

Minutes of the **Parks & Open Spaces Committee** meeting of Haydon Wick Parish Council held on **Tuesday 3rd March 2026** at 7.30pm.

ATTENDANCE

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

OFFICERS: Laura Cutter, Deputy Clerk/RFO, HR & Services Manager
Georgina Morgan-Denn, Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO
Julie McMorro, Meetings & HR Administrator

POS 116 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and noted from Councillors R Ross & O Munagala (Work Commitments) & Councillor J Ali (Personal Commitments).

POS 117 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were none.

POS 118 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were none.

POS 119 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Last Parks & Open Spaces Committee meeting of this current Council for the municipal year.

POS 120 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Members approved the minutes as a true record of the meeting held on Tuesday 6th January 2026.

Proposed: Councillor S Heyes Seconded: Councillor L Jackson

Vote: Agreed with one (1) abstention.

RESOLVED: Members confirmed as a true record the minutes held on Tuesday 6th January 2026 and they were signed by the Chairman.

POS 121 SEVEN FIELDS

On the 5th May 2026, the works on Kings Footbridge will commence. The Parish Council will be kept updated on progress and completion of targets.

POS 122 CHIEF OFFICER/DEPUTY CLERK & SERVICES MANAGERS REPORT

Steady progress is being made with regards the thermal imaging camera and device is hoped to be collected from South Swindon Council later this week ending 6th March 2026. A further update will be given at Finance & Policy later in the month.

Haydon Wick Parish Council (HWPC) received notification from Councillor D Adams (Swindon Borough Council (SBC) Ward Councillor, St Andrews) advising of a pilgrimage to take place in early May at Mouldon Hill for a religious gathering in early May. This has been checked with SBC and no licences are required, therefore this can go ahead.

Initials _____

POS 123 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor R Hailstone – Nothing to report.

Councillor S Heyes – Nothing to report.

Councillor J Jackson – Noted that Elstree Way tidy up and replanting is looking good, Countrywide has done an excellent job.

Councillor L Jackson – A vehicle has caused some damage at Elstree Way, this has been reported via the POS Reporting system. Attended Abbey Park School it went very well with over fifty pupils.

Councillor R Worman – Nothing to report.

Cllrs L Stevenson and V Manro joined the meeting at 7.42pm

POS 124 PARKS & OPEN SPACES REPORT

POS 124A

Members received an update on the maintenance schedules and other matters arising in the Parks & Open Spaces Team. Members considered and agreed to the proposal and recommendations in the report. Members discussed the Hylder Close hedge reduction work and potential to plant with laurel hedges, it was requested alternative hedges are researched for this project as laurel hedges grow rapidly.

Proposed: Councillor S Heyes

Seconded: Councillor J Jackson

Vote: Agreed Unanimously

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the cost of £1,812.10 per cut for optional outsourced mowing of large, grass areas. As with last year, cutting performance will be monitored daily, and this option will only be used if deemed necessary and pre agreed.
2. To approve the cost of £312.00 per cut for the mowing of Tadpole paddock, three cuts are required.
3. To approve the cost of £972.00 per cut for the mowing of three wildflower areas, one cut is required.
5. To approve the resident request for hedge reduction at Hylder Close and the costs associated.
6. To agree an ongoing trial of CCTV at Rose Walk to monitor the dog mess situation.

POS 124B

Members noted the Parks and Open Spaces (POS) Statistical Report – Dec 2025 to Feb 2026:

- 119 POS job requests were logged between 19 December 2025 and 19 February 2026, an increase from 101 in the previous period (Oct–Dec 2025), representing a 17.8% rise in overall reports.
- 74% of requests have been completed, with 26% ongoing during the reporting period.

Issue Types

- Hedges & Shrubs remained the most reported issue
- Fly tipping decreased.
- Street sweeper requests fell • Litter reports increased
- Graffiti reports rose.
- Play area issues increased
- Other issues increased from 17 to 22 reports, largely relating to potholes and footpath/road maintenance referred to Swindon Borough Council.
- Reports of dog fouling have increased in several areas; awareness posters have been installed to encourage responsible behaviour.

