

**FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee  
Held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024 commencing at 7.45pm at Benians Pavilion**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>Cllrs Gebbett, Medhurst, M Pullen and Coulson</b>
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	<b>Jo Tsigarides Clerk, Victoria Ursulean, Assistant Clerk. Cllr Roger Speed.</b>
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	<b>Three members of the public. None</b>

**24.43 OS ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Gebbett was elected as the Committee Chairman (proposed by Cllr Coulson, seconded by Cllr M Pullen and with all in agreement).

Cllr Medhurst was elected as the Vice Chairman (proposed by Cllr Gebbett, seconded by Cllr Coulson).

**24.44 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None.

**24.45 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Assisant Clerk noted some observations from a member of the public: that there were several sunken graves at the Cemetery, that there is a cement plinth on the football pitch (where the dugouts previously were) which could be better maintained for footballers to put their bags on, that the grass on the field was bumpy and that a camera should be installed behind the tennis courts to catch dog fouling.

Resident one spoke about an Oak tree that was overhanging their garden. They had been advised when they moved into their home that the tree should have a crown reduction at some point. The Clerk informed them that a tree inspection is undertaken every three years and that this tree was not flagged, however the tree inspector was due to come and reassess a tree that had been previously flagged and so this would be discussed with them. The Clerk agreed to meet the resident to look at the tree the following week.

Two members of FOFM spoke briefly about the proposed fireworks display.

With no further items raised, the Open Session ended at 7.50pm.

**24.46 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**24.47 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES .**

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Coulson , and with all Councillors in agreement, it was:

**RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024.**

**24.48 OS TO REVIEW COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE FULL COUNCIL.**

In line with the Community Building Committee, the financial authority would be £5000 excluding VAT, and the election of a vice chairman would be included.

**24.49 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/REVIEW**

**It was agreed to bring Agenda Item 7.3 forward.**

**24.49.1 To discuss fireworks display and any recommendations to the Full Council.**

The representatives from FOFM discussed the potential fireworks display and confirmed some of the points in their proposal.

The Committee were supportive, but concerned about the impact on neighbouring residents. There had already been some comments about pets and noise on the night. It was agreed that communication before the event would be key and could include a school organised leaflet drop to the neighbouring estate informing residents of the time/date.

Ticket sales were discussed, and it was agreed that if the event should go ahead, that a meeting would be held with the Benians Committee to discuss drink sales/profits and that there could be stalls on site to try and boost fundraising. The three entrances to the cricket pitch would need to be cordoned off.

The school would have to fund ten eco porta loos, and any other equipment needed for the evening.

Parking would also need to be considered and it was agreed that if the Full Council agreed to the event going ahead, a working party would be formed to work with the school.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Full Council that permission should be given to Four Marks School to hold their fireworks display on the cricket pitch.

#### **24.49.2 Water refill point – to consider whether to renew agreement**

The Clerk advised that the water refill point agreement was coming to the end of the three year fixed term. There had been a price increase effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024, which would mean that the cost would go from £156.54 per month to £172.19 per month. Cllr Gebbett requested that the Clerk approaches the company and asks for a lower price.

#### **24.49.3 Allotment Pruning Works**

The Allotment Association had requested permission to carry out works to the Orchard area in the allotment. This would involve coppicing of several trees, and they had taken professional advice about this. A check had been done and none of the trees involved have TPO status. The Clerk was asked to consult the tree inspector about whether these works were suitable.

Secondly, there has been a request to prune the Cherry tree which borders the allotments. It is situated on the cricket pitch but there had been a complaint from one of the allotment holders about the amount of shade the tree created. A quotation had been sought by the allotment association, and the Assistant Clerk had submitted a sketch plan to EHDC who confirmed that there are no issues with undertaking works to the tree. On reviewing the tree, the Committee asked that the allotment association consider a less severe prune of the tree, instead thinning it out and reducing it by 3m.

#### **24.49.4 To appoint new allotment representative.**

Cllr M Pullen was unable to continue as the allotment representative and it was agreed to appoint another volunteer at the next meeting of the Full Council.

### **24.50 OS CORRESPONDANCE**

#### **24.50.1 To discuss resident email regarding balance beam.**

Following the RoSPA report that was conducted on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024, it was found that there are no defects with the equipment and that the risk level involved is acceptable. The Clerk had already written to the resident but would update them.

