

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Space Committee
Held on Wednesday 7th July 2021 commencing at 6.00pm at Four Marks Sports Pavilion**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Cllr Anne Tomlinson (Chair), Cllrs Neil Bonter, John Davis and Janet Foster
IN ATTENDANCE:	Jo Tsigarides (AEO) Sarah Goudie (EO) Cllr Reg Pullen
APOLOGIES:	None

21.49 OS OPEN SESSION/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Cllr Pullen enquired about the proposed SLR poles for Blackberry Lane and what progress had been made so far with location and funding. The AEO had received an email from HCC prior to the meeting and will liaise with the EO about this matter.

Cllr Bonter referred to comments that have previously been made by a member of the public at both Open Space Committee and Full Council meetings regarding the use of social media to promote Council business and activities. It was questioned as to whether there could be a facility on the website where people can fill out a form/give their email address so that an automatic message could then be sent to them with Agendas and details of meetings. The EO will investigate this further.

Cllr Foster informed the Committee that the next putting club event would be on Thursday 19th August 2021. Following a discussion with the club as they were making preparations, they said that they are open to a relocation away from the children's play area.

The AEO informed the Committee that the company that provide the Christmas lights had been in touch to ask for confirmation of preferred installation dates. After discussion with the EO, the proposal is to agree an earliest install date of the 22nd November 2021 as the Christmas tree will be in situ by then, with a window of installation until the 30th November 2021, allowing for a switch on the 1st December 2021. The earliest removal date proposed is the 4th January 2022. The Committee approved this.

The EO gave a brief update on the land at Swelling Hill Pond and advised that Land Registry had confirmed they were now progressing the reregistering of the boundary however recommended completing an FR1 form for registering the area of land to the front of the pond, including the car park, stating claim for adverse possession as the Council have been maintaining the area in excess of the statutory twelve years.

Cllr Foster stated that she had been made aware of some more fly tipping at Oak Green and said that she would investigate, advising the AEO if anything needed to be removed.

The EO had met with the tennis club and has been told that they are planning to obtain quotes for the resurfacing of the courts. It is thought that they may apply to the Parish Council for a grant for this project in the future.

The AEO informed the Committee that a resident had been recently volunteering with some open space tasks. Specifically, he has completed some work at the cemetery where graves have been left untended for some time and had become very overgrown. He has also helped with hedge trimming and the shrub beds at Lymington Bottom Green. The Committee acknowledged his hard work and appreciated his efforts. The AEO has been asked to send a note of thanks.

Cllr Davis asked what progress had been made regarding the gardening works at Oak Green in terms of barriers identified which may prevent a contractor from completing their tasks efficiently. The AEO has contacted several businesses along the parade of shops to try and obtain water access but with no success and it has been agreed that limited tools could be stored in the cupboard on site. There was a discussion about the previous contractor using containers and that this could continue to be the case going forward.

There were no further items to raise under the Open Session, therefore the meeting commenced at 6.05pm. Standing Orders were applied.

21.50 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

21.51 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Davis declared an interest in item 21.54.1

21.52 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

It was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Open Space Committee Meeting, previously circulated, held on Wednesday 19th May 2021 following proposal by Cllr Tomlinson , seconded by Cllr Foster , and agreed by all Councillors as a true reflection of the meeting and would be signed by the Chairman at the next meeting in person.

21.53 OS MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman formally acknowledged the contribution that a resident has made to obtaining the Oak tree artwork for the village sign. The resident contacted the designer directly and kindly paid for the illustration of the Oak tree.

21.54 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

21.54.1 Quote for allotment fencing replacement.

Due to the cost of the quote that was presented, a discussion took place about the cost of clearing the brambles, the type of fencing required and associated costs with rabbit proofing along with a comparison with fencing that has recently been replaced in the village. It was noted that condition of the fencing is very poor and presents a security issue. It was agreed that this work should go ahead but in order to keep the costs down, the Allotment Association would be approached to complete the bramble clearance later in the year when the conditions are better. The AEO also noted that the grant stream for Developer's Contributions should be open by then and that the Council could apply for some funding for the project. It was agreed to delay this until October/November.

.21.54.2 Quotes for installation of various items at Telegraph Lane/A31

Two quotes were presented to the Committee for the installation of a noticeboard, bin and bench at the Telegraph Lane junction and also for the installation of the 'To the Pond' sign. It was confirmed that the relevant fixings are in our possession and the Committee RESOLVED unanimously to approve quote two.

.21.54.3 Grant application from Speedwatch

The Speedwatch organisation have applied for a grant of £86.89 for new uniform for their volunteers. A breakdown of costs was given to the Committee and it was noted that there have been previous donations to this group. It was RESOLVED unanimously to approve this grant.

21.54.4 To consider whether to put a 50L dog waste bin at the cricket pitch and approve quote.

The AEO informed the Committee that there have been ongoing issues with the 30L bin to the far side of the cricket pitch. It is often overflowing which has led to several complaints. The AEO has contacted the contractor to see whether the operator would be able to lift a 50L bin but has had no response. It was suggested that a better option would be to purchase an additional 30L bin and put it next to the existing one, therefore increasing the overall capacity to 60L and ensuring that the weight is not too much for the operator as they could make two trips. It was RESOLVED to purchase an additional 30L bin.

21.55 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

21.55.1 Summary and review of the RoSPA inspection

The AEO had compiled a document outlining the issues raised in this report from May 2021. It was suggested that as a routine annual programme of maintenance for some issues could be put in place as some points such as the removal of swing and zip wire covers to carry out inspections as they repeatedly appear on the report. It was decided to contact neighbouring Alton Town Council to enquire about their routine maintenance as their play area is popular and heavily used. There was also a discussion about the Machinery Directive which the AEO will investigate and what obligations the Parish Council has under this legislation. The AEO was also asked to find out about the material that the swing chains are made from and whether or not they are prone to rusting.

With reference to the shakes, Cllrs Foster and Davis do check the shake size on the timber frames, but their checklist is going to be modified to incorporate a formal check for shake size, ensuring that none exceed 8mm.

There were several points about surfacing throughout the children's play area and the worst area is around the fire engine. The fire engine was installed last year and does have the relevant safety surfacing but due to the popularity of the item, parents tend to walk around the area and the surface has become worn. The company that installed the fire engine have supplied a quote for Rhyno Mulch surfacing for the worn area. It was decided that due to the volume of worn surfacing, a programme would be put in place over the next three years to replace the surfacing throughout the play area with Rhyno Mulch. As a result of this programme of resurfacing, it was suggested that the company may be incentivised to provide a more competitive quote with the offer of repeat business. The AEO is going to approach the company and also obtain a further quote for comparison.

The rest of the summary was discussed and there are some items such as the required signage that are already underway. A main issue from the report was the gates, especially the one on the right hand side of the play area, near the zip wire. Various options were discussed including replacing one or both of the gates. The EO suggested that a grant may be available next year to replace all of the wooden fencing and the gates at the same time and so on that basis, the AEO will contact the contractor who has fixed the gate before for another temporary fix. The resident who has repeatedly complained about the noise caused by the violent closing mechanism will also be contacted with an update.

Cllr Foster has also made comprehensive notes on the report and will send these to the AEO.

21.55.2 Update on tennis court floodlights following communication with contractor/approved electrical quotes.

Cllr Bonter provided an update on his contact with the electrical contractor and informed the AEO of an alternative email address to contact the company on and approve the quotes. He has also discussed the switch type with them and they are able to complete the works to the Committee's requirements.

Despite his efforts to contact the company regarding the tennis lights that were proposed at the last meeting, Cllr Bonter has been unable to speak to them. It was suggested that he could email them and he is also going to speak to the electrical company that are completing the above works to revisit the quote that they provided.

21.55.3 Applications for gardener position

There is one applicant currently for the gardener position and it was decided that the AEO would ask some further questions about their hourly rate and if it is acceptable, organise a meeting with the Chairman and any other Committee members who wish to be involved.

