



Minutes of the Meeting of the Operations Committee Held on Thursday 25th May at 7pm in the Parish Office

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Hill (IH)
Roger Beattie (RB)
Keith Jackson (KJ)
Andy Aherne (AA)
Leo Pesci (LP)

Officer:

Kristina Tynan (KT)

23/23 Election of Chair

Roger Beattie proposed Ian Hill and this was seconded by Keith Jackson.

Resolved: That Ian Hill be elected as Chairman.

24/23 Apologies for absence

Tim Horton, Jenny Wilkinson, Rob Smith.

25/23 Election of Vice-Chair

Roger Beattie proposed Andy Aherne and this was seconded by Ian Hill.

Resolved: That Andy Aherne be elected as Vice- Chairman.

26/23 Minutes of the meeting held on 20th April 2023 which were received by Council on 9/5/23 to be agreed as a correct record

Resolved: That the note of this meeting was a correct record of this meeting and that it be signed by the Chairman.

27/23 Declarations of Interest

There were none notified.

28/23 Matters arising

None other than agenda items.

29/23 Review of Terms of Reference

These were reviewed and are shown at the bottom of these minutes.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That the attached terms of reference be agreed.

30/23 Budget 2023/24 – attached

The proposed budget for this financial year was sent out prior to the meeting and was noted.

31/23 New Tasks

a) **Installation of public toilets in the recreation ground** – report from RB

RB reported that he and TH have been looking into putting a metal transpor container which would comprise of a one toilet and one disabled toilet. A water connection would need to be put in but this could link into the supply which will be used for the drinking fountain. The unit can be removed easily at any time if a more permanent solution is built in the future. The cost for the unit and all works needed would be approximately £12,500. The May Full Council meeting agreed in principle that the Operations

Committee continue to investigate putting in a larger toilet unit into the recreation ground. RB suggested that we now consult the public on this. It was also agreed that we ask the Finance Committee if this would be an appropriate project to use CIL funds.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That we put a Monkey Survey on our website and the WPC Facebook and Watlington Town Facebook page to gauge our resident's opinion on this.

b) Responsibility for MUGA maintenance – transfer from Major Projects Group

This was noted and the committee will have a look at the MUGA area. Our caretaker inspects it daily and a professional company (Slatters) maintain it on a bi-monthly basis.

32/23 Task list for Operations committee

The task list was updated

33/23 Progress with current tasks

1. **Telephone Box in the Car Park** – TH had sent out an update on this project which is shown below:

Commitment to date

The WPC has resolved that it would wish to preserve and make use of the last K6 telephone box (a design by Gilbert Scott) in the body of the town. (A second has received some restoration in Christmas Common)

Many K6 boxes have become Grade 2 listed and variously serve their communities in new ways.

In Watlington it was further resolved more recently that the box should become the 'Watlington Small Gallery' and be maintained by the volunteer work of the local art group gathered around 'Arts Week'. It would not be the first nationally to have such a designation and use.

The box would remain in the car park and be a welcoming sight as many come to Watlington via the car park. Other steps are being taken to improve the initial 'take' on the town. Other positions would raise a number of concerns among residents, and it would be an additional complexity to take the power supply with the box.

Attempts to recover the box

Recovering the box in the car park has however been a difficult matter. Two sets of negotiations were initiated. Locally no single company would pick up the job of both a full restoration and adding the necessary features for a secure presentational space. Advertisement within the trade produced two initially interested companies but both of these 'pulled out' without submitting tenders.

Using figures from partial stages in the recovery process it might be estimated that costs would be around £2,900 (to include new toughened glass panels. New (teak) panelling) but still outstanding would be the need to use volunteer work to paint the recovered box and make internal accommodations for display.

A new approach

A radically different scheme is now suggested whereby a full and comprehensive scheme is carried out on a newly commissioned box that is delivered and fixed into place in exchange for the existing one.

The only company identified with the ability and interest to carry out the full scheme is XConnect Ltd of Newark, this company would offer £800 for 'our' box (that would in due course be revived).

Budget costs

Refurbished Kiosk including bespoke signs and lock (They did similar project for art kiosks in Cheltenham) & Delivery £3600

Budget Sub contact groundworks £1700 (costs are high because of electrics)

Allowance for old kiosk £800

Total Cost £4500 + VAT

Meeting the costs

It is further proposed that WPC seeks to cover the net cost of this approach through meeting with success in a bid to the Art Fund now developing through SODC (in parallel to CIL funds). It may be felt that an iconic structure that contained artwork throughout the year (but was periodically refreshed) would be a popular scheme. Such a presence in the car park would deeply underscore the Town's

gathering image as a centre for endeavour in the fine arts (one third of all South Oxfordshire art centres this year were to be found in Watlington and Christmas Common)
It would in itself be a stimulus to the business of the town (through low key advertising on lower panels that may therefore provide an income in the future).

Maintenance would be occasional. Clearly there will be some risks of vandalism – but these can be expected to be low as the box would be locked, have toughened glass and never contain items of very high value.

After discussion the following was agreed:

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL: That WPC adopt the approaches above and make the box a subject for applications for support, especially to the Arts Fund of SODC (the part that is dedicated towards Watlington alone).

It was suggested that the WPC calls together its Arts Group to discuss this further.

2. Mansle Garden

We have had a quote from Adam Clissold to put in a post and rail for the new entrance which would be a dog leg barrier. For the material and labour, it will cost in the region of £160.

Resolved: That we commission this work.

3. **Hill Road Car Park** – TH had sent out 6 requests for quotes and had received only two quotations for drainage works in this location. The works for the Installation of Aco drains would consist of:

- Dig out along the back edge of the parking bays to a depth of 200mm.
- Install 25 metres of aco drains along the parking bays.
- Aco drains will be bedded on concrete.
- Dig a new pipe 10 metres in length down to the drain that is beside the curb.
- Dig along the curb line in the topsoil to make reinstatement easy.
- Cut the tarmac footpath the width of a pipe and lay pipe through. Once the pipe is through to immediately reinstate with new tarmac
- Connect into drain.
- Reinstatement all works and tidy everything up.

This job will take 2 men for 1 week to complete.

The area would need to be fenced off to prevent the public from injuring themselves.

TH had asked the committee to discuss the following proposal:

To accept the bid from EDMORR at and charge this to the Car Park reserve. That TH be delegated to ask the successful bidder to add an upstand to prevent water/mud from backfilling the drain.

After discussion it was

Resolved: That the committee need to visit the site before accepting this proposal.

It was also agreed that the Clerk contact Royal Mail to see if the post box in this location is ever used as it has no signage to show that there is one.

4. **Sails over Picnic Benches in the Rec** – RB will see if these can be put up this year. It was agreed that we look at a more permanent cover for the next financial year.

34/23 Committee Members items for discussion.

1. **Jenny Wilkinson** – suggestion to mark the crowning of King Charles by planting a memorial tree – Would the committee support this?

This was deferred to the next meeting.

35/23 Correspondence

SIDs – Britwell Road residents have asked if the SID could be moved to the Britwell Road next.

R Lee – speeds on Hill Road and how can the 20mph to be enforced – IH will write to him.

1. **Support Fund** - The Trustees would like to order this commemorative bench for the end of Gorwell. Would the WPC support this.

<https://www.tdp.co.uk/product/commemorative-wirksworth-seat/>

Following discussion, it was thought that the bench in Gorwell was in good condition and not needed there. However, it was thought that with the new footpath from Red Kite View to Cuxham Road opening up there may be a need for a bench somewhere in that location. Members to consider suitable areas for a bench.

2. Freshwater Habitats – letter was sent with the agenda. **-It was agreed that we send it to WCAG as it would be of more interest to them.**

36/23 Any Other Business

Red Kite Problems – It was noted that Stephanie Halliwell is investigating this.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.30PM

The next meeting will be held on Friday 30th June 2023 and will be a Walkabout- Time TBC

Addendum

Operations Committee Terms of Reference 2023

Membership

The Operations Committee will comprise of a minimum of six elected members of Council. Members will be elected at each Annual Meeting of Council. A Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee shall be elected annually from among its members.

The committee may co-opt members as it sees appropriate. As per the Standing Orders, these co-opted members shall not have voting rights.

Quorum

A quorum for this committee shall be three members.

Reporting

The Committee will consider all matters referred to by the Council and those required by the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and will make recommendations to Council for approval.

Meetings

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Standing Orders. The Committee shall meet monthly apart from August and December. Additional meetings may be scheduled as required.

Remit

1. To deal with operational matters concerned with the use, monitoring, replacement, maintenance and enhancement of Watlington assets, including those of the Allotments as well as those for which the council has taken responsibility. This includes spending decisions within the agreed budget for the relevant items.
2. The Committee will also manage day to day actions on environmental matters where these fall within the remit of WPC.
3. The Committee will advise on the programme of work for the caretaker.
4. The Chair of the committee will report and make recommendations to Full Council meetings on actions taken by the committee.

To be approved at Full Council on 20th June 2023