

Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee
held on 18 November 2025 at 7:30pm
in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Councillors present: Cllr Danny Bonnett (Chair)
Cllr Chris Bloor
Cllr Christine Carter
Cllr Chris Davies
Cllr Fiona Deas
Cllr Gil Gilroy
Cllr James Murray (from item OS2526.55 onwards)
Cllr Phil O'Rourke
Cllr Chris Rowe
Cllr Chris Woodhouse

Officers present: Wendy Sydenham (Deputy Clerk)

Councillors absent: Cllr Emma Shepherd

There was a representative of South Gloucestershire Council in attendance in relation to item OS2526.57

OS2526.52 TO CONSIDER ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence offered.

OS2526.53 TO RECEIVE ANY MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Chris Bloor declared an interest in matters relating to Walkers are Welcome, specifically item OS2526.63, as Chair of that organisation.

OS2526.54 TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no members of the public present.

OS2526.55 TO ELECT A NEW COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR

Nominations were received and seconded for two candidates for the post of Vice Chair of the Committee, Cllr Phil O'Rourke and Cllr Chris Bloor. Following a vote, Cllr Chris Bloor was duly elected Vice Chair of the Committee.

OS2526.56 TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2025

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on 16 September 2025, and they were signed by the Chair.

OS2526.57 TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION FROM SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL (SGC) ON THE STREAMSIDE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

Following a presentation by SGC, comments were made by Committee members in relation to the following:

- There was concern that this was a missed opportunity to resolve issues relating to other footpaths and highways around the town which detrimentally affected residents' ability to safely and easily walk or cycle around the town, and a missed opportunity to develop new routes or join up routes. The Committee felt that these needed to be addressed along with the Streamside Improvements to ensure a coherent and planned approach to improving non-vehicle travel around Thornbury. SGC noted these concerns and highlighted that some of these were being addressed through separate projects, as part of the Getting Around Thornbury Scheme. SGC agreed to provide a single document that mapped all of these together and to provide this for the January Committee meeting.
- Concerns were raised regarding the costs involved with the Town Council maintaining play equipment installed by SGC as part of the Streamside project and it was agreed that further details should be obtained regarding all costs involved, to allow further discussion at the January Committee meeting.
- The Town Council should be allowed to actively participate in the planning of the improvements, including codesign of the areas where play equipment would be installed.

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

- That the Committee were very supportive of the Streamside Improvements project in principle, whilst also highlighting the importance of not missing this opportunity to make other improvements to travel as part of a joined-up scheme.
- That the Committee would discuss the project further at its next meeting in January, to be supported by a map of all planned projects relating to improving walking and cycling routes around Thornbury (SGC to provide for the meeting), and further detail on the costs involved with maintaining proposed play equipment (SGC and Town Council officers to provide). At the January meeting, the intention would be to make recommendations to Full Council regarding the project (for consideration at the March Full Council meeting).

(It was noted that the Climate & Nature Committee would consider the climate and nature aspects of the Streamside Improvements project in at its next meeting.)

OS2526.58 TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO THE HEDGE CUTTING REGIMES ON TOWN COUNCIL LAND

In relation to the hedge cutting regimes on Town Council land, the following was **RESOLVED** by majority vote:

- To agree to the suggested changes in the hedge cutting regimes as set out in the officer report, with the additional action that officers would work with the Tree Warden, Cllr Chris Bloor, to identify hedges which included Elm trees and ensure that these were maintained at below 2m in height.
- To note that Avon Wildlife Trust were carrying out hedge surveys on some hedges on Town Council land and to delegate authority to officers to proceed with any cost-neutral hedge works suggested by Avon Wildlife Trust.
- To delegate authority to officers to engage contractors to carry out Winter 2025 hedge works in line with the agreed regimes, with officers acting within the Financial Regulations when engaging contractors, and with expenditure being within the £7000 already set aside for hedge works (as a previously agreed overspend to the Open Spaces Maintenance Budget 130/4150).

OS2526.59 TO CONSIDER A REQUEST TO HOLD A JUNIOR PARKRUN ON SUNDAY MORNINGS AT THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS

In relation to the request to hold a Junior Parkrun on Sunday Mornings at the Mundy Playing Fields, it was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to agree to the request.

OS2526.60 TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO SEATING ON TOWN COUNCIL LAND

- **To Consider Options for a Replacement Seat on Rock Street Garden**

It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to proceed with the purchase of a bespoke bench made from FSC certified hardwood by a local supplier at a cost of £1068 plus VAT to be funded from the Site & Property/Street Furniture (4595/130) budget.

