

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee
Held on Thursday 5th October 2023 commencing at 8.00pm at the Benians Pavilion**

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| MEMBERS PRESENT: | Chairman Cllr Gebbett, Cllrs Speed, Medhurst, Black and Coulson |
| IN ATTENDANCE: | Jo Tsigarides Clerk Nicole Williams (Assistant to the Clerk) |
| APOLOGIES: | None. |

23.80 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

23.81 OS OPEN SESSION/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There had been some questions for the Committee received by email regarding the graffiti at the skate park and the grass waste on the football pitch. It was noted that the graffiti on the surrounds had been removed that day and that a contractor was being sourced to repaint the skate surfaces. Cllr Coulson had reported some graffiti to the Clerk previously when completing a check of the area.

The grass cuttings had been discussed with the contract gardener and there are plans to try and use some of it in the composter. Cllr Speed is going to make enquiries with the Allotment Association to see they are of use to them.

The Clerk had received a resident complaint about a holly bush on the far side of the football pitch which forms part of the hedgerow. This bush does have amenity value in the hedgerow and any pruning should be approached with caution, but a meeting will be held with the residents on the 10th October 2023 to discuss this further.

There had been a site meeting at Badger Close on the 5th October 2023 with a Badger Protection volunteer who had been involved in some of the mitigation steps during the development of the area. There was firstly an issue of a boundary encroachment which had compromised the badger refuge which the Clerk agreed to follow up on and secondly was the issue of the badger orchard. This area has several fruit trees and plants especially placed for badgers to forage and thrive but was found to be so overgrown that it is impossible for them to benefit. The Clerk had contacted the Environmental group who are keen to take this area on as a project. The Clerk will take on the boundary encroachment issues which had been investigated by the previous Committee.

A handwritten letter had been received by Cllr McAllister regarding Kingswood Copse and then shortly after, a typed version of the same letter was received at the Parish Office. The letter makes several observations about activity in Kingswood Copse which had been investigated by Cllr McAllister and the Clerk. The residents of Kingswood Rise had been written to in response asking that they contact the Parish office if they note any unusual activity and alongside this a second letter was being drafted to confirm the boundary line.

Cllr Medhurst asked whether any progress had been made regarding the issues on FP17. NW will follow up on this.

Cllr Gebbett read the following statement:

I just wanted to record a note of thanks to Kellie Knight for her all to brief help and involvement as part of the Open Spaces Committee. I am confident that everyone will join me in wishing Kellie a speedy recovery to good health and who knows, maybe a return to the Parish Council in the future.

23.82 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were declared.

23.83 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Open Space Committee Meeting, previously circulated, held on Wednesday 2nd August 2023 following a proposal by Cllr Coulson, seconded by Cllr Speed, and agreed by all Councillors as a true reflection of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

23.84 OS ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

23.84.1 To note the Minutes of the FMEG

The Minutes of the September FMEG meeting were noted and the Clerk had received an email from the Chairman of the group requesting a meeting about forthcoming village projects.

23.84.2 To review gardener recommendations, specifically:

Oak Green Shopping Parade

The gardener recommendations in this area were accepted and Cllr Black offered to provide some mulch for this and any other open space projects that might benefit from it.

Hedgerow strategy at cricket pitch

It was agreed to lay the hedge at the cricket pitch and the Clerk will make the necessary applications for funding to complete this. The hedgerow pack from the Woodland Trust would be used along the hedgerow which acts as a border between the Jubilee Green and the allotments.

Lymington Bottom Green – wildflower areas and poppies

The Committee approved all the recommendations made by the contract gardener.

23.84.3 To review Tree Management Policy

The Committee asked that this be deferred to the November meeting.

23.84.4 To review Climate and Nature Emergency Action Plan

The Committee asked that this be deferred to the November meeting.

23.85 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

23.85.1 To discuss Christmas tree arrangements.

The Clerk noted that the Christmas light installation would take place on Monday 4th December 2023. Enquiries have been made with a local Christmas tree provider and they have confirmed that they will be able to price match the previous source used and deliver the tree for free. The Clerk will arrange for the tree to be delivered on Friday 1st December 2023 and the Chairperson of the Council and OS Committee Chairman had agreed to be on site to deal with the delivery and light installation.

23.85.2 Request regarding Christmas tree campaign.

The Committee have asked for some further information on the size of the banner and possibly a photograph of what it might look like in situ for them to make a decision.

23.85.3 Deterrent measure for skate park

A deterrent measure for the skate park was discussed and NW is going to liaise with Cllr Medhurst to secure the correct equipment.

23.86 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

23.86.1 Play area quotations

It was decided to approve the quotations provided from company one, but to delay the surfacing repairs to the MUGA as there is a resurfacing project which will take place.

