

Four Marks Parish Council

Minutes of the Open Space Committee Wednesday 14th September 2016 commencing at 7.00pm At the Benian's Pavilion, Uplands Lane, Four Marks

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Anne Tomlinson (Chairman), Cllrs Tim Brake, John Davis, Dave Mills, Janet Foster and Derek Seaton
IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Sarah Goudie (Clerk), Mrs Lesley Chandler (Deputy Clerk)
APOLOGIES: None

16.67 OPEN SESSION

The Committee meeting started with site visit to Lymington Bottom Green to discuss maintenance work to the trees, followed by a visit to the Recreation Ground to discuss the hedgerow breach, fencing and planting options. Mr Simon Gray attended the site visit to advise the members on the various proposals to ensure that they were able to make informed decision. Although thanked personally, Cllr Tomlinson asked for a formal thank you to be Minuted to Mr Gray for taking time out of his evening to attend and advise the Parish Council. Once the site meetings were concluded, the members returned to the meeting venue and commenced with the main business of the meeting.

There were no items to be raised under the Open Session.

The meeting commenced at 8.00pm. Standing Orders were applied.

16.68 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

16.69 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

16.70 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

- The Minutes of the Open Space Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd August 2016, previously circulated were proposed as an accurate record by Cllr Foster, seconded by Cllr Tomlinson and were signed by the Chairman.
- Matters arising
 - Cllr Seaton asked if there had been any success in attempting to get any recompense for the work carried out at 1 Thorn Lane. The Clerk confirmed that she had been unsuccessful in an attempt to recoup any costs as the property is tied into various legislations due to the recent death of the owner, however it was considered a necessary task and the Parish Council had been thanked for carrying out this work as a goodwill gesture.
 - Cllr Seaton asked for information on the Parish Lengthman's Scheme. The Clerk passed her details on the scheme to Cllr Seaton but confirmed that there is no availability on the current scheme, but we are on the waiting list for next round of the application process.
 - Cllr Mills was very concerned about the removal, probably due to the quality, of one of the new padlocks, the Clerk confirmed that the cemetery gate padlock had also been broken open. It was agreed to get a heavy duty lock, for the gate, from a local

locksmith to avoid this happening in the future. He was also concerned that one of the dragon's teeth beside the scout hut is loose and easily removable. The Clerk said that we were awaiting the removal of the garage so we could re-do all the dragons teeth in that area. As it is now approaching two years since the pavilion was demolished it was agreed that the Football Club, who had expressed an interest in the garage, should be written to and asked to remove it by the end of October if they still want it or the Parish Council would do it and dispose of as appropriate, together with what is still in the building.

- Cllr Mills also asked the clerk if there had been any response to the query with reference to the rusty goal posts? The Clerk agreed to chase this again.

16.71 OS AREA UPDATES

• Recreation Ground.

- **Tennis Courts.** Land Transfer now completed. Second cabinet grant application for fencing to be submitted this month. *The clerk confirmed she is chasing the original application so as not to miss the deadline the following week.*
- **Table Tennis table.** A concrete base and rhino mulch surface playing surface in the children's play area has been installed. The table will be moved once the base has set. Bats and balls will be left in the Pavilion for use by users of the Pavilion only. The play area was deemed the only suitable location due to the undulations in other areas.
- **Skate Ramps.** Finally installed. Final payment made and retention now released. The supplier has offered some small portable ramps as a good will gesture, although these are yet to materialise. Security fencing still to be removed and will be chased as they are now being used as a new obstacle. *It was agreed to chase the contractor and if they are not removed by the end of week to get Scott Stewart to remove them.*
- **Playground.** New parts ordered to fix broken equipment and new picnic table has been delivered and is awaiting installation. Unsuccessful with the Tesco's Bags of Help grant application for replacing the toddler multiplay unit, should the Parish Council consider complete refurbishment? *It was agreed to get costs to completely refurbish the play equipment and decided which would be the most cost effective option.*
- **Land between the skate park and pavilion.** Land Registry search for the owner has established the land is not registered. *It was agreed to try and make contact with the new owners through the executor and make a new approach to purchase the land.*
- **Storey's Sanctuary right of way.** Tree still to be removed, then fence to be installed to rear of 9 Vectis Close. Awaiting confirmation of access from the development side.
- **Land at Telegraph Lane/A31 junction.** Nothing further to report.
- **Cemetery.** A full check is now being carried out in the Cemetery where headstones will be checked for safety purposes. The Clerk reported a new but very sensitive issue in that a headstone has been requested that is not permitted under the Winchester Diocese rules. Although it doesn't specify this in our own rules, because the ground is consecrated, they have the ultimate say. It was agreed that we need to make reference to these regulations in our own for the future. The memorial request needs to be refused, but separately further concerns have been raised over the same persons grave and inappropriate memorabilia on the grave space. Cllr Foster agreed to visit with the bereaved family and refer them to the rules and regulations of cemetery etiquette, and although it was agreed that it was difficult to raise both concerns, it was best done sooner rather than later but confirm to them as sensitively as possible, that once the first anniversary of the death had passed, all inappropriate items need to be removed.

