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Minutes of the **Parks & Open Spaces Committee** meeting of Haydon Wick Parish Council held on **Tuesday 8th July 2025** at 7.30pm.

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS: Councillors R Hailstone (Chair), S Heyes (Vice Chair), J Ali, V Manro, P Park, L Jackson, J Jackson, R Ross and R Worman.

OFFICERS: Georgina Morgan-Denn, Chief Officer/Clerk & RFO
Laura Cutter, Deputy Clerk/RFO, HR & Services Manager
Jason Watts, POS Operations & Facility Manager

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: SBC Ward Borough Councillor S Wilson

POS 025 APOLOGIES
Apologies were received and noted for Councillors L Stevenson (Personal Commitments) and Councillor O Munagala (Work Commitments).

POS 026 DECLARATION OF INTEREST
None.

POS 027 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
SBC Ward Councillor S Wilson was interested to understand the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's wellbeing programme for the Seven Fields agenda as could not access the documents online. Also looking into pathway clearance at Seven Fields – Councillor R Worman is willing to champion and keep the information centrally.

Members raised that the Swindon Local Plan still does not mention parishes, although in most cases the parishes offer the early intervention initiatives prior to accessing the Borough's core services.

POS 028 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
None.

POS 029 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS
Members approved the minutes as a true record of the meeting held on Tuesday 13th May 2025.
Proposed: Councillor L Jackson Seconded: Councillor S Heyes
Vote: Agreed unanimously.
RESOLVED: Members confirmed as a true record the minutes held on Tuesday 13th May 2025 and they were signed by the Chairman.

POS 030 SEVEN FIELDS
POS 030A Members received a written update sent in advance from Councillor L Stevenson. The Seven Fields Conservation Group meeting was cancelled last month and rescheduled the 9th July. A complaint was received from a member of the public stating the pathway for walkers and dog owners are not being maintained. It was explained to the resident and explained that the desire lines have been cut backwards to prevent the meadows being cut into which over time will re-establish the original desire line, as needed to protect the meadow, and will consider any improvements on the next cut. The management plan has been received. A site visit was undertaken by the Committee before the meeting and the cycle paths look in good condition. The POS Manager will report back after the meeting tomorrow. It is

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regularly cut as part of the Council's existing grounds maintenance schedule. The width of the pathways was raised again but a meeting needs to be arranged with Central Swindon North, Swindon Borough Council and Haydon Wick Parish Council to establish the boundary lines and responsibilities.

POS 030B

Members received and noted Wiltshire Wildlife Trust in Swindon's Adult Wellbeing programme and the request to work together on delivering this initiative in Seven Fields. The programme is aimed at people aged 18+ and is a 12-week programme utilising outdoor spaces to improve mental health and enhance employability skills. Further discussions led to partnership working at what the Parish Council can offer in terms of volunteering opportunities and hiring out the meeting rooms or providing the community bus.

POS 031

DEPUTY CLERK & SERVICES MANAGER'S REPORT

Mouldon Hill - A TV production company is going to be filming at Mouldon Hill on Thursday 10th July and has received permission from Swindon Borough Council. The TV production company contacted the Parish Council to ask for assistance with access to the site on the day, but it would be preferred for the Borough to liaise with them on this as unsure of the timings and can't leave the site open for too long. *Councillor S Wilson agreed to liaise with the Borough Council to arrange access for Thursday.*

POS 032

COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor S Heyes – Has recently been down Thames Avenue and would like to comment how nice it looks, especially now the squirrel outside the Parish Council Office has been painted.

Councillor J Jackson – Several councillors undertook a litter pick on Akers Way with positive feedback from residents

Councillor L Jackson – As above litter picks, met with resident and conducted a Mental Health Walk at same time. Good feedback on hedge cutting on the public footpath between Colbert Park & Greenwich Close.

Councillor V Manro – Attended the Haven and the Orbital Market which seems to be well attended and a good opportunity to engage with residents

Councillor R Ross – Attended the Haven, the Orbital Market and a school fete at Catherine Wayte School with volunteering help from her daughter. Catherine Wayte School may have a stand for the Summer Event that the Council could loan.

Councillor P Park – Met the POS Facility & Operations Manager at Voyager Drive Play Area to discuss a maintenance plan for the area, there was a speedy response and resolution from the team which has been well received with residents. Thanked for the support.