Reporting Methods

Initials ____

- Use of the POS Reporting System (Direct Webform) increased significantly from 37 reports (36.6%) to 69 reports (58%), an 86.5% increase in usage.
 - Email reports decreased from 24 to 17 (29.2% reduction).
 - Telephone reports reduced from 16 to 12 (25% decrease).
 - Internal reports fell slightly from 17 to 14.
 - In-person reports remained steady at 7.
- Overall, the data indicates a successful shift toward the online reporting system as the primary reporting channel.

POS 125 ROTHER CLOSE/THAMES AVENUE BENCH PROPOSAL

Members noted a proposal from Swindon Borough Council (SBC) to repurpose the wood removed from two (2) felled Oak Trees. A volunteer has offered to use make a bench with tree product and be placed where the trees once stood. Members felt that the principal is good but with some concerns that it could attract anti-social behaviour. Residents were consulted and were happy with the suggestion of using the wood in this way. Committee are supportive and approved the proposal.

Proposed: Councillor V Manro

Seconded: Councillor J Jackson

Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To approve the proposal for the remnants of the Oak Trees to be made into a bench and place where the trees once stood.

POS 126 PARKS & PROJECTS TEAM UPDATE

POS 126A

Members received an update and a recommendation for repair costs to Queen Elizabeth Drive Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). Members noted the surface repair costs of Queen Elizabeth Drive MUGA and to agree to Infinity Playgrounds at a cost of £3,715.61, to be met from existing surface repair budgets in 4518/302. Infinity Playgrounds were very responsive, and they have been used before and have proved to be a good steady service provider. Members requested a more detailed report with the different options and price differences to be able to make more informed decisions next time – though the answer was given verbally by the Officers in the meeting.

Proposed: Councillor V Manro

Seconded: Councillor J Jackson

Vote: Agreed Unanimously

Resolved: Members agreed the Officers recommendations and proceed with Infinity Playground to conduct the repairs at a cost of £3,715.61 to be met from repair budget code 4518/302.

POS 126B

A verbal update was received regarding the Francomes Play Area currently its closed as it's a health and safety risk with appropriate signs in place advising residents. An email has also been received from SBC Legal Team which has identified that this land is not owned by SBC. A landownership transfer would need to be agreed; this play area is deemed to be unsafe. This is an ongoing issue spanning over several years trying to establish ownership. Costs to take on this project would require looking back through archived planning documents and appropriate budgets are not currently in place for 2026. Therefore, due diligence around the heavy administration load, potential legal issues need thorough examination. With that in mind information and background data will be collected on this and will go to Full Council 24th March 2026. Along with this local resident will be consulted, and a press release will be prepared.

POS 126C

Members received an update on the Thyme Close Play Area project and acknowledged the report. Project is going well with a 'Teddy Bears Picnic and a Bear Hunt' coming up this Spring 2026. Age group suggested for these events is 'under twelves'.

POS 127 BOROUGH/PARISH SERVICES MEETING

The Chief Officer and Deputy Clerk met with the Services (Interim) Manager at SBC and discussed the Transfer of Services, this was an introductory meeting which was met with enthusiasm. A consolidated spreadsheet of all twenty one (21) parishes information is being prepared and will be shared at the next Swindon Local Councils Forum.

POS 128 ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There are none.

POS 129 BUDGET MONITORING: INCOME & EXPENDITURE

Members noted the report. No further questions were raised.

POS 130 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

To be put to the Chief Officer in June 2026.

POS 131 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC & PRESS

There were none.

POS 132 GROUND MAINTENANCE FACILITY

Fire compliant window was received today 3rd March 2026. This will be installed this week and then SBC's Buildings Control Officer will sign off the final completion on Friday 6th March 2026.

POS 133 SECURITY CONTRACT

Members received a verbal update on the Security Contract for King George V Play Area and the Skate Park. The security company used up until January has now ceased trading. This means that with Spring and Summer on the way the KGV Play Park and Skate Park will need security. Deputy Clerk advised that quotes were requested from six (6) companies which proved unsuccessful and no interest was shown, however SBC did come back at a charge of £1,381.00 per month. Feedback from other Parishes is that SBC do an excellent service at managing similar parks.

Proposed: Councillor J Jackson Secondary: Councillor L Jackson Vote: Agreed Unanimously.

RESOLVED: To proceed to procure Swindon Borough Council for the security at KGV Play Park and the Skate Park at a cost of £1381.00 per calendar month.

Meeting Closed at: 8.25 pm Signed by Chairman: _____

Initials _____