- **Swelling Hill Pond.** Report of damaged tree received was received on 7th September, the Angling club removed broken branches but remedial protection work needs to be carried out.
- **Allotments.** *Cllr Davis has raised serious concern over the Allotment Chairman and the Allotment Committee's actions, and had asked the Clerk to provide a copy of their Constitution. Cllr Davis feels that the Constitution is inadequate with no provision for holding an EGM to discuss the various concerns. There was a meeting on the following Monday and following that meeting, Cllr Davis would report back to the Full Council with an Agenda item for next Open Space to discuss this issue in further detail.*
- **Footpaths.** Nothing to report. *Cllr Mills asked if the concrete bollard lying across Footpath 6 could be removed. The Clerk agreed to action this.*

16.72 ONGOING PROJECTS:

- **Oak Green.** The draft tender is ready to submit following insertion of dates. However Cllr Seaton expressed serious concern over the way the refurbishment would be project managed, and keen to ensure that the Parish Council would not be in the position again that it is now. It was agreed that to hire a Project Manager would cost more than the project itself and that this was not an option. Although of concern there was no easy solution to ensure that the materials used would do the job they should do, the Parish Council can provide the specification but will have to rely on testament and recommendation as to their durability. It was suggested that the Local Authority be contacted to see if it would be possible to buy services on project management from them. It was agreed, however, to progress with the submission of the tender to the Contracts Finder system and start the procurement process. Details of product specification could be dealt with further down the line.
- **Recreation Ground**
 - **Benian's Pavilion.** The Clerk raised a comment that had been made on the proposals for the extension of the pavilion, in that the kitchen in proposals A & C was completely enclosed with no natural light or ventilation and that this may raise Regulation concerns, and would Option B be more cost effective if the objective is primarily to increase the bar and hall space? The Clerk agreed to pass on these additional comments to Cllr Seaton to raise at the appropriate meeting, which is to be held prior to presentation of the chosen option to the Parish Council for approval and submission to Sport England.
 - **Charles Church Boundary Breach.** Detailed discussions took place as to what needs to be done to restore the hedgerow and boundary between the Recreation Ground and Medstead Farm estate following the earlier site visit. The Clerk presented three fencing options all of which would work with hedgerow planting but offering different benefits. It was agreed that the deer fencing style with the oak posts would be the most suitable for this project and although it was acknowledged it did not have the longevity of other options, it was the most aesthetically pleasing and by the time the posts deteriorate the hedgerow would be established. It would also offer connectivity for the wildlife until the hedgerow was re-established. The Clerk confirmed that both grants and developers contributions would be used to fund this project. Details of the planting plan would be submitted to EHDC to ensure that the loss of the Ash Tree was recompensed. An article would be submitted to the Four Marks News to explain the restoration work in detail and it was agreed that Tracey Vear the new development liaison officer should be contacted and asked get in touch with the new residents to explain the reasons behind the works, and help them understand and respect the rural aspect of Four Marks and integrate them appropriately into their new environment. The pedestrian boundary breach by

the now removed Ash Tree would remain as it was more than apparent that this was necessary. There was no confidence that Charles Church would carry out the proposed fencing and the issue with the damage to the hedgerow would be dealt with separately.

- **Cricket.** The Clerk asked the members for approval to spend open space funds to 'put the wicket to bed', in preparation for next season. (Approx £500-£1,000) Although Alton Cricket Club had intimated that, due to the restriction on availability because of the Archers extensive usage had proved difficult in scheduling matches, they may not return. However John Cook from Hampshire Cricket had proposed trying to set up a Sunday afternoon cricket club under the banner of Four Marks Cricket club and would come and speak to the Council in due course about his proposals. It was agreed that it would be beneficial to keep the wicket playable now that the pitch is up and running again and in the long term would be a good investment.
- **Mobile Catering van.** The clerk advised the members that the catering van who had asked for permission to trade at the football matches had a formal licence in place with Alton TC and if we were to give agreement a similar arrangement should be put in place. It was agreed that the football club should be approached for agreement prior to getting back to the enquirer.
- **Lymington Bottom Green,** following the site visit the proposed maintenance works were approved.
- **Badger Close.** It was agreed to give the resident permission to trim the wildlife hedges as proposed along their driveway. The footpath encroachment of the laurel hedge adjacent to 10 Badger Close was discussed in detail and it was agreed that although the occupant did get the hedge trimmed back yearly it would be difficult to ask them to have this done more regularly, but that it was not appropriate for the Parish Council to intervene or this could set a precedent. It was agreed to find out who the contractor is to see if when they are next approached if they were able to cut it back more aggressively to allow for seasonal growth without further encroachment during that year, and that the Rights of Way officer be contacted for advice.

Land Transfer. The Clerk advised the members that a third solicitor had now contacted her about the Antler Homes land transfer of the wildlife corridors and orchard, which has still not taken place. It appears that this condition on their permission has not been discharged and they are in breach of their planning conditions, and it also appears that they owe the Parish Council a sum in the region of £7,000. The Clerk confirmed she had passed this on to the EHDC legal department. In the meantime maintenance work needs to be carried out, but it was agreed that until the land transfer takes place no further work would be done.
- **Kingswood Copse.** A resident had raised concerns over the Ash Trees to the rear of her garden in the woodland, one of which had a broken branch hanging. The Clerk confirmed that any required work would be carried out in the Autumn, when the next stage of coppicing takes place.

16.73 OS NEW ISSUES

- Refurbishment of finger posts. The Clerk advised members that, due to the complex nature of restoring the finger posts, this was going to cost in excess of £2,000. Lesley had got three quotes, no local companies had quoted. It was agreed that they need to be done and the Clerk is to investigate grant opportunities to carry out the work.
- Community Challenge Fund and Small Grants scheme applications. Both of these schemes criteria would be looked at to see if any of the above projects would be suitable.

16.74 OS DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Next Meeting Wednesday 6th October 2016, 8.30pm, at the Benian's Pavilion, unless advised otherwise, to follow Planning

16.75 OS The Chairman closed the Meeting at 10.00pm.

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Chairman