Councillor R Worman – Enquiries outstanding for the Officers to respond to about tree works in Sunningdale Road. It would be beneficial to have a meeting with the neighbouring parish and Swindon Borough Council to establish the boundaries and responsibilities.

POS 033

PARKS & OPEN SPACES REPORT

Members received the report in advance. Highlights included:

- Fly tipping is increasing especially on Akers Way. Members queried with the SBC Ward Councillors present whether this is a result of the excessive delays in getting a tip slot at Waterside. *Councillor S Wilson will investigate.*
- Tadpole Field - it is critical we cut the paddock part of the field due to it being close to the Railway – it's not publicly accessible - but is it the risk of fire that we must cut it etc. Good progress with the grass cutting progress – Members

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requested descriptions next to the rounds eg. repeat what we have on the website.

- Upton Close bin issue – a closed top bin is in stock and is on the Parks & Projects schedule to be replaced.
- Strimmer – was two days ahead of the mowers in Haydon View, this looked great and gave a well finished overview.

Councillor J Ali arrived at 20:06.

POS 034

PARKS & OPEN SPACES REPORTING SYSTEM STATISTICS

Noted the report. We now have a 12-week round for hedges and brambles/roses due to the rapid growth. POS Manager walks through identified areas daily to cut back the worst of the brambles to improve safety of the area ahead of the reactive team and before the tractor & flail. Cutbacks 3-4 months ago look like we haven't been there. Continuous battle and identifying the areas - protecting the public using the paths. Using the POS Reporting system to monitor the cases – we're getting at least four daily. We can't have team on reactive duties because we're in holiday season and doing the best we can – they're putting in 100% to keep on top.

POS 035

GRAFFITI ON UTILITY BOXES

Members noted a campaign from local councils joining together to campaign to utility providers to clear the graffiti from their utility boxes and agreed to put the same messaging on the Parish Council's website. It was acknowledged that some providers are more responsive than others, but it does become demoralising that nothing gets done about it, as it looks unsightly and the general appearance of the area looks run down. The Parish Council is unable to conduct the work as it does not have the correct permissions or insurance, and the chemicals used can cause damage to the street boxes. *Action: Deputy Clerk to prepare comms for the website and socials.*

POS 036

SWINDON BOROUGH WIDE DOG FOULING PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS CONSULTATION

Members noted the consultation and questioned whether this had been raised at the recent Swindon Local Council's Forum (SLCF). Councillor V Manro confirmed that all parishes agreed there should be one and recommended that the status quo is maintained. SLCF concurred that the issue is the lack of enforcement and would like it to be highlighted that more enforcement is provided. Members agreed to the same approach and would like this to be noted at Full Council.

Proposed: Councillor P Park

Seconded: Councillor V Manro

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: To submit a response to the consultation confirming the status quo and requesting enhanced enforcement provision.

Ward Councillor S Wilson left the meeting 20:25.

POS 037

PARKS & PROJECTS TEAM UPDATE

POS 037A

Committee received an update on works recently completed and upcoming by the Parks & Projects Team. Noted the high standard of the work and professional approach to the projects. The new inspection app is working well.

POS 037B

Committee received a verbal update from the Play Area Working Party on site visits that were conducted on Tuesday 8th July 2025. The Working Party visited White Eagle, being the home for the new outdoor gym and discussed enhancing the small toddler area at Primrose Close. Signage could be displayed pointing families in the

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direction of the toddler area as it is not visible, and many residents might not know it was there. The Working Party also visited Trent Road Play Area, Seven Fields and the site for the Dog Play Area, Chatsworth Road/ Old Blunsdon Road open space.

Action: Another bus trip in August to be arranged.

POS 037C

Members received an update on Tadpole Field Permissive Path and would like to progress with the installation of signage either side using the existing funds assigned to the project.

Proposed: Councillor R Hailstone Seconded: Councillor S Heyes

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: To purchase and install two 'Permissive Path' signs and install at each entrance on Tadpole Field.

POS 038

POS 038A

GROUND'S MAINTENANCE UPDATES & PROJECTS

Wildflower Areas Review. Members noted the Horticultural Budget and received an update on the status of the wildflower areas and received suggestions for winter bulb planting. After discussion, it was agreed to increase the Wildflower budget using funds from the Decorative Flowerbed budget to ensure proper maintenance of the Wildflower sites.

