

**Otley Town Council**

**Environment & Sustainability Committee**

**Date: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

**Report: Gallows Hill Maintenance and Insurance**

**Report by: Community Development (Deputy Executive Officer)**

**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 To inform members of vermin control requirements and insurance needs at the Gallows Hill Nature Area.

**2. Background**

2.1 The Gallows Hill Nature Area is in the ownership of Otley Town Council. A strategic plan, adopted by the Town Council and the Friends of Gallows Hill, sets out planned works for the site.

2.2 In relation to maintenance, there is an issue of damage being caused to the site habitat and wildlife by the presence of grey squirrel and mink. There are steps required to control the squirrel and minx population on the site and these works must be carried out by a pest control professional using humane methods.

2.3 The current site contractor is able to provide these control services and the Council need to appoint the contractor to undertake this work.

2.4 In addition to the monthly on-site work parties with Open Country and the Friends of Gallows Hill, there is a planned programme of events to take place on the Gallows Hill site during 2016 organised by the Friends of Gallows Hill, including: Forest School events; amphibian safaris; small mammal trapping; bat walks; fungus trails etc.

2.5 It is the responsibility of the Town Council to ensure that all leaders and participants taking part in on-site activities are covered under the Council's Public Liability Insurance. The Executive Officer will be ensuring that all events taking place on the Gallows Hill site are included on the Town Council's Insurance for 2016.

### **3. Legal and Financial implications**

3.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report. An amount of £3k has been set aside in the 2015/16 budget as agreed at July's revised budget setting meeting for maintenance works at Gallows Hill. The total cost required for the vermin control amounts to £250.

3.2 The cost for insuring all event leaders and participants at events will form part of the Town Council's Public Liability Insurance, to be agreed by the Executive Officer with the Insurer.

### **4. Recommendations**

4.1 Members are asked to note the content of this report and approve the appointment of the Council's contractor at a cost of £250 to undertake vermin control on the site through use of the Gallows Hill budget.

4.2 Members to note that all participants in the planned events programme and working party days on the site be covered by the Town Council under its Public Liability Insurance.