

HAYDON WICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee of Haydon Wick Parish Council held on Tuesday 9th February 2021 at 7.30pm remotely via Teams.

ATTENDENCE

MEMBERS: Councillors R Hailstone (Chairman), E Baker Lee, L Brown, S Heyes, J Jackson, A John, V Manro, R Ross and R Venkatesh

OFFICERS: Clerk, Georgina Morgan-Denn
Deputy Clerk, Laura Cutter
Head of Parks & Open Spaces, David Hunt

AL 094

APOLOGIES

No apologies were received from Councillor K T Naik.
7.32pm Councillor L Brown left the meeting due to technical issues.

AL 095

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor R Hailstone declared an interest in Item 8 – Graffiti; Request to paint underpasses.

7.34pm Councillor L Brown rejoined the meeting

AL 096

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were two members of the public present, both made representation. One member of the public would like the Committee to consider a proposal for the underpass that links Haydon End to Mouldon Hill to be used as a dedicated area for students who study street art/graffiti to practice their talent and make the area more appealing. Approaching this method would build relationships between the Youth, Parish Council and the Police and save on the maintenance costs of removing obscene graffiti. Once graffiti work has been undertaken, it would be well respected within the street art community and look after itself. The member of public was willing to dedicate some time as a volunteer to oversee the project and would observe the discussion in Item 8 – Graffiti; Request to paint underpasses.

Another member of the public submitted their questions in advance, and these were read to the meeting.

1) What is the rationale in hiring a grass cutting machine at £10,000 per annum?

At the Full Council meeting in October 2017 where the grass cutting contract vs in house services were discussed and rationalised. The minutes advise that the benefits of leasing were the warranty period, the ease of running for a certain period (3 years or 5 years) meaning there was flexibility, the need to restore the reputation of the Council and the options could be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis, seemed to be the correct decision made at the time. It appears that leasing machinery such as this is a common practice amongst parish councils due to the warranty period received and the ease of running for a certain period of time before obtaining new mowers or re-evaluating the needs of the Council.

2) If the machine is out of action due to breakdown, is there an immediate replacement available?

There is no replacement included in our lease if one of the mowers breaks down. We will be down to one mower and the operative that does not have a mower will be out strimming/push mowing. Two mowers are sufficient for the size of our Parish, approximately 400 hectares.

3) If not are the council reimbursed on a pro rata rate for time lost?

No. This is not a condition of the lease.

4) Is there any future consideration to purchase a grass cutting machine?

Once the lease has ended (in 2022/2023) then we will undertake the due diligence in line with the search for a new depot etc. This is a standard practice for Parish Councils in line with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to make sure operationally business is conducted fairly and to a suitable standard.

5) Have all the overhanging tree and bush growth been cut back to 2 metres on the Seven Fields paths?

We will ask the Head of Parks & Open Spaces to ensure that Seven Fields is cut regularly in line with the schedule and that a full cut back of the areas is completed before the mowing starts in the spring.

Additional queries at the meeting regarding the role of the Hybrid Operative and to note the works being done by Central Swindon North Parish Council to remove an abandoned vehicle at Seven Fields.

AL 097

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

AL 098

MINUTES

Members received and approved the minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 12th January 2021.

Proposed: Councillor E Baker Lee Seconded: Councillor R Ross

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the Amenities & Leisure Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 12th January 2021 be agreed and signed as a correct record when physical meetings resume.

AL 099

COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor V Manro

Reported that there was a burst water main on Thames Avenue this morning. The Fire Service and Thames Water responded to the incident quickly. There may be four homes that have been evacuated as a safety precaution.

City Fiber continue to build shallow trenches for connecting fiber to properties within parish over next few months. Have left previous sites tidy.

Swindon Borough Council's LED street lighting program is now being rolled out in Haydon Wick, some columns may be replaced if they are not able to accommodate the new bulbs.

Councillor S Heyes

Conducted a site visits to Thames Avenue and KGV Play Area with Councillor J Jackson today. Requested that Councillor D Renard writes to Thames Water asking why this is the third water main to burst along Thames Avenue in a short period of time. During site visits, noticed some brooks overflowing from the excess water and reported to Swindon Borough Council.