Proposed: Councillor P Park

Seconded: Councillor S Heyes

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED: To increase the Wildflower budget to £1,050.00 and reduce the Decorative Flowerbed budget to £2,000.00 to ensure proper maintenance of the Wildflower areas.

POS 038B

ELSTREE WAY/ELSHAM WAY REMEDIAL WORKS

Members noted the costs, and the next steps associated with remedial works. It was acknowledged that the Council never approved the cutback as harshly as it was done and that it is an operational correction which should be organised. Some members felt this should be funded by General Reserves. Two more quotes are yet to be received – it is the deep roots which are the issue and as such the groundwork required is more extensive. The ballpark figure is £12,500.00. Works to be completed in the Autumn/Winter months to be most effective.

Given the potential use of the General Reserves it was suggested that this goes out to public consultation to ensure that the area is enhanced in line with resident expectations. Also, the area is only one roundabout in the parish, whilst well traversed, it only impacts a small number of residents. 18 months have passed with trial methods which have not taken well, further work is needed and the time to resolve and communicate the plan with the residents is critical.

Other suggestions included decorative flower beds, installing a small hedge and impregnated wildflower turf. There is a Work Experience Student coming for two weeks late July who could help with a community consultation.

Members agreed to receive more information ahead of deciding the next steps at Full Council.

POS 038C

BUDGET

Members noted the costs and potential budgetary impact on both projects.

POS 039

LEISURE GARDENS

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Members noted the report and after discussion agreed to the cost of the noticeboards to be met from existing budgets and a change in the date of the annual Allotment Competition.

Proposed: Councillor S Heyes

Seconded: Councillor P Park

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1. To order three noticeboards, one for each site, to the value of £2,016.00 using existing budget from Ear Marked Reserves – 356 Leisure Gardens.
2. To develop the idea of installing a small natural pond at Goodearl after extensive consultation with the residents and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.
3. To change the 2026 competition dates to capture peak gardening season.

POS 040

DOG PLAY AREA, OPEN SPACE BETWEEN OLD BLUNSDON ROAD AND CHATSWORTH ROAD

Members noted the report and the costs associated with the project. £1,500.00 towards the cost of the project has been sponsored by Muddy Squad, the remainder will be met from the Community Choices budget. Members would like to consult with the residents facing the site to confirm the plans for the fencing being installed.

Proposed: Councillor L Jackson

Seconded: Councillor R Ross

Vote: Agreed unanimously.

RESOLVED:

1. To consult with the residents of Chatsworth Road adjacent to the proposed site.
2. To agree the cost of the project is £3,780.00 and met from Community Choices and sponsorship funds.
3. To formally notify Swindon Borough Council of the intentions for the site.

POS 041

ACCESSIBLE PARKS CONFERENCE SWINDON

Members received an invitation to speak at this future conference because the parish council has worked with Benjamin Smiles for several years. Councillors will attend and present Haydon Wick's accessibility initiatives in September 2025. Councillors Park, R Hailstone and Manro will attend. Officers were asked to join them to provide operational information and support.

POS 042

BUDGET MONITORING

Members noted the budgets assigned to Parks & Open Spaces. There were no questions raised.

POS 043

GROUND'S MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The electrical installation was not done on 7th July 2025 as planned. A call with the Project Manager is taking place tomorrow and Council will be updated on next steps in due course.

POS 044

POS ACTION REVIEW SUMMARY

Acknowledged the actions and completions in May. Members the completion dates are updated on the spreadsheet and then removed from future reporting.

POS 045

TREE SURVEY 2025 - 2030

Members received a verbal update from the POS Operations & Facility Manager. The order has been raised with external contractors for the KGV Play Area high risk categories and Hamble Road tree reduction. A remaining 112 trees need to be actioned over the next 5 years of which 62 could be carried out inhouse. Officers will

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work on the budgetary impact in Year 1 and future years than span over the 5 Year inspection period and share a Tree Work schedule in due course.

POS 046 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

To be passed to the Chief Officer in advance of the next meeting on 2nd September 2025.

POS 047 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'. Reasons: *Sensitive*.

POS 048 RESIDENT COMPLAINTS/INSURANCE MATTERS

Members noted the report detailing resident reports and tree work requests, report is held confidentially.

Meeting Closed at:

Signed by Chairman: _____

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