23.86.2 Clock at Oak Green parade – to review and approve any works.

The Committee decided that the clock maintenance should be managed by the Chairperson of the Council and any other Councillors with expertise in this area. Provisionally, an amount of £450 plus the cost of any parts to service the clock has been approved and the Clerk had made enquiries with the Councils insurance provider who had confirmed that Councillors may hire equipment and remove/gain access to the clock providing that the relevant health and safety steps and risk assessment was put in place.

Cllr Black offered to provide NW with details of a clock company that had been used in a neighbouring village hall as an alternative. They are based in Southampton and so may be able to conduct a site visit.

23.86.3 Replacement bus stop panels, to consider and review quotation.

The Committee unanimously agreed that the panels should be replaced at the bus stop in question but have asked for images of the finishes that were provided. The Clerk had requested further information from the company, which had not been received. Once further details and images were received, they would be circulated to the Councillors who favoured the aluminium/perforated aluminium finishes but wanted to see them before committing.

23.86.4 Quotation to repaint container.

A quotation had been provided to repaint the container, but the Clerk confirmed that this task could be given to the Parish lengthsmen on the 16th October 2023. As they did not attend in August, they have booked in a whole day and so will be able to complete the task.

23.87 AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS

23.87.1 To receive area update and supplementary report.

The Clerk highlighted to the Committee that a large shrub had had to be removed from the middle of the Cemetery as it was in a grave space and that the composter had been received and was due to be constructed by the open spaces contractor.

| Location | Action Required | Status | Notes |
|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|--|
| Allotments | Hedgerow improvement | Agenda Item | Woodland Trust pack being delivered early Nov. |
| Badger Close | Boundary Encroachment | In progress | Clerk to research further – Nov 23 Agenda |
| | Pine Road Area | In progress | Cllr Gebbett reviewing. |
| Cemetery | Replacement gate stops. | Pending | |

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| | Replacement bench | Ordered | |
| | Composter | Ordered | Awaiting installation. |
| | Works to oak tree | In progress | Booked October 2023 |
| Lymington Bottom Green | Wildflower area and sign | In progress | Signs delivered – to agree 2023 installation. |
| | Village sign remedial works | In progress | |
| | Works to Sycamore tree | In progress | |
| | Poppy planting | In progress | |
| Oak Green parade | Flower bed maintenance | In progress | Further works approved. |
| | Phone box/book share | In progress | Bid not accepted – investigation to purchase underway, potential DC Grant option, to present to new Committee. On Hold |
| Recreation Ground | Cricket equipment | Pending | Clerk to organise. |
| | Containers | In progress | To be painted 16/10/23 |
| | Report of Japanese Knotweed | In progress | First application completed. |
| | Football pitch/club | Ongoing | Ongoing Liaison with Club regarding use. |
| | Floodlights for training area | In progress | Costs have been requested. |
| | Footway along football pitch | In progress | Measurements and preference on finish have been sent to landscape architect. S106 app – awaiting construction quotes |
| | Children's Play area | In progress | Awaiting date for works. Resident report, broken gate, fixed on 22/09/2023 Cllr Smith is booked in for RoSPA training in October 2023 |
| | Inspections | | |
| | Water refill point | | Service completed July 2023. – contract expires October 2024; notice must be given July 2024 if contract is to be terminated. |
| | Skate Park | In Progress | Working party to repaint surfaces – Autumn. Graffiti removal completed. Researching nature camera. |

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| Climate change mitigation | Solar Panels at Benians Pavilion | Pending | Awaiting information from Benians Committee Chairman following site visit |
| | Nature boxes | Pending | Boxes produced – awaiting installation. |
| | Parish Trees | Completed | All trees in the report dealt with except for the tree at Cemetery – awaiting it to be in leaf to assess damage. |
| | Footpaths | Ongoing | Enquiries have been made re a kissing gate at FP17a |
| | Bus stop maintenance | In progress | Extinction Rebellion have been contacted regarding flyposting. Cleaning has been completed – Cllrs have agreed to put 'No Flyposting' stickers on. |
| Swelling Hill Pond | Silt removal project | In progress | S106 application has been made |
| | South of pond/car park area. | In progress | Adverse possession claims in progress |
| | Fencing replacement and small pond fencing. | In progress | Quotations being sought |
| Station Gardens | General | | Newly planted pear tree doing well. |
| Kingswood Copse | Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife. | In progress | Resident has alerted Council to dead Willow tree – to review/action. |
| | | In progress | Letter to be sent to residents regarding activity in Copse and reminder regarding access. |

23.88 Next meeting: 1st November 2023

23.89 Meeting Closed at 9.20pm.