

HAYDON WICK PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parks & Open Spaces Committee meeting of Haydon Wick Parish Council held on Tuesday 9th January 2024.

ATTENDANCE

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

OFFICERS: Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO, Georgina Morgan-Denn
Deputy Clerk & Services Manager, Laura Cutter
Head of Parks & Open Spaces, Dave Hunt

POS 134 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies received from Councillor O Munagala.

POS 135 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

POS 136 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were four (4) members of the public present.

Two members of the public raised a need for a footpath in Locksmead Crescent. It was confirmed this would be covered under Exempt Agenda Item 21. The residents have requested a compacted gravel path through a small space of open space which becomes incredibly muddy in the winter months. Another member of the public was there to receive an update on Agenda Item 13 - Leisure Gardens Communications Response and to receive an update on the responses to the survey which went out to plot holders and confirmation of the site's maintenance plans for 2024.

Another member of the public raised failing service levels with dog and litter bin emptying. It was necessary to ask the resident to step out of the room with the Chief Officer and Chairman of the Council due to a potential breach of confidentiality. When the resident returned to the meeting, they presented photographic evidence that the bins were overflowing. The Head of Parks & Open Spaces noted the concerns and agreed he would investigate this matter and make improvements to the service.

POS 137 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman wished everyone a prosperous New Year and had no further announcements.

POS 138 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members reviewed the minutes of the Parks and Opens Spaces Committee meeting held on Tuesday 7th November 2023 and the Chair of the Committee signed the minutes as a true record.

Proposed: Councillor A Jimmy Seconded: Councillor A John

Vote: Agreed with two (2) abstentions.

RESOLVED: Members confirmed as a true record the minutes held on Tuesday 7th November 2023 and they were signed by the Chairman.

Resolved to move Agenda Item 13 forward.

POS 139 LEISURE GARDEN PLOT HOLDERS' COMMUNICATION RESPONSES

It was confirmed that the report and outcome of this evening's discussion will be published on the Leisure Gardens noticeboards. There has been a very poor response - 10 out of 120 plot holders and concerns were cited that the small responses were not representative of the audience.

Members suspended Standing Orders to invite the resident to ask questions.

The resident was disappointed by the lack of response of the plot holders as felt at the annual plot holders meeting there was a lot of feedback. They asked when the hedgerow and the birch trees on the boundary would be done? *The Head of Parks & Open Spaces confirmed this would be done before the end of March whilst the Tractor & Side Arm is still on hire.*

POS 140 SEVEN FIELDS

- Seven Fields Conservation Group has identified brown hair streak eggs which is a breed of butterfly, therefore, requested that the hedgerows (identified on an email to the Head of Parks & Open Spaces) will not be cut back this season to protect the species and allow them to flourish.
- Thanks were given by residents in and around Seven Fields for the good work the Parks & Open Spaces Team has done on the hedges and shrubs.
- The footpath on Stour Walk at Seven Fields requires rebuilding its current state makes it unstable underfoot for walkers, in particular disabled or elderly residents.
- A request was received from Seven Fields Conservation Group to deposit £500.00 into a Parish Council bank account until they have successfully opened a new account. The Finance Officer has confirmed that the Seven Fields Conservation Group will receive the exact money deposited and there will be no additional interest which was accepted.

Proposed: Councillor P Park Seconded: Councillor R Ross

Vote: Agreed with one (1) abstention.

RESOLVED: To hold up to the value of £500.00 of Seven Fields Conservation Groups monies in the Parish Council's holding account until such time the Conservation Group has opened and secured a new bank account.

The members of the public left the meeting at 20.04pm.

POS 141 HEAD OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES REPORT

Members noted the report. Key topics included the tasks remaining on the daily work sheets, the winter bulb planting and the memorial tree that has been planted at Haydonleigh Skate Park in conjunction with Kelly's Foundation in honour of a young skater whose family and friends wish to remember him there.

POS 142 DEPUTY CLERK & SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

- **Christmas Parcel Feedback** - Positive Christmas parcel feedback been received.
- **Household Recycling Waste** – Resident enquiries are being forwarded to SBC Ward Councillors to deal with and litter pickers have reported that plastic litter has increased because of the reduced service.

- **Trent Road Play Area Refurbishment** – Due for completion in mid-Feb, this has been slightly delayed due to high winds and poor weather conditions.

POS 143 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Cllr R Worman – Sewerage clearance by Thames Water has recently been done in Haydon View Road. Flooding issues will be continued into 2024. The old Skate Park equipment from the Oasis site is being recycled and moved to Penhill Bowling Green. As this is only a short distance from Sunningdale Road (30m), suggested the Office make enquiries with Central Swindon North Parish Council as may be of interest to residents.

Cllr E Baker-Walker – Parking issues at The Brow / High Street from school traffic will be forwarded by the resident to SBC Ward Councillors.

Cllr P Park – Jason Close Hedges report has been submitted to office for review. Flooding issues have been reported to Swindon Borough Council. Reports from residents that diesel was put into the stream at Tadpole Lane but the Environment Agency confirmed that it has been sorted and hadn't reached Oakhurst. Residents want to know what the long term cutting plans for Oakhurst will be, explained the schedule and maintenance plans will be confirmed after budget setting. Events in the future which will come to CD Committee – like World Book Night for adults, Great British Spring Clean and Councillor fundraising opportunities.