#### **24.50.2 To discuss resident email regarding dogs at Recreation ground.**

The email was discussed, with the Committee observing that they had already tried to start a warden/ranger scheme. It was an ongoing problem but measures were being taken to try and combat dogs being off leads in the wrong areas and dog fouling.

### **CLLR MEDHURST LEFT THE MEETING.**

### **24.51 AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS**

#### **24.51.1 To note area update**

The Clerk informed the Committee that the RoSPA inspection had taken place on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024. Cllr Smith was in attendance and the final report will be through in due course.

There had been communication received regarding seasonal vegetation management in that EHDC would no longer be undertaking the priority cutting schedule. The footpaths would now have to be maintained through use of the lentsman and the Open Spaces contractor.

There had been several issues reported around Badger Close and the Clerk would compile a report for the July Open Spaces Committee meeting. Several residents had reported damage caused by the overgrowth/vegetation that borders their gardens/property and there was also a resident on Blackberry Lane who had reported some serious issues caused by the overgrowth. Cllr Gebbett offered to go and speak to them on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2024 with the Assistant Clerk.

The bench on the raised section at Swelling Hill Pond had a broken support and a repair had been arranged. The lentsman had pressure washed all of the benches on their recent visit and it was suggested that Cllr Smith might assist in coating all of the benches.

Whilst going through the area update, the netball lines were discussed again and the Committee requested that even if the netball club cannot fully pay back the cost, that they are painted on and that they are permitted to play. The Clerk would liaise with them.

**Area Update.**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Action Required</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Badger Close</b>	Boundary Encroachment	In progress	Clerk to research further.
	Badger Orchard	In progress	Planting has taken place – water bags to be placed.
	Badger Run upkeep	In progress	Clerk to compile report after resident visits – July meeting.
<b>Cemetery</b>	Cemetery inspection		Planned in for Summer 2024
	Memorial application		
<b>Lymington Bottom Green</b>	Wildflower area and sign	In progress	Installed 22/05/2025
	Village sign remedial works.	On Hold.	
	New bench – FM Care.		Awaiting site meeting date.
<b>Oak parade Green</b>	Flower bed maintenance	Ongoing	New contractor.
	Book share.	Completed	Awaiting signage.
	Repainting of car parking spaces.	To do.	To review spacing and repainting – future meeting.
<b>Recreation Ground</b>	Cricket equipment	Pending	Clerk to organise.
	Containers	Pending	Grass mats to be installed
	Skate Park	In progress	Area to be repainted.
	Tennis courts	In progress	Resurfacing completed. To investigate coin update and fence.

	Football pitch/club	Ongoing	Ongoing Liaison with Club regarding use.
	Footway along football pitch	In progress	Awaiting quotations.
	RoSPA report	In progress	Inspection 3/5/24 – report received and quotations being sought.
	Water refill point	In progress	Service completed March 2024. – contract expires October 2024; notice must be given July 2024 if contract is to be terminated.
<b>Climate change mitigation</b>	Solar Panels at Benians Pavilion	Pending	Awaiting information from Benians Committee Chairman following site visit
	Nature boxes	Pending	Placed – awaiting EHDC promotional video.
	Parish Trees	Completed	Awaiting quotation for interim inspection (to include resident Oak tree, Ash tree on Uplands, Allotment trees).
	Bus stop maintenance	In progress	
<b>Swelling Hill Pond</b>	Silt removal project	In progress	Further works now completed.
	South of pond/car park area.	In progress	Adverse possession claims in progress
	Fencing replacement and small pond fencing.	Completed	
	Car park remedial works.	In progress	Contractor accepted.
	Tree works – overhanging pond.	To do.	
<b>Kingswood Copse</b>	Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife.	In progress	Plan decided at meeting – Clerk to follow up.

#### 24.51.2 Update on Swelling Hill Pond.

Cllr Gebbett advised that the works were now complete and that a separate tree assessment would need to take place.

#### 24.51.3 Update on tennis court/MUGA resurfacing.

The Clerk had inspected the works on Monday 3rd June and found that some of the edging around the basket ball courts is not satisfactory and noted a cracked slab. The correct basketball lines had also not been painted on correctly and so the contractor had been contacted to revisit the site.

#### 24.52 Next meeting - 3rd July 2024.

#### 24.53 Meeting closed 9.20pm.