- Councillor J Jackson** Visited King George V Play Area, the Contractors have made good progress and some photos have been shared on Teams. Emphasized the quality of the workmanship at KGV Play Area, the resurfacing should be completed within the next few days. The area has been kept very neat and tidy, would recommend Vita Play.
- Councillor A John** Confirmed that the flooding on Thames Avenue had been dealt with swiftly by all services involved.
- Councillor R Hailstone** Thanked the Parks & Open Spaces Team for gritting footpaths that were becoming icy because of the burst water main. Pleased to hear that the incidents are being reported by Councillor D Renard. Advised the Committee of a recent article in the Swindon Advertiser regarding funding for remediation works on drainage to avoid flooded areas in heavy down pours. *Councillor S Heyes confirmed that the works will alleviate high density built up areas suppressing down on the drainage.*

AL 100

CLERK'S REPORT

Appraisals - Parks & Open Spaces Team (POST) Appraisals were completed in January by the Deputy Clerk and Head of POST. SMART objectives were set for 2021/2022 and several objectives are to be completed by the end of March before the peak in grounds maintenance commences.

Vehicle Washdown SBC - Received official confirmation from SBC that the cost of using the washdown facility has doubled from £20.00 per month to £40.00 per month. This is consistent with the use from other parish councils and reflects 4 tippers and 2 smaller vehicles. Due to the short notice, January's invoice was credited and there will be no costs for February and March. The budget for 2021/2022 for future costs has been amended to accommodate the extra costs. *Suggestion from Councillor V Manro to do a price comparison against a local car washing facility before approving the additional costs with Swindon Borough Council. The Committee agreed to do a comparison but felt that £10.00 per week was good value to wash down 5 vehicles with jet wash facilities as due to the nature of the vehicles they do require a powerful wash down.*

Life Cycle & SBC Partnership – Bike Stands - Life Cycle & SBC are working together to provide free bike stands for public places to promote cycling as a green and safe way to travel during the pandemic. The Parish Council could apply for a couple of bike stands to be put inside the allotments, or other public places within our parish, such as the skatepark. Unless there are any objections we will commence with the applications.

Bin Grant - The Parish Council was approached by various commercial companies advising of a potential bin grant for the trial of smart bins. Upon further research, parish councils are not eligible for this grant, so we cannot apply at this stage. We will look at other potential grants as the benefits of this would help with scheduling, gather statistics of usage, alerts

when bin is on fire/tipped over, confirmation of when the bin was last emptied, etc.

ASDA Orbital Centre - Residents have contacted us about overcrowding at Asda – the matter was raised with Councillor D Renard who confirmed public health have been to see them and it was disappointing to hear that little appears to have changed. Councillor D Renard is following this up.

VO7 Casterbridge Road 2020 - A package for the parking restrictions work by SBC Highways has been drawn up and the works is planned to take place shortly, the overall date depends on the weather conditions.

The remainder of the Clerk's report would continue in the confidential section towards the end of the agenda.

8.30pm Clerk left the meeting and the Deputy Clerk continued.

AL 101

GRAFFITI – REQUEST TO PAINT UNDERPASSES

The Committee discussed a request received to dedicate one of the subways within the parish to urban graffiti artists to practice their skills and to add some decoration to the subways. If done correctly this would prevent further graffiti and be easily maintained. The general feel of the meeting was that this was a good way to engage with the young persons within the parish and that if managed correctly, could build up a good relationship and reduce the need for maintenance on the subway. The meeting discussed the most practical subway would be the one next to the Skate Park on Westfield Way as it is in proximity to be monitored regularly by the Parks & Open Spaces Team in case of any obscene graffiti, has regular security presence in case of any anti-social behaviour and is a nice gateway into Haydonleigh Skate Park, complimenting the graffiti wall. The Council already has a graffiti wall policy so this could be extended for the provision of one subway to start with. Permission would need to be sought from Swindon Borough Council.

The activity could be overseen during workshops or with volunteer assistance from parents. It was agreed not to overarch the policies to ensure that this runs smoothly and is not seen to be too strict that it does not welcome or attract the graffiti artists. Westfield Way underpass could be a trial area and if it does not work out as planned it can return to the usual maintenance agreement. Due to the potential controversy of this suggestion it was agreed to recommend this to Full Council for final approval.

Proposed: Councillor S Heyes Seconded: Councillor J Jackson

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council that subject to permissions from Swindon Borough Council, the graffiti policy be extended to enable graffiti workshops, sessions, and urban graffiti to take place at the underpass on Westfield Way.

AL 102

GRASS & HEDGE CUTTING AND WINTER PROJECTS

The Committee noted the Officers' Grass & Hedge Cutting report and received a verbal update from the Head of POST on the winter projects and work scheduling for January – March 2021.

AL 103

PARKS & PROJECTS

The Committee noted the Officers' report. There were no recommendations for the Committee to consider. An update was given on the KGV Resurfacing Project and the Footpath Project, which will be progressed in the background and reported to a future Committee meeting.

