

Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee
held on Tuesday 15 September 2026 at 7:30pm
in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Councillors present: Cllr Danny Bonnett (Chair)
Cllr Chris Bloor
Cllr Chris Davies
Cllr Fiona Deas
Cllr Chris Rowe
Cllr Chris Woodhouse

Officers present: Wendy Sydenham (Deputy Clerk)
Andrea Durn (CEO & RFO)

OS2526.132 TO CONSIDER ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were noted from Cllr Gil Gilroy and Cllr Christine Carter

OS2526.133 TO RECEIVE ANY MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no members' declarations of interest.

OS2526.134 TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no members of the public present.

OS2526.135 TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE ON 21 JULY 2026

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee Meeting on 21 July 2026, and they were signed by the Chair.

OS2526.136 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL ON THE STREAMSIDE WALK PROJECT

Plans provided by SGC for two pocket parks along Streamside Walk were noted. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to request further information from South Gloucestershire Council on the following:

- SGC expectations regarding the Town Council's responsibilities for these parks going forward, to include confirmation of – ongoing maintenance of all features (surfacing, planting, benches, signage and walls), safety inspections, liability, insurance, legal ownership of the asset(s), etc.
- How this fits in with the Special Expenses process, specifically whether these two parks would be treated in the same way as other facilities in the town that come under these changes and would the timescales be the same, e.g. will SGC have full responsibility for maintenance, ownership and liability until the Town Council chooses to enter into the Special Expenses process.

OS2526.137 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON REDUCING THE TOWN COUNCIL'S RELIANCE ON MAINS WATER FOR GROUNDS MAINTENANCE AND AGREE NEXT STEPS

The Committee noted the officer report and confirmed their support for the action already being taken to plan for/install water butts on Town Council property, as well as in the wider town. The following was unanimously **RESOLVED**:

- To support officers continuing to scope other potential solutions, as set out in the officer report.
- To request that the Climate & Nature Officer contact South Gloucestershire Council to access the work carried out by their hydrologist looking at both the drainage off the A38 and the drainage through to Tesco, and to feed this information back to the Climate & Nature Committee and also to the Facilities Officer in relation to the new water play facility at the Mundy Playing Fields.
- To explore options for improving the water retention in the Town Council's hanging baskets e.g. clay balls, swell gel, etc, and to bring back to the January Committee meeting when the Committee will be due to decide on the order for hanging baskets for 2027.

OS2526.138 TO CONSIDER A NEW MEMORIAL STONE REQUEST

The following was **RESOLVED** by majority vote:

- To uphold the officer decision to refuse a permit for the stone.
- To request that officers review the regulations around memorial stones in the Cemetery and include more detail on what was permitted and what was not.
- To inform the family making the request that there is likely to be some sort of natural stone memorial included in the new memorial gardens on which plaques could be placed, as this may be something they would be interested in.

OS2526.139 TO AGREE PLANS TO ENHANCE WILDFLOWER PLANTING ON TOWN COUNCIL GREEN SPACES

The plans for replacing areas of wildflower planting/longer grasses with alternative areas and/or new wildflower planting, as set out in the officer report, were noted. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to agree to the changes being made in Autumn 2026.

OS2526.140 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE NEW MEMORIAL WOODLAND/WELLBEING GARDEN ADJACENT TO THORNBURY CEMETERY

The update on the new memorial woodland was noted, as set out in the officer report. It was also noted that the design would be presented to the Climate & Nature Committee for sign-off at its October meeting. The design would, however, be shared with members of the Open Spaces Committee in advance, and they would be welcome to attend the October Climate & Nature Committee meeting to put forward their views before it is signed off. It was **RESOLVED** to liaise with RBL with regard to this project, and any other volunteer opportunities.

OS2526.141 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON WORKS TO THE CULVERT ADJACENT TO OAKLEAZE GREEN AND RATIFY ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE

The update provided in the officer report was noted. It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to ratify the following out of meeting decisions made by officers for expenditure to come from 130/4150 Open Spaces/Maintenance:

- Additional expenditure on the initial connection repair, with the total amount for the repair being £3834.98
- Expenditure on further CCTV surveying and dye testing at £240 per hour, with 2-4 hours needed, and potentially more

It was further unanimously **RESOLVED** that, at an appropriate point in the future, the Committee should review all culverts on Town Council land to assess the feasibility of de-culverting.

OS2526.142 TO PROVIDE A COMMITTEE UPDATE FOR INCLUSION IN THE TOWN COUNCIL'S REVIEW OF PROGRESS TO DELIVER THE CURRENT STRATEGIC PLAN

The draft schedule of contributions by the Committee to the existing strategic plan was noted. The suggestions below were made regarding input into the next strategic plan, for further discussion at the next Committee meeting:

- Work with all stakeholders to improve access to good quality sports pitches.
- Focus on improving engagement with elderly people and making our facilities more welcoming and accessible to them.
- Focus on making our open spaces fun and engaging, particularly by working with nature, e.g. mazes, natural bund seating, etc.
- Adjust focus under the existing climate change priority to include - climate adaptation, nature-based solutions, water management, etc, both on Town Council land in the wider town – examples: de-culverting, flood management/water storage projects, tree planting to create shade/cool corridors, etc.
- Enhance the existing priority regarding young people to cover better engagement.
- Address issues around mental health and loneliness – all generations.

OS2526.143 TO IDENTIFY ANY ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE BUDGET REQUESTS FOR 2027/2028

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to put forward the following items for consideration for the 2027/2028 budget (with some crossover with Climate & Nature Committee):

- Signage production
- Continued funding for memorial woodland project
- Tiny forest
- Contingency fund for culvert repairs at Oakleaze Green
- Shaded seating areas

OS2526.144 TO NOTE PROGRESS ON ACTIONS FROM MOST RECENT EXTERNAL INSPECTIONS OF PLAY EQUIPMENT

The Committee noted the schedule of progress on actions from the most recent external inspection of play equipment.

OS2526.145 TO AGREE KEY POINTS FROM THE MEETING TO BE PUBLICISED VIA SOCIAL MEDIA/WEBSITE

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** to publicise the following key points from the meeting – taking steps to reduce reliance on mains water for grounds maintenance, enhancements to wildflower planting and exploring opportunities for enhanced engagement with the Armed Forces/veterans/Royal British Legion regarding Town Council projects and volunteer opportunities.

OS2526.146 TO NOTE THAT THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ITEMS TO THE DEPUTY CLERK FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT AGENDA IS WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2026

The deadline for submission of items to the Deputy Clerk for inclusion in the next agenda was noted to be Wednesday 4 November 2026.

OS2526.147 TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2026

The date of the next meeting was noted to be Tuesday 17 November 2026.

The meeting closed at 21.00.

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