

HAYDON WICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parks & Open Spaces Committee meeting of Haydon Wick Parish Council held on Tuesday 7th November 2023.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS: Councillors S Heyes (Chair), J Ali, E Baker-Walker, A Jimmy, A John, V Manro, Omkar Munagala, P Park, R Ross and R Worman.

OFFICERS: Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO, Georgina Morgan-Denn
Head of Parks & Open Spaces, Dave Hunt
Meetings Administrator, Julie Coe

POS 112 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and noted from Councillors R Hailstone (Personal Commitments).

POS 113 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

Councillor J Ali joined at 19.33 and Councillor O Munagala at 19.39.

POS 114 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were two (2) members of the public present. The residents attended to communicate their concerns to do with Agenda Item 20 – Thames Avenue Tree. The residents presented a case for the removal of the large oak tree next to their property. Members asked the residents a few questions and the Chairman thanked them for coming. It was confirmed that the matter would be discussed later in the meeting and that they would be contacted on Wednesday with the next steps.

Members of the public left at 19.55.

POS 115 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

POS 116 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members reviewed the minutes of the Parks and Opens Spaces Committee meeting held on Tuesday 10th October 2023 and the Chair of the Committee signed the minutes as a true record.

Proposed: Councillor E Baker-Walker Seconded: Councillor A John

Vote: Agreed with five (5) Abstentions.

RESOLVED: Members confirmed as a true record the minutes held on Tuesday 10th October 2023 and they were signed by the Chairman.

POS 117 SEVEN FIELDS

There will be two Park Runs over the festive period at the Seven Fields, the dates of these will be the 25th December 2023 and 1st January 2024.

POS 118 HEAD OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES REPORT

Daily Work Sheets September 2023 - 57 tasks carried forward from September. 63 new cases in October, 76 completed in October with 65 carried forward into November.

Tidy Up Team - The team continues to bolster the shrub/tree team assisting with overgrown shrubs and hedges after completion of litter and bins. Tasks of

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litter picking, bin emptying, graffiti removal and fly tipping removal will continue as normal throughout the winter season.

Vehicles - The Goupil (electric vehicle) has been repaired and is fully functional. BP68 MYV Transit Van had the necessary works to complete and pass annual MOT and is back on the road. WD65 UKO Minibus is due MOT 8th November 2023. It was noted there was no contingency in place for service levels if the bus had to remain in the garage. OV23 HYB Tractor had a side arm failure this has been repaired and is fully functional.

KGV & Skate Park Winter Hours - 1st November 2023 until March 2024 will open at 08.30am and close at 5.00pm. HWPC will open and close during the week and the external security team will open and close at weekends and any Bank Holidays.

Trent Road Play Area - The refurbishment on Trent Road Play Area has begun with completion (weather depending) taking no longer than 5 weeks.

Shrub Bed Removal - The shrub bed removal program has been revised with the priority being based on the grounds of health and safety. Commencement for these works will be over the Winter season however date to be advised in due course.

Trent Road Playing Fields - A resident had reported that floodlit lights from the playing fields were causing an annoyance during football training by AFC Haydon Vale. However after investigation it was advised they had not been using floodlights and the resident was duly advised.

POS 119 DEPUTY CLERK AND SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

POS 120 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor V Manro – 7th November 2023 had spent an afternoon with residents of Haydon Court, Sanctuary, and local Police. The purpose was to try to rebuild trust and help reassure vulnerable residents of their safety. There will be a follow up meeting in December 2023.

Councillor A John – Would like it known that 'Bob' the cat recently passed and the family are enquiring about a possible memorial plaque.

Councillor R Ross – Gave thanks to Cllr E Baker-Walker for helping at another successful Haven and advised that the Superhero litter picking event had gone well.

Councillor E Baker-Walker – Advised on attendance of both Memory Café and Haven, some residents would like to see a mix of Councillors attend these events in around work and personal commitments where possible. Councillor E Baker-Walker had also attended the meeting on 7th November 2023 regarding Haydon Court, Sanctuary need to do more and another meeting was arranged for December.

Councillor J Ali – Expressed his support toward a memorial for Bob' the cat.

Councillor P Park – Met with residents of Jason Close and Clementine Close about hedge cutting. Councillor P Park will put a report together and send it to the office. Concerns about the stream were mentioned and it was advised that this should be directed to the Environment Agency.

Councillor A Jimmy – Nothing to report.

Councillor S Heyes – Advised had helped with the Pumpkin Carving event which also went well.

POS 121 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES (POS) SYSTEM AND MAINTENANCE SCHEDULES

Councillor V Manro presented the new POS system that will be on the HWPC website to allow residents to log maintenance concerns and open space issues. Each case will generate a number and if the resident requests they will be given

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feedback on the work that will be undertaken and when. Ideally this could be launched on HWPC website as soon as possible giving the public access to use. Any residents preferring to call in to the office may do so and the admin team will endeavor to log the call on their behalf. Councillors are asked to encourage residents in their areas to use the new case logging process and an update will be given in approximately two months to understand usage and results.

POS 122 WINTER PROJECTS

A spreadsheet was discussed showing all works to be carried out by the Grass Cutting Team when mowing ceases for the season. There will be a focus on low level tree maintenance that falls under the Council's remit. Any fallen trees will be removed and any crown lifting to be a priority. The list of trees outside of the parish council's remit has been collated to go to SBC. They include:

1. Burnet Road
2. Glenmore Road
3. Hamble Road

In addition, Akers Way will be a priority as the laurels are too high and these will be reduced to 3ft.