- **To Note and Ratify an Officer Response to Comments Regarding Planned Seating on Oakleaze Green**

It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to note and ratify an officer response to comments received regarding planned seating on Oakleaze Green, in relation to potential antisocial behaviour and littering. The Committee confirmed that officers should proceed as planned with the installation of the seating and that levels of litter should be kept under review by grounds staff.

OS2526.61 TO CONSIDER QUOTES FOR REPLACEMENT FENCING AROUND THE TWO PUBLIC TENNIS COURTS AT THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS

In relation to replacement fencing around the two public courts at the Mundy Playing Fields, the Committee **RESOLVED** by majority vote to request that officers carry out a thorough survey of the fencing with a view to making repairs to the existing posts and/or re-concreting them in place to defer the need for complete replacement of the fencing.

OS2526.62 TO CONSIDER COMMITTEE BUDGET REQUIREMENTS FOR 2026/2027

The Committee noted the draft Committee budget for 2026/2027 provided by the Chief Executive & Responsible Financial Officer. The Committee requested some further information on two items, to be provided out of meeting. Otherwise, it was **RESOLVED** by majority vote that the Committee did not wish to make any further requests or amendments to the draft budget for Open Spaces (with the exception of an increase of £5000 to the Play Equipment Maintenance 4410 budget in 2026/2027, to allow for the Streamleaze play area refurbishment budget to be £75,000 rather than £70,000 – see resolution under item OS2526.66).

OS2526.63 TO CONSIDER DRAFT WALK LEAFLETS PRODUCED BY WALKERS ARE WELCOME SUPPORTED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL

In relation to the draft walk leaflets produced by Walkers Are Welcome, with support from the Town Council, it was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to agree to the leaflets being published, with the inclusion of a waiver. It was noted that the Town Council would print copies of the leaflets on normal paper, and Walkers are Welcome could apply for a grant for any additional or enhanced printing requirements. It was also noted that signage for the walks could be considered further in due course.

OS2526.64 TO RATIFY THE OUT OF MEETING DECISION TO AMEND THE TYPE AND POSITIONING OF THE STORAGE STRUCTURE FOR THE FOOTBALL CLUB AT THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS

It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to ratify the out of meeting decision to amend the type and positioning of the storage structure for the Football Club at the Mundy Playing Fields, as detailed in the officer report.

OS2526.65 TO PASS A RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FOR THE REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS DUE TO THE COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE CONTRACTED

It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to pass a resolution to exclude members of the public and press for the remaining agenda items due to the commercially sensitive nature of the business to be contracted.

OS2526.66 TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE STREAMLEAZE PLAY AREA

- **To Agree to Proceed with the Refurbishment of the Streamleaze Play Area**
It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to proceed with the refurbishment of Streamleaze Play Area.
- **To Agree a Budget for the Project (Subject to Final Agreement During Budget Setting for 2026/2027) and Agree the Design Brief**
It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to recommend to the Finance & General Purpose Committee that the budget for this refurbishment project be increased to £75,000 which would require an increase of £5000 to the Play Equipment Maintenance 4410 budget in 2026/2027.
It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to agree the Design Brief as circulated with the meeting papers, with the following amendments/additions:
 - the basketball hoop be replaced with combined basketball hoop and football posts
 - additional path works to allow hard surface routes from entrance gates to seating
 - request that the design include some sensory elements
- **To Agree to Make a Recommendation to Full Council to Allocate Funds from an Existing Ear Marked Reserve to the Project (EMR 355 Play Equipment)**
It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to make a recommendation to Full Council to allocate funds (£35,000) from an existing Ear Marked Reserve to the project (EMR 355 Play Equipment).
- **To Agree to an Electronic Tender Process**
It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to allow an electronic tender process.
- **To Agree to Delegate Authority to Officers to Prepare all Other Tender Documentation**
It was **RESOLVED** by majority vote to delegate authority to officers to prepare all other tender documentation.

OS2526.67 TO NOTE THAT THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ITEMS TO THE DEPUTY CLERK FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT AGENDA IS WEDNESDAY 7 JANUARY 2026

The deadline for submission of items to the Deputy Clerk for inclusion in the next agenda was noted to be Wednesday 7 January 2026.

OS2526.68 TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY 20 JANUARY 2026

The date of the next meeting was noted to be Tuesday 20 January 2026.

The meeting closed at 21.15.