AL 104

HEAD OF POST REPORT

The Committee noted the Officers' report. The Head of POST advised the Committee of the works completed from the 12th January to date. The Council discussed the increase in usage of the public litter bins during the third national lockdown. Discussions are being held with the Clerk regarding weekend working for the peak months. A reminder to Councillors that the winter projects lists can be added to by emailing items for attention to tidyup@haydonwick.gov.uk

AL 105

COVID-19 MEMORIAL PROJECT

The Committee discussed Councillor V Manro's proposal of creating a Covid-19 Memorial within the Parish. The project will involve planting cherry blossom trees, installing sleeper benches and a flower bed next to Orchid Vale Care Home. After discussion, the consensus was that the project would be a great tribute to those who sadly lost their lives due to the virus and would be a nice place for residents to sit and remember them. The Council will also develop a competition for posters and plaques to be displayed at the site detailing 'what Covid-19 and the year 2020 meant to them'. The Committee approved the proposal subject to Swindon Borough Council's permission on the use of the land. The decision will be reported to the Full Council to offer any additional ideas or to be aware of the project.

Proposed: Councillor V Manro Seconded: Councillor A John

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- 1. To purchase the saplings, tree supports, guards and additional materials for a cost of £822.20 using existing budget [4309/307].**
- 2. To plant five Great White Cherry Blossom Trees in a semi-circle at the proposed location next to Orchid Vale Care home off Torun Way/ Guernsey Lane before the end of March 2021, allowing an extra season for them to grow.**
- 3. To agree to purchase items now for Phase 2 to be completed in the 2021 Winter Projects list. Purchases to the value of £1950.00 using available funds in [4301/307].**

AL 106

ISSUES WITH DOG WASTE

The Committee discussed the increase in dog fouling recently. The Chair reminded the meeting of the notices in place and the enforcement log being compiled to gather statistics of reoccurring areas. The Head of Parks & Open Spaces confirmed there is still an issue with the wildflower are on Old Blunsdon Road. Areas for consideration for notices and a clean should be sent to tidyup@haydonwick.gov.uk.

AL 107

MOULDON HILL COUNTRY PARK – FOREST MEADOWS PROJECT

The meeting received a verbal update on a developments from the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. The project will be promoted on social media with a call out for volunteers.

Councillor V Manro updated on Swindon Borough Council's plans to enhance Mouldon Hill in 2022/2023 and 2023/2024. Discussions are taking place on extending the railway to the Taw Hill halt, increasing the sports provision, resurfacing the car park, clearing overgrown vegetation to utilize the full space that Mouldon has to offer and the potential installation of a café for visitors. The Parish Council should be involved with the

discussions and decision making with Swindon Borough Council during the planning stages and should consider whether it wishes to take on more of the services at Mouldon Hill.

AL 108

SEVEN FIELDS

Councillor E Baker Lee advised that local artist Marilyn Trew is designing bespoke maps and it would be beneficial for the Parish Council to invest in one to map out the Seven Fields. The Seven Fields Conservation Group is in favour of this idea. As the Parish Council maintain Seven Fields and are building sustainable working relationships with the Conservation Group it was agreed the cost of £50.00 for the maps, would be met from the Parks & Open Spaces budget 4308/307.

AL 109

OPERATIONAL BUDGET MONITORING

Members received and noted Month 9 & 10 income and expenditure report for Parks & Open Spaces cost centres.

AL 110

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

To be sent to the Clerk in advance of the next meeting.

AL 111

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

RESOLVED: In accordance with Standing Order 3 (d) that 'in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted and in the public interest, that the press and public be temporarily excluded, and they be instructed to withdraw'. Reason: Confidential

AL 112

CONFIDENTIAL CLERK'S REPORT

The Deputy Clerk continued the Clerk's report:

Insurance Update - The Council has accepted the £9,000 (less policy excess) for the stolen vehicle but the tracker claim would need to be a separate claim which is not worth pursuing because of the excess.

HR Update – A member of the team is no longer employed by the Council and a seasonal replacement is being considered by the Clerk.

Tree Issue - Rosemary Close – ongoing issue and the Head of POST is contacting the Environment Agency as a last resort.

AL 114

POST DEPOT FEASIBILITY

The Committee received a verbal update and discussions are underway with Pre-Planning at Swindon Borough Council. Financial information is still being obtained and not yet ready to share.

AL 115

KING GEORGE V (KGV) PLAY PARK INSTALLATION OF ACCESIBLE PLAY EQUIPMENT

The Committee noted the Officers' report on the progress of the installation of accessible play equipment and a change to supplier of the basket swing, due the turnaround time and unknown delivery costs when initially agreed by Committee last month.

The meeting closed at 21.02

Chairman: