

**FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Space Committee  
Held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 commencing at 6.00pm at Four Marks Village Hall**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>Cllr Anne Tomlinson (Chair), Cllrs Neil Bonter, John Davis, Janet Foster and Reg Pullen</b>
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	<b>Sarah Goudie (EO) Jo Tsigarides (AEO) Cllr John Hammond</b>
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	<b>Two members of the public None</b>

**22.00 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**22.01 OS OPEN SESSION/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

A member of the public made some observations and comments regarding the planting plan for the cemetery which was due to be presented to the Committee in full later in the meeting. Having become familiar with the area, they had concerns about overplanting but did generally like the concept.

Cllr Hammond asked whether the OS Committee could revisit the areas that had been designated as wildflower areas having noticed a triangle of land at the bottom of Blackberry Lane where the heritage finger post is located had become very overgrown. It was noted that this area of land is not owned by the Parish Council but that over the summer, a 'Do Not Mow' sign had been placed there as wildflowers seemed to be thriving. It was agreed to remove the sign and the AEO advised that the current wildflower areas which have been scarified and planted are at the bottom of Lymington Bottom Green and along the edge of the former cricket pitch.

The AEO advised that the Great British Spring Clean is planned for the 25<sup>th</sup> March – 10<sup>th</sup> April 2022. It is hoped that community litter picking will be able to go ahead by then. Following a request from Cllr Foster at the most recent Full Council meeting, five volunteers undertook litter picking at the Recreation Ground over the Christmas period and a substantial amount of litter was collected.

**There were no further items to raise under the Open Session, therefore the meeting commenced at 6.10pm pm and Standing Orders were applied.**

**22.02 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**22.03 OS MATTERS ARISING**

**22.03.1 Amendment to minute number 21.103**

Following the circulation of the minutes from the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021, two points were agreed for amendment. Firstly, that although the Festival Committee referred to their project in the meeting as the Village Gateway Signage Project, this is the same name that the Parish Council project has and so there is confusion in the minutes

regarding which project is in question. For the purpose of clarity, it is asked that the Festival Committee project is referred to as the 'Festival Committee Illustrated Welcome Signage' project.

Secondly that representatives that came to support with the Festival Committee Illustrated Welcome Sign project presentation are correctly recognised as the 'former Chair of the Festival Committee' and 'former Secretary of the Festival Committee' as opposed to residents/former members.

#### **22.04 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES**

Subject to the above changes, it was RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Open Space Committee Meeting, previously circulated, held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 following proposal by Cllr Foster, seconded by Cllr Davis, and agreed by all Councillors as a true reflection of the meeting and were duly signed by the Chairman.

#### **22.05 OS PRESENTATION FROM GARDEN DESIGNER ON CEMETERY PLANTING PROJECT**

It was agreed by the Committee to change the order of the Agenda in order to allow this presentation to take place first.

The garden designer that has been commissioned to do the cemetery planting project gave a full presentation on their design concept. It was noted that in addition to the £250 already allocated to this project, the AEO has made a District Councillor Community Grant application for £1000 towards this project and is hopeful that it will be supported as it fulfils some environmental objectives. A hedgerow pack has also been ordered from the Woodland Trust as part of the Queen's Green Canopy which will be used at the perimeter of this area.

It was noted that the proposed plants would be able to withstand the dark, wet conditions in this area and that plants of concern, such as the Mahonia, could be heavily cut back annually to prevent overgrowth. It is hoped that the plan, alongside using as many native plants as possible, will encourage wildlife and create year-round colour with minimal maintenance.

A spiral design has been suggested to allow people to walk into the centre and also provide a possible future location for a bench. The majority of the Committee were strongly in favour of the design and subject to a final site meeting between the designer, EO, AEO and grass cutting contractor to discuss finer details such as mowing practicalities, the concept has been approved.

#### **22.06 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

##### **22.06.1 Ash tree removal – to discuss strategy and review quotes.**

Following on from the last meeting, three tenders have now been collated and circulated for the removal of the Ash trees at Swelling Hil Pond and Badger Close. Although most of the quotes were comparable, company two submitted a far more competitive quote for the tree at Badger Close. The AEO advised that the company had been contacted and confirmed the pricing. More than one Councillor questioned the lower quotation, one of whom raised concerns about using a new company rather than a tried and tested one. The majority decided that despite the concerns raised, company two should be instructed to undertake this work.