Cllr R Hailstone – Recently attended a Swindon Local Councils Forum (SLCF) regarding the draft protocol which has been circulated to parishes with a view to going to SBC Cabinet in March. SBC has indicated that it would like to devolve services to parishes as soon as October 2024 and has meetings scheduled in with parishes to discuss further. *The Chief Officer confirmed the meeting for Haydon Wick was due to take place tomorrow.*

Cllr V Manro – Nothing to report.

Cllr A John – Nothing to report.

Cllr S Heyes – Nothing to report.

Cllr J Ali – Nothing to report.

Cllr A Jimmy – Nothing to report.

Cllr R Ross – Nothing to report.

POS 144 PARKS & OPEN SPACES MAINTENANCE SCHEDULES

Members noted the report. Good feedback was given by the Councillors who undertook quality checks recently. The team is currently working through Haydon Wick and Greenmeadow. There is sufficient time at the end of the Tractor & Flail Hire Period to revisit areas of Abbey Meads ahead of the Spring/Summer cuts (May-July). Members noted that the updated schedules do not appear on the website as the last entry was at the end of November 2024. The Officers acknowledged a better process was needed to ensure these are uploaded to the website soon after the documents have been updated.

POS 145 WINTER PROJECTS

Members noted the report and were asked to forward any suggestions for winter maintenance to tidyup@haydonwick.gov.uk.

POS 146 POCKET FOREST CREATION – NEXT STEPS

Neil Pullen from Wiltshire Wildlife presented an update on the Pocket Forest Creations to the Committee prior to the meeting. There are currently two projects being researched:

- Grace Walk – which has a large great crested newt pond, the original protective netting has not been removed by the developers so there is a lot of investigation to be done to establish the levels of great crested newts. The searches are done in the evening so residents would need to be made aware of what is happening in the area. There is scope for planting trees on the open spaces opposite and maintaining the wildlife area by upskilling the Parish Council staff and working with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's volunteers.
- Voyager Drive will also be progressed further as part of the project.

Members noted that as the first two projects would take a lot of time, Heaton Close will be pushed back to 2025. The Head of Parks & Open Spaces also updated that the Tadpole Replanting Event was due to take place this weekend (13 & 14 Jan) at Tadpole Field.

POS 147 ROYAL HOTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S (RHS) 'IT'S YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD' SCHEME 2024

Members noted the scheme but were not aware of any local gardening groups or any dormant land within the Parish to develop this initiative.

POS 148 PARKS & OPEN SPACES GROUNDS MAINTENANCE FACILITY

Awaiting contracts to bring to future meetings and have provisionally held contractors to break ground towards the end of February.

POS 149 OPERATIONAL BUDGET MONITORING

Members noted the Income & Expenditure for Month 9.

POS 150 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

To be passed to the Chief Officer in advance of the next meeting 5th March 2024.

POS 151 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

There were none present.

POS 152 TREE MATTER

Members noted a report about an overgrown tree on land that the Council leases from the Borough Council. It was explained that as this lease is outside of the Transfer of Services agreements, the Parish Council is responsible for the maintenance of the tree. It was acknowledged the resident has been passed back and forth from Parish and Borough Council for several years. Officers reassured Members that the leased open space would be picked up on the next Tree Survey which is due to be commissioned in 2025.

Proposed: Councillor S Heyes Seconded: Councillor V Manro

Vote: Agreed with three (3) abstentions.

RESOLVED: To proceed with the quotation of £900.00 + VAT to be met from existing budget 4301/307 to conduct tree works.

POS 153 PARKS & OPEN SPACES GROUNDS MAINTENANCE FACILITY

There were no further updates.

POS 154 LOCKSGREEN CRESCENT PATHWAY

Initials _____

Members reviewed the request and confirmed that this is within the remit of the SBC Highways Department and SBC Ward Councillors. There were concerns about the placement of the drain covers and whether there was a dropped kerb the other side to ensure that any designated footpaths are accessible for wheelchair users and pushchairs.

POS 155 HIRE VEHICLE MAINTENANCE COMPLAINT

Members noted the report and the delays to settling an insurance claim with an external hire vehicle agreement. It was agreed that the Finance Officer would be the single point of contact for all insurance matters and will bring a formal procedure for processing complaints to a future Finance & Policy Committee. The Finance Officer will be asked to review the vehicle insurance and see if there is a clause regarding external vehicle hire and whether any costs can be recouped in the eventuality that there are delays on future claims.

POS 156 GRASS CUTTING – LARGE AREAS 2024

Discussed the quotations received. Members agreed that for continuity of service and the general local knowledge of the Parish that they want to proceed with the current supplier. Members requested that the Head of Parks & Open Spaces negotiates a three year contract.

Proposed: Councillor J Ali

Seconded: Councillor V Manro

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: To appoint Countrywide at a cost of £10,765.82 for 2024 and to negotiate a three year deal for 2024 – 2027 at the same cost per year.

Meeting Closed at: 21.25 Signed by Chairman_____