POS 123 TINY FOREST CREATION – NEXT STEPS

It was noted that Earth Watch (Tiny Forests) will no longer be delivering this project with Swindon Parishes and as of 30th October 2023 Trees for Climate will be taking hold of this project. Therefore, the dense tree planting now won't take place. It was noted that the Grace Walk site had been agreed with Earth Watch and the legal terms signed so this will be progressed. Voyager Drive had an updated site and should there be more community engagement for this it may go ahead after Christmas with Trees for Climate. Finally, a third location at Heaton Close is under investigation. This will be subject to a community consultation and the standard utility searches and may therefore go ahead in the New Year with Trees for Climate. The Parish Council will welcome community involvement in helping with monitoring the woodland and the maintenance. But there will be a budget from SBC to help fund the future tree maintenance. *Action: Head of POS to confirm the income due to the parish.*

POS 124 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES GROUNDS MAINTENANCE FACILITY

Meeting received the following verbal update:

- Awaiting a revised cost plan from the contractor requested full breakdown of any increases, savings etc. Expecting to receive a new itemised tender identifying any increased costs and savings.
- Awaiting a revised programme based on recent update informing us that we do not need to use a crane and if that will affect the programme of works.
- Awaiting confirmation from contractor (who is liaising with the planning authority on our behalf) confirmation that all planning conditions have been met and discharged before we break ground.
- Once all the above is finalised the following items will be brought to working party then to committee/council for final agreement:
 - a. Building contract
 - b. Final costing breakdown with a programme of repayments
 - c. Planning conditions confirmed and discharged.
 - d. Project timeline with breaking ground date

POS 125 OPERATIONAL BUDGET MONITORING

To note budget report for Month 7 (31st October 2023) – no questions were raised.

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POS 126 BUDGET ASPIRATIONS 24/25

Budget aspirations were discussed, and it was favoured (but not yet agreed) to investigate a longer lease on a tractor and flail rather than a purchase. This is because a purchase decision needs to be fully assessed and Council should have at least two seasons' usage before it commits to any significant capital cost. In the meantime, the Head of Parks & Open Spaces will prepare a business case for the budget setting working party to include six and a twelve-month lease cost, full scope of works, justification and to personnel requirements.

The meeting heard the existing lease for the machinery may need to be extended by another three (3) months. This will be added to the Finance & Policy Committee meeting on the 21st November.

There will be an audit of this year's grass cutting schedule to be presented at a future meeting. *Action: Head of POS to prepare tractor and flail case for budget working party by December at the latest.*

POS 127 TREES, BULBS AND WILDFLOWER

Report was received and it was agreed to go with the Officer's recommendations to suspend the extensive parish wide bulb planting due to other parks and spaces taking priority. Fritillarias will be planted along Pond Street. Daffodil bulbs would be planted around the Parish Council office and a new wildflower area will be established (using existing seeds in our stock) on a verge next to Manor Farm and Morrisons.

Proposed: Councillor E Baker-Walker Seconded: Councillor P Park

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To suspend the extensive parish wide bulb planting due to other parks and spaces tasks taking priority this winter. Fritillarias will be planted along Pond Street. Daffodil bulbs would be planted around the Parish Council office and a new wildflower area will be established (using existing seeds in our stock) on a verge next to Manor Farm and Morrisons.

POS 128 LEISURE GARDENS/PLOT HOLDERS MEETING 2023

An update was received following the annual Plot Holders Meeting held in October 2023. The meeting was very well attended however those present had a lot of concerns about the lack of maintenance at all three sites this year and the lack of progress from the actions at the previous years' meeting. There were requests for skips on allotments from several plot holders. It was agreed to send a letter with updates on urgent maintenance work being undertaken to improve the sites and consultation on the possible introduction of skips, shipping containers, water troughs and more. After receiving their feedback, proposals will be discussed at a future meeting. It was noted that future maintenance schedules will be clearly advertised at the sites and on the website and the Head of Parks & Open Spaces must ensure the schedule is met.

POS 129 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

To be passed to the Chief Officer in advance of the next meeting on 9th January 2024.

POS 130 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To resolve 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: Sensitive & Contractual.

POS 131

TREE MATTER

The residents of Thames Avenue have serious issues with the large oak tree next to their property. There are insurance implications for them and they are requesting that the tree is removed. The meeting explained that the land on which the tree is sited belongs to Swindon Borough Council (SBC) and it is their tree. Any potential removal and/or by whom was not discussed as that must be approved by SBC. It was decided by Committee that the best way forward was to advise the residents to commission their own independent report from a structural engineer to understand the impact of any removal. *Action: To write to the residents.*

POS 132

PARKS & OPEN SPACES GROUNDS MAINTENANCE FACILITY

Nothing to report

POS 133

ACCIDENT REPORTING

Members noted that an operative whilst driving the Hako street sweeper had a near miss accident. The vehicle was recovered by the mini tractor with no damage and the operative was ok. The operational risk assessment was updated to include what to do in the event of it happening again.

Meeting Closed at: 21.43 Signed by Chairman _____