

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee
Held on Thursday 8th August commencing at 6pm at Four Marks Village Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Cllrs Gebbett, Coulson and M Pullen
IN ATTENDANCE:	Jo Tsigarides and Victoria Ursulean
Members of the Public:	Four
APOLOGIES:	Cllr Medhurst

24.64 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Medhurst had sent apologies (work) which were duly accepted by the Committee.

24.65 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Residents located behind the football pitch requested for the Council to review the citing of the football posts on the practice pitch. They raised concerns over anti-social behaviour since the goal posts have been moved back. They mentioned loud music until 10pm, footballs coming over their fence, obscenities being shouted and people climbing over their hedgerow and fence. Cllr Gebbett proposed to move agenda item 5.2 forward.

With no further items raised, the Open Session ended at 6.10pm

24.66 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Coulson declared a prejudicial interest in item 5.1 as the matter involved a neighbour.

24.67 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbett which was seconded by Cllr M Pullen, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was: **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on July 3rd 2024.

24.68 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbett, which was seconded by Cllr Coulson and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to bring Agenda Item 5.2 forward.

24.68.1 To note resident correspondence/complaints about direction of play on football field.

With the residents in attendance, Cllrs Gebbett and Coulson said that they had been to look at the area. Cllr Coulson was concerned about putting youths off using the area for sports as it had been mentioned to her by up to 40 people that they were very happy the practice pitch had returned to its original standing. The Clerk noted that the Archery Club does their practice on the cricket field three times a week, and also that it is the only field for dogs without leads. She suggested reporting the anti-social behaviour to the PCSO and passed on his email address. Cllr Gebbett suggested moving the goals 90 degrees and looking at nets to protect the Scout Hut. The Clerk agreed to canvas opinions from those using the pitch and this would be revisited at the September 2024 meeting.

24.68.2 To note interim tree inspection notes and discuss Oak Tree at Scout hut.

With The Councillors approval, Cllr Coulson remained in the meeting room during item 5.1.

A local resident had attended the July 2024 Open Spaces Committee meeting and reported that a large Oak tree on the border of the Scout Hut car park and their property, which is of significant size, has lost limbs in her garden and that the branches are almost touching their garage. The Clerk did a site visit and was able to provide Councillors with photographs of said tree.

The Clerk advised that during the interim tree inspection, the consultant had said that the Oak tree in question was healthy with no signs of decay. They advised that the resident could apply for planning permission to have the tree branches trimmed (due to a TPO). The Resident asked about who would fund this work and the Councillors were in agreement that there was no room in the budget for this.

The Clerk noted that the Arboricultural Inspector also looked at the Ash tree in Badgers Close and saw no evidence of cavities or decay but that the crown was sparse and this could be due to Ash Dieback. This should be monitored. The Tree Inspector went to view the Cherry Tree on Bishops View but failed to find it. The Clerk said she would investigate this further.

24.68.3 To consider request from Alton U11 team to play matches on 'cricket' field.

The Clerk explained that Manor Colts U11's football team agreed on a fee and schedule with the Finance and General Purposes Committee to use the practice pitch for matches on Saturdays at 8.30-10.30. Alton U11s requested to use the pitch as a temporary measure as they had no pitch to use, but under the request of the Clerk to only use the cricket field as a last resort. They did use the cricket field and have requested to use it for future matches, citing that the parents like to use the Pavilion patio to stand on and that they wouldn't have to repaint their lines as much.

Cllr Coulson mentioned that Alton teams like to use Jubilee Fields, but the Pitch Inspector doesn't like teams to use it during the summer months in order to preserve it, which means they don't get much play.

It was unanimously agreed that football should stay on the football pitch, and that Alton U11s should be offered play on the practice pitch for a two hour slot after Manor Colts have played. It was suggested that the price of paint could be shared between the teams.

24.69 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

24.69.1 To review and approve playground works from RoSPA report

A list of the quotations received for the works on the playground was viewed and on the proposal of Cllr Gebbett, which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, it was **RESOLVED** to appoint contractor two to undertake the works, that the wooden structure in the skate park be repaired, and to just replace one section of the multiplay rope. It was agreed that we would revisit the original contractor who laid the tarmac at the foot of the skate ramps.

24.69.2 To review additional works noted by maintenance contractor.

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbett, which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, it was **RESOLVED** to carry out the additional works to the playground equipment once a final price has been acquired and distributed to the Committee members. The Clerk noted that there is £7,340 in reserves for playground equipment.

24.69.3 To consider tennis gate technology grant and ongoing maintenance.

The LTA have offered The Council new gate technology which provides an access code to the tennis players as well as remotely operating the floodlights. The Council would have to pay a yearly maintenance fee to the gate company. On considering the proposed tennis gate technology, Cllr Gebbet requested a profit and loss account which the Clerk would source from the RFO. This would give a clearer picture of affordability as the Council need funds available for the resurfacing of the courts when required. This should also give a basis from which to request a rental agreement from a tennis coach. Cllr Coulson suggested purchasing multiple padlocks and changing them each month as the maintenance costs of proposed technology was a big commitment. The Clerk suggested a digital lock. It was unanimously agreed to move this item on to the next meeting's agenda.

24.69.4 Playground signage quotations for review.

Cllr Gebbett requested that all the signage should contain the 'no dogs allowed' image except for the skate park. In general, Councillors were happy with the proposed signs and on the proposal of Cllr Gebbett, which was

seconded by Cllr Coulson, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the cost of the aluminium signage and ask Contractor One for a sample.

24.69.5 Badger Close update and approval of any works.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen and seconded by Cllr Coulson, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation of £600 for the cutting back of trees and hedges behind 30, 31, 20, And 22 Badger Close, and the reduction of the Hawthorn tree along the badger run. Cllr Gebbett noted that a resident had offered to contribute towards this, and that could encompass one third of the costs.

24.70 OS AREA UPDATE

24.70.1 To receive report

There was a brief update on the ash tree on Uplands Lane where it was noted that the works would take place on Monday 12th August in the morning. This is to limit the disruption to the public. It was also noted that the cemetery inspection had been completed, and that the children's tennis camp had been cancelled for the following week due to low numbers. The Clerk assumed this was due to the planned afternoon times.

24.70.2 To discuss any outstanding actions at Swelling Hill Pond.

Cllr Gebbett mentioned two outstanding issues at Swelling Hill Pond. Some clay soil is required to fill in behind the revetments, and quotations from a tree surgeon should be acquired to remove overhanging branches so that they are 6-8 feet from the edge of the pond.

24.71 OS EVENTS

24.71.1 To receive update on fireworks display following site meeting on Monday 5th August 2024.

Cllrs Coulson and M. Pullen met with members of Four Marks Village School to discuss the fireworks display. Cllr Coulson was concerned that the fliers that have been proposed do not contain enough information regarding the time of fireworks. The Clerk agreed to email the PTA and ask for this information plus the website to be added to the flier. Cllr M. Pullen mentioned that the fireworks would take place on the cricket field and an arc around the firework zone would be marked out for health and safety. This matter will be presented to the Full Council in September 2024 for final approval.

24.72 Meeting closed at 7.41pm

24.73 Next meeting: 11th September 2024