21.55.4 Cricket pitch strategy

The AEO has been in touch with various cricket organisations to try and get some interest in using the cricket pitch but so far has not had any success. It was suggested that to the Committee that rather than constantly maintaining the cricket pitch which there is no interest in using, they could cease the upkeep and if there was a sudden future interest, consider investing in an artificial pitch. The Committee unanimously agreed to this strategy of ceasing to maintain the pitch.

Whilst completing an unrelated tender, a contractor who is also a member of a local cricket club expressed an interest in purchasing the cricket equipment that the Council has. It was agreed that a meeting should be set with the interested party with a view to selling all equipment and keep the money in a cricket fund should it be needed in the future.

21.55.5 Mobile football dugouts

Four Marks football club wish to pursue obtaining some dugouts. They have provided two options that they are considering and propose to fund this via a District Councillor grant, Parish Council grant and sponsorship. They wanted to seek opinion and recommendations from the OS Committee prior to beginning the application process.

The Committee discussed that the first option is not favoured and could not be contemplated without a proposal for a proper storage solution. The second option was also discussed and favoured but it was noted that some time ago, the Council proposed to purchase and install two permanent benches for the club to use meaning that they would only need to provide a pop-up shelter. Although the football club were not keen on this proposal previously, a new manager is now in place and the AEO is going to contact him about this.

It was also suggested that to obtain sponsorship, that the football club approach other organisations within the village.

21.56 AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS

21.56.1 Area Update

The AEO informed the Committee that the well restoration has been delayed by a day due to the contractor over running on a previous project.

Through contact with Cllr Hammond, Alton ramblers have offered to provide some assistance with footpath maintenance and have cut footpath 8 and are planning to do footpath 18 on the 13th of July 2021.

21.56.2 Queen's Platinum Jubilee working party.

The AEO has put out social media posts and contacted various organisations within the community to try and form a working party to plan the events for next year. So far, Cllrs McCarthy, Davis and Hammond have expressed an interest along with one member of the public, a representative from COGs, the Scouts and District Councillor Thomas. The WI may be interested but do not wish to help with catering. There are still some groups that have not responded but once the final group has been established, the AEO will set a first meeting, facilitate it and then feed back to the Open Space Committee.

21.57 OS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

21.57.1 Water refill point

An agreement was signed in March 2020 for a water refill station to be installed at the Sports Pavilion. Cllr Foster has been in touch with a local scientist and some questions were raised over the safety of refilling bottles. Specifically that there could be cross contamination from the bottles when people remove the lids and the mouthpiece touches the equipment. Although there is no data to suggest that there is a risk, it has been suggested that daily cleaning should take place. This project has been put on hold pending further investigation due to health and safety risks.

21.57.2 Wind Turbine

Cllr Bonter suggested that some time would need to be taken to find out the relevant information as it was some time ago that this project was discussed. The Committee proposed that this could be a good initiative to incorporate into the new community building and recreational hub and asked that this be passed to the working party for this project.

21.57.3 Car charging point

After previous contact with EHDC, it was decided that the Council would wait for communication from EHDC on this matter. It was suggested that a charging point could be set up to provide income and also that this could be a good initiative to incorporate into the new community building and recreational hub and asked that this be passed to the working party for this project.

21.57.4 New initiatives – bike rack request at the allotment

The AEO has been contacted by a resident with a request to install some bike racks at the allotment. The committee discussed that if people do ride their bikes, that they could take their bikes to their plot to keep them safe or leave them at the main gate. There could be a possibility of having bike racks at the recreation ground but again, this was thought to be a good initiative to incorporate into the new community building and recreational hub and asked that this be passed to the working party for this project.

21.58 OS WILDFLOWER AREAS

The AEO updated the Committee on the wildflower areas in the village which unfortunately have had limited success this year. After consultation with a local resident and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight wildlife trust, it appears that the ground was not prepared correctly. HIWW have had various successful programmes where they have helped facilitate volunteer groups called 'Wilder' groups and have suggested that this is a good option to complete the amount of work that would be necessary to cultivate the wildflower areas. The group would need to be in place by late Augst/early September.