Regarding the quote from company two at Swelling Hill Pond, the access issues were discussed and it was decided that even if there were problems, that there would be an alternative option of felling the tree (as preferred by company one). It was asked that it is confirmed with company two that the price for the works is fixed regardless of whether the method of removal is changed.

In conclusion, it was RESOLVED that company two would be awarded the contract to do both of the above removals, subject to a fixed date being agreed and the relevant insurance/risk assessments and third party documents being provided.

## Winchester Road Ash trees

Following a site visit from companyr one, it has been recommended that three mature Ash trees at this site should be removed. As the situation involves a residential garden, it was decided that this contractor would be suitable as they have completed the site visit, built a rapport with the resident and is known and trusted. It was RESOLVED to accept this quote subject to a fixed date being agreed and the relevant insurance/risk assessments and third party documents being provided.

### **22.06.2 Tennis court floodlights**

A discussion took place regarding the option of replacing one set of six lights (one entire court) versus just replacing the entire fittings and lamps for the three broken lights. The electrician had confirmed that the switch gear was not faulty and provided a quote for six LED lights and labour costs. The quality of the LED lights was questioned due to the low cost and the AEO will recirculate the specification of the lights.

It was agreed that it would be better to source six new lights for one court as using two different lights on one court may not provide a suitable solution. Cllr Bonter explained the differences between LED lights and HMI lights (similar to those currently in place) and noted that any lights would have to comply with LTA guidelines. The AEO will ask the electrician to provide a comparable quote for HMI lights and also check the regulations.

### **22.06.3 French drain on Uplands Lane**

There is a large build up of silt/debris on the surface of the French drain at the entrance to Uplands Lane and two contractors have been contacted to quote for clearing the drain and putting in new stones. Although several contractors were contacted to provide quotes, only two attended site visits and were asked to provide costs to clear the drain although the second contractor only provided quotes for more extensive works.

A discussion took place regarding whether the cost of any works could be justified given that there may need to be improvements to the width of the road that could have an impact on this area should the New Community Building project go ahead but it was decided that along with leaf clearance on the left hand side of the road, improvements needed to be made especially for pedestrians. It was RESOLVED to accept quote one.

## **22.07 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **22.07.1 Village planting plan**

**Cemetery planting plan review – dealt with above**

### **Queen's Platinum Jubilee tree**

The AEO advised that communities are being encouraged to 'plant a tree for the Jubilee' and various location proposals included Station Gardens, Swelling Hill Pond and Lymington Bottom Green but it was decided that the green space by the allotment gardens would be suitable and in addition to a tree planting, it would be a good opportunity to use the remainder of the hedge pack here. Cllr Davis confirmed that it is not anticipated that this land would be needed in the future for allotment plots. A suggestion was made that this area could be renamed as the 'Jubilee Gardens'.

With regard to the species of tree, the AEO will circulate recommendations to the Committee for decision and also research ordering a plaque for an unveiling ceremony to be included in the Jubilee planned activities.

### **Hedgerow at the Pavilion**

Following on from previous discussion in early 2020, the EO confirmed that she is in receipt of written agreement from the landowner of the neighbouring land to the hedgerow that they are happy for the hedgerow maintenance and improvements to take place.

It was noted that the area is in need of maintenance and that efforts should be made to enhance areas such as this prior to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. It was RESOLVED to accept the revised quote provided from the most competitive contractor.

**22.07.2 Outdoor wood preservative painting schedule**

Cllr Davis volunteered to undertake a programme of painting the outdoor wooden furniture such as the various benches around the Parish in order to prevent them from rotting. It was clarified that he had no intention of including the ladder rungs in this and also that a clear preservative would be used.

The Committee were supportive in principle of the idea, however it was decided that pressure washing the benches would be a good starting point.

**22.07.3 Bollards at Oak Green Parade**

Cllr Foster informed the Committee that a second wooden bollard at Oak Green parade had been knocked over and that although they were chosen for their natural appearance, they appear to be rotting and in disrepair. The need for them was emphasised, as they do ensure that drivers do not take vehicles onto the grass verge, however it was decided to leave the matter until they rot over time and become a bigger issue. No quotes will be sought for replacements due to fluctuations in pricing.

