

HAYDON WICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parks & Open Spaces Committee meeting of Haydon Wick Parish Council held on Tuesday 5th November 2024.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS: Councillors R Hailstone (Chair), S Heyes (Vice Chair), J Ali, J Jackson, A John, V Manro, R Ross, L Stevenson and R Worman

OFFICERS: Georgina Morgan-Denn, Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO
Laura Cutter, Deputy Clerk and Services Manager
Andy Nickols, Head Groundsman
Jason Watts, Facility Manager

POS 055 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and noted from Councillors E Baker Walker and R Ross (Personal Commitments). Councillor J Ali sent apologies during the meeting due to an urgent personal matter. There were no apologies from Councillor O Munagala.

POS 056 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

POS 057 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were four (4) members of the public present to address the Committee on the following issues:

1. **Environmental Health Untidy Waste at Akers Way:** Residents are aware the Parish Council is not directly responsible for household recycling, but blue bin bags are left outside their properties and foxes/rodents are going through them causing litter to be widely dispersed around the local area. They have written to SBC directly, however, there has been no response to date. Last week they contacted Parish Council to visit the area and they cleared the litter in the car park – they were grateful for this but within a few days the litter was back. It was clarified that blue bags are issued those households when a wheelie bin cannot be used – reasons given were narrow footpaths or steps etc. Residents feel there is an environmental issue as the waste is unsanitary and needs to be escalated to Environmental Health. When they've spoken to SBC they directed the resident to the Parish Council despite the responsibility being SBC's. *Action: Officers took the resident's contact details and will escalate the matter to the SBC Ward Councillors.*
2. **White Eagle Road Cycle Path:** cats are being attacked by dogs whilst off leads during daily walks. There are a lot of cats within the area and they are being chased, owners are not keeping an eye on the dog's behaviour. Property purchased due to the pet safety away from main roads, so this is disappointing and concerning. Have spoken to dog walkers directly but some are coming across very rude and not understanding the issues. They quoted there is provision in law for dogs not to attack humans or other dogs/farm animals, but there is no provision about dogs attacking other people's pets. It was clarified that if a dog is uncontrolled they could escalate it to the authorities but it is difficult to police. Meeting confirmed this will be discussed in later in the meeting but Councillors were in agreement to install some signage to help. Suggested wording: Sign to say "Be responsible for animals and keep them under control". *Action: Officers will ask SBC Dog Wardens to patrol the area for a trial period to see if this assists.*
3. **Banned driver driving on public path behind Moredon Park:** in public path linking to Jasmine Close near Basil Close Play Area. The incident has been published in the Swindon Advertiser. Banned driver is driving on the public path and had an incident with the resident's daughter. The police are

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investigating the issue and a case has been logged. It was reported the household has remove a large area of the hedgerow to allow the car to have access to their property. They cannot drive on the main roads because they are banned. The Housing Officer from SBC is due to do a Home Visit and they will escalate it to the Enforcement Team. They are concerned for all the residents in the area. *Action: Officers to escalate the incident to SBC Ward Councillors and assist the family. Heads Groundsman to conduct a site visit to check on the hedgerow removal.*

Members of the public left at 19:50.

POS 058 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

POS 059 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members reviewed the minutes of the Parks and Opens Spaces Committee meeting held on Tuesday 3rd September 2024 as a true record.

Proposed: Councillor A John

Seconded: Councillor J Jackson

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: Members confirmed as a true record the minutes held on Tuesday 3rd September and they were signed by the Chairman.

POS 060 SEVEN FIELDS

Their committee meeting is on 7th November 2024 so will report back issues at a future meeting. Issues with flooding, possibility of putting bark in these areas to mitigate against this and help protect the desire paths.

POS 061 PARKS & OPEN SPACES REPORT

Introduced the Head Groundsman and Facility Manager to the meeting in their new roles and currently stepping up since the Head of Parks & Open Spaces left mid-October.

Daily Jobs: discussed the new Parks & Open Spaces Reporting System which logs the turnaround time and monitors the time it takes to complete the jobs.

Grass Cutting: mowers recently been serviced, currently doing the split rounds to increase efficiency, likely to come to an end middle of this month, currently the ground is ok and there hasn't been any rainfall.

Winter projects: examples were given with a reminder to all Councillors to send any Winter Project ideas and Tidy Up cases through to tidyup@haydonwick.gov.uk to avoid lengthy discussions at committee meetings.

Hedges: confirmed we have had the tractor for 12 months and achieved quite a lot. Have done one complete round of the whole parish. They have had 20 days in Oakhurst and started planning more accurately rather than guessing and using data, this includes major reductions in Voyager and Queen Elizabeth as well. Had 11 days in Taw Hill /Haydon End so far, 10 priority jobs had to be taken on due to safety risk or ongoing public enquiries. On schedule, despite losing 6 days due to problems with the tractor, the company came out to repair this quickly. Up time for tractor use is currently running at 87%. Continue with Taw Hill and coming through Haydon Wick and Greenmeadow, then returning to Abbey Meads. Concentrating on footpaths. *Action: Officers start updating the schedules again and publish widely.*

Tools: compiling a detailed asset list confirming repairs, replacements and removals due to being unfit for purpose. A wish list of new tools has been generated and in priority order, the list presented is what is needed immediately and those which can be added to the budget aspiration for 25/26. Members discussed the safe storage of the tools to include maintenance plans to keep them safe and well maintained.

Wildflower area in Hyssop Close email: will be dealt with on the last cut for this season. This will enable time for a site visit. Tall trees, but away from properties. Open area and is going with the tree line and foxes would be in there as enclosed. Reduce height and continue to monitor.

Proposed: Councillor J Jackson

Seconded: Councillor S Heyes

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: To approve the list of tools as presented totaling £1,570.00 (current remaining budget £1,639.00) coded to 4615/307.

POS 062

DEPUTY CLERK & SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

Additional update on Catmint Close hedge cutting enquiry which cannot be completed due to the wet ground. It was noted there is a fence supported by the hedgerow so there needs to be some caution before any removals. Attended, with the Chief Officer, Wiltshire Association of Local Council's conference today in Devizes. Pleased to hear a presentation from Benjamin's Smiles which showed some of our play area photos in the slideshows and examples of best working practices.

POS 063

COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor J Jackson – Liaising with Head Groundsman about some debris under pylons.

Councillor L Stevenson – Attended Memory Cafe Decade Disco in Penhill lots of music and happy faces. Nice atmosphere. Also went to our Half Term Sublime Science session which was attended by 30 children. Had a walk around at Seven Fields

Councillor V Manro – areas in the parish are looking nice and public reporting has dropped. Our visibility is better as we are spread across the parish every day and it is making a difference.

Councillor R Hailstone – a lot of leaves across the parish so assumed the street sweeper is off the road. Confirmed it has been as waiting for a part for last couple of weeks. Now we have back-up parts to reduce time in the future. *Action: Facility Manager to consider recycling some of the leaves in the allotments as mulch – it must be 100% organic and could save trips to Waterside.*

No representation at parish activities meetings or events this month:

Councillor R Worman

Councillor A John

POS 064

PARKS & OPEN SPACES MAINTENANCE SCHEDULES

Discussed in the agenda item above.

POS 065

SENSORY GARDEN/COMMUNITY PLOT, GOODEARL

Members wish to hold off on any work until the GMF is in the last phase of works to keep the area tidy. They agreed to approve the budget and to schedule the work as required. *Action: To ask the contractors if we can use their digger.*

Proposed: Councillor J Jackson

Seconded: Councillor V Manro

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: To approve the cost of £450.00 for rotavating and flattening the ground on the Community Plot and seeding with grass to be met from the Community Choices budget 4629/402.

POS 066

REQUEST FOR A BUS SHELTER ON TORUN WAY

Committee received a report from Councillor V Manro regarding a request from local school pupils for a bus shelter at the bus stop on Torun Way. The pupils signed a petition and received support from the school's administration. Councillor Manro suggested using CIL Funds which have previously been allocated to Bus Stop Improvements. Bus shelters can be used as part of a bee corridor and have a green roof/ wildflower area and the maintenance regime would need to be determined, these are extremely popular in other areas and can enhance the local area, as not much green space due to it being

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dense in houses. Planning restraints may need to be considered. Bus shelter is important, and members suggested going for the mesh material, which keeps the rain off and is better for graffiti. Plants will need to be cost effective, low maintenance and height would need to be a consideration.

Proposed: Councillor V Manro

Seconded: Councillor A John

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To allocate Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds for the installation of a bus shelter on Torun Way, as requested by students from Bradon Forest School and supported by the school administration.

To allocate up to £6,099.00 from the CIL budget for the bus shelter installation and £1,000.00 from the biodiversity budget for ongoing maintenance and environmental enhancements, including the expansion of the local bee corridor initiative.

POS 067

PARKS & PROJECTS TEAM UPDATE

Noted the update from the Parks & Projects Team.

POS 068

PLAY AREA WORKING PARTY UPDATE

The Working Party recently met to discuss current budgets and future aspirations. They want to submit aspirations for an Outdoor Gym with potential cost in the remit of £80,000.00 for the highest specification. It was noted that the Working Party is still discussing the specifications and there is currently a large discrepancy in prices based on the type of equipment, fixtures and resistance. More realistic costs will be needed budget setting.

Action: Officers to set up a 'request for a quotation' meeting with a supplier to get some indicative costs for budget setting.

Members discussed, noted and recommended actioning the repairs that are needed across various play areas utilising the existing play area repairs budget. These items include:

1. £2,696.60 for two seesaws for Doyle and Village play areas.
2. £1,950.00 spinning bowls at Doyle, Capesthorne, Wick Farm and White Eagle play areas.
3. £1,980.00 for inclusive play panels at Capesthorne Play Area.
4. £840.00 for a replacement net at Village Play Area.
5. £1,104.00 for six (6) Gate Mechanisms.
6. £500.00 for the Skate Park graffiti improvements.
7. £3000.00 to be left as contingency for repairs throughout 2025

Total £9873.60.

Proposed: Councillor S Heyes

Seconded: Councillor V Manro

Vote: Agreed with one (1) abstention.

RESOLVED: To approve the repair costs across the above Play Areas to the value of £9.873.60 costs to be met from the existing repair budget 4305/302.

POS 069

GROUND MAINTENANCE FACILITY

Members heard that the Council has managed to secure free furniture from a local office in the town centre which was closing because their workers are going to be working remotely. They provided us with lockers, desks, cabinets, whiteboards and it's all in brilliant condition. Still waiting for final costs for the kitchen specification and updated project timelines following the installation of the Phase 3 electricity supply. Members noted the update from the Council's solicitor. After receiving feedback remotely from the Working Party, and in view of the time constraints, the Chief Officer has given instructions to the solicitor to proceed with the standard wayleave application. It was acknowledged that the Solicitor had advised on more amendments to the legal document however due to the time constraints and limited time to now access the Public Works loan, the majority of the Working Party were happy to proceed, despite showing caution from the Chief Officer and the Council's legal advice. The Working Party's

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rationale was if SSE and SBC were happy with the standard wayleave form then the Parish Council is happy to proceed.

The Chief Officer reported she had received confirmation from SBC's legal director just prior to the meeting to say they were happy with this approach. The Parish Council is now waiting to hear from SSE as to when the 3-Phase electrical installation will take place.

Members were reminded that the initial application to SSE was made in May and followed up with SBC in June. There then followed a two-month delay caused by no acknowledgement from SBC. The Parish Council will now incur additional rental charges at Waterside due to delays. The Chairman due to meet with SBC's CEO and will request they authorise waiving the additional two months' rental fees because of the delays which were beyond the Parish Council's control.

POS 070

BUDGET ASPIRATIONS

The Committee will recommend to Full Council the following aspirations:

- Outdoor Gym - £80,000.00
- Brookfield Play Area, Bark Surfacing - £30,000.00
- Tractor & Flail (Hire, Purchase, 5y Lease) – Cost TBC
- Weed Spraying (3 sprays) - £37,500.00
- Tools/ Equipment - £8,000.00 (£6,900.00 on wish list plus £1,100.00 contingency)
- Permissive Path through Tadpole Field £1,000.00

POS 071

OPERATIONAL BUDGET MONITORING

Councillor R Worman requested clarification on the £41,000.00 transfer from Ear Marked Reserves into the budget. The Chief Officer explained the process of EMRs, explaining that these are itemised under a separate list. Members were also reminded of the update given in October's Full Council that there is currently a projected underspend of approximately £40,000 in the budget this year rather than using the budgeted subsidy of £40,000 from General Reserves. However, a lot can change in six months, and this was a projected underspend. It was also noted that the recent Budget increase in Employer National Insurance contributions for parish and town councils will impact significantly on future budgets. *Action: Chief Officer to circulate the current balances of EMRs to Councillor R Worman.*

POS 072

POS ACTION REVIEW SUMMARY

Members noted the Parks & Open Spaces Action Review Summary.

POS 073

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

To be received prior to the next meeting on 7th January 2025.

POS 074

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

There were none present.

POS 075

WEED SPRAYING

Members received the report and had a thorough debate discussing the most effective method, frequency of sprays, timescales and the chemicals being proposed. Members noted the costs and various options to submit a budget aspiration for 2025/2026. Being presented was a trial period for 12 months, during this time two applications or three applications could be applied. Members agreed to submit the aspiration for three applications (£37,500.00) whilst further research and discussions are pending. The Grounds Maintenance Working Party will meet to discuss the specification in more detail and submit a more accurate aspiration for the budget.

Proposed: Councillor S Heyes

Seconded: Councillor L Stevenson

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

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RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council to submit a budget aspiration for £37,500.00 for three weed spraying applications in 2025/2026.

POS 076

TREE SURVEY

The last tree survey took place in 2020 and is due to be renewed in 2025. Four companies were contacted, two did not respond, one is unable to complete the work as they no longer have a Tree Surveyor. One supplier submitted a quote for £6,365.00 – they are a trusted supplier of the Council and have conducted tree works on the Council's behalf for several years.

Members confirmed that the Officers had shown best practice for collecting quotations and appreciated in previous years it has also been hard to obtain tree quotations from multiple contractors due to the nature and business of their work. After discussion, it was agreed to proceed with the quotation and to continue with the Tree Survey as soon as possible. It was acknowledged there are resident requests on the trees due to be surveyed, and it would be easier to assess all works and quotations as a project rather than separately.

Proposed: Councillor V Manro

Seconded: Councillor J Jackson

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: To accept the quotation from Cotswold Tree Surgeons to conduct the 2025 – 2030 Tree Survey, at a cost of £6,365.00 to be met from 4301/307.

POS 077

GROUND MAINTENANCE FACILITY

Discussed in earlier agenda item.

POS 078

TADPOLE LANE – IMPROVEMENTS TO ACCESS/PROPOSED PLANS

Councillor R Hailstone gave an update on previous discussions of including a permissive path throughout Tadpole Field, this would include eastern access improvements (Boatman Close) and work on the vehicle gate. There would also be some requirement for signage and register as a permissive path with SBC. Members agreed to recommend to Full Council submitting an aspiration for £1,000.00 for this project.

Meeting Closed at: 21.21

Signed by Chairman: _____