The AEO is going to investigate this further and also contact Four Marks Horticultural Society for advice and possible volunteer help.

21.59 OS 10k UPDATE

Currently, there have been 12 entrants for the 10k and one entrant for the 5k. This month, the AEO is going to focus on publicising the event. Adverts are going in this and next months Four Marks News, flyers have been given out at the Alresford 10k and the Alton Herald has also been contacted. This is along with social media posts and the website.

21.60 OS The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.25pm

APPENDIX ONE

Location	Action required	Status	Notes
A31 Winchester Road	Noticeboard	Ongoing	Issue with noticeboard – awaiting delivery of panel. ‘Do not Mow’ signs removed as wildflower areas have not taken. Actions from meeting AEO. Installation quote approved – to action.
	Wildflower Areas	Ongoing	
	Bench Bin	Delivered Delivered	
Allotments	-Fencing, estate side, and wildlife corridor breach reports	Pending	On hold – Allotment Assoc to remove brambles and apply for grant.
Badger Close	- Replacement fencing	Completed	
Cemetery	Planting schedule to take place. New burial regulations in place.	Pending	Project for gardener Resident has cleared some overgrowth.
Kingswood Copse	Access letters	Completed	Completed
Lymington Bottom Green	- Wildflower Planting	Pending	Sign needed. – as above.
	-To the Pond sign	Pending	Sign awaiting installation – approved awaiting action
Oak Green	-Flower beds	Pending	Gardener applications reviewed at meeting – to contact applicant.
Recreation Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training area and tennis courts floodlights; agree purchase of replacement light housings, electrician to be contacted for costs for installation - Vandalism and CCTV – - Security lighting approved, contractor awarded contract, awaiting installation - new CCTV motion activated camera to be installed at the Pavilion to attempt to curb nighttime anti-social behavior - Cricket pitch; No further action, sell equipment. - Public Spaces Protection Order; 	Pending	Further investigations to find appropriate supplier pending.
		Completed	Key access issue decided.
		Pending	Awaiting update
		Reviewed	
		Approved	Liaise with EHDC for regular patrols.
Station Gardens	- No reported issues		
Swelling Hill Pond	Shoring works	Pending	Postponed until Spring/Summer 2021

	<p>Land Registry boundary issue - boundary registration, now submitted - boundary fencing, seek further quotes ready for confirmation from Land Registry -refurbishment of Well - remedial works to parking area</p>	<p>Awaiting response</p> <p>Awaiting confirmation of boundary registration Pending</p>	<p>Contractors to be contacted for quotes.</p> <p>Work underway</p>
Benians Pavilion	-Guttering replacement	Completed	
Climate Change	- Water refill station -Previous initiatives – car charging point, wind turbine along with bike racks	On hold Passed to NBRH working party	
Open Spaces – General	<p>PARISH TREES Ash tree removal</p> <p>GRASS CUTTING & MAINTENANCE Hedgerow to be reinstalled along access to pavilion road.</p> <p>FOOTPATH MAPS</p> <p>BUS SHELTERS Maintenance/Cleaning</p> <p>VILLAGE SIGNAGE Gateway signage. Lymington Bottom Road /Boyneswood Road Gateway signate: A31</p> <p>LYMINGTON BOTTOM ROAD Awaiting Pedestrian crossing works, site will then be cleared, and once carried out, decision to be made whether to approach Highways further.</p> <p>NOTICE BOARDS Proposal to replace Lymington Barns board 50/50 using S106 contributions</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Pending</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Pending</p> <p>Pending</p>	<p>A31 board ordered, awaiting grant decision before order of others.</p> <p>Phase 1, sign approved and awaiting production and installation Phase 2, EO to make contact to progress options</p> <p>Delayed to September/October by HCC</p> <p>Awaiting delivery and installation (MPC)</p>