his willingness to help with the shelter construction which would be at no cost to the Council other than for materials.

Members discussed the project and thanked the former Councillor for his input so far, but that it would be difficult for them to take it forward without his continued commitment.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Council that no further action is taken and that Cllr Scovell is advised of the option to pursue the project as a resident and seek help from the local community.

O/02/25/15 Village Hall Car Park

This item was discussed earlier in the meeting under minute reference O/02/25/4 .

O/02/25/16 Any other urgent Open Space, Recreation & Allotment and Footpaths and Conservation issues that may arise.

None raised.

O/11/24/17 Date and Time of next OSRA Meeting: Monday 17th March 2025 at 7:45pm

There being no further business to transact, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:16pm

Signed..

Dated...17-03-2025...