**22.08 OS AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS**

**22.08.1 Area Update**

Alongside the submitted report, the AEO advised the Committee that investigations had started into a suitable path to install alongside the football pitch and that she had been trying to contact the company that have been asked to deal with some outstanding playground issues.

Location	Action required	Status	Notes
A31 Winchester Road	Research into Ash trees following resident complaint.	In progress	Quote accepted for tree removals. – awaiting date. Greenhouse repair completed.
Badger Close	-Boundary issue – private garden -Ash tree removal	Pending In progress	Solution accepted – awaiting works.  Quote accepted – works booked for 7/3/2022
Cemetery	Planting schedule to take place  Full cemetery inspection	In progress  Pending	Agreed in principle, DC community grant awarded, site meeting 20/01/2022 To finish Jan 2022
Recreation Ground	- Tennis court flood light maintenance. - Cricket pitch; Sale of cricket items. -Mark out of junior pitch  - Public Spaces Protection Order; -Signage update  -Playground -Various pieces of equipment require attention. -Skate Park-Graffiti/vandalism	In progress  Pending  Approved  Pending  Pending	Further quotes to be sought   Awaiting response from football club.  Liaise with EHDC for regular patrols  Signs in progress of being designed and ordered.

	-Footway along football pitch -Uplands Lane French Drain -Land by allotments	Pending Pending In progress	Riding surface paint received/awaiting paint date. AEO has begun researching options.  To be designated as Jubilee area, tree planting etc to take place.
<b>Swelling Hill Pond</b>	Shoring works  Land Registry boundary issue - boundary registration, now submitted - boundary fencing, seek further quotes ready for confirmation from Land Registry -Ash tree removal	Pending In progress In progress In Progress	Postponed until Spring/Summer 2021 TR1 has been completed and awaiting update.  To Action when above is confirmed.  Quote accepted – works booked 04/03/2022
<b>Climate Change</b>	- Water refill station	Pending	Contractor accepted – to be installed Jan 22
<b>Open Spaces – General</b>	<b>PARISH TREES GRASS CUTTING &amp; MAINTENANCE</b> Hedgerow to be installed along access to pavilion road.  <b>VILLAGE SIGNAGE</b> Phase two gateway signage  <b>LYMINGTON BOTTOM ROAD</b> Decision to be made whether to approach Highways further following completion of works.	In progress  In Progress  In progress	Contractor accepted  EO to update at next meeting

### 22.08.2 Footpaths

Aside from some minor issues that have been reported, there are no footpath issues.

### 22.08.3 Village Gateways Project

The EO advised that notification had just been received that funding had been secured for the entire project and that updated drawings featuring 'Four Marks' on two separate lines, along with vertical picket style fencing would be available for the next meeting.

### 22.08.4 Parish Lengthsman

The EO informed the Committee that there are going to be some changes to the Lengthsman service and that there is a meeting at the end of January to give further details on this. It is thought that this service will be discontinued.

## **22.09 OS ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS**

### **22.09.1 Update on Water refill point**

Following some delay, the contractor has been booked in to complete this job in mid January.

### **22.09.2 The Greening Campaign**

The AEO recently attended an online information evening on the Greening Campaign which is a campaign run by an action group to help tackle climate change. The aim behind the campaign is to simplify and make steps towards battling climate change achievable. It was noted that although there a number of communities declaring a climate emergency, people are then reluctant to take action because they are confused, blinded by jargon or think that there has to be a huge cost involved.

The campaign has four phases, all of which come with actions and an implementation pack on how to go about delivering the initiative and engaging the community. Each phase has been reduced to £50 per pack. The first phase is about small steps that residents can take and carries on from a pilot called 'greening Petersfield' where small cards were delivered to each home with eight challenges on. Residents were asked to complete five of them and then display the card in the window by a given date and the response was overwhelming. The tasks could include saving water, turning off lights, not buying new and can be tailored to the demographic.

As a result, an idea of the CO2 that is saved is then given to the community by their actions so that they can see the result. So far, Alton Town Council have saved 213.5 tonnes of CO2 and 110.4 tonnes of water by completing the challenges. The following phases are available – 1, actions in the home, 2, retrofitting, rewilding and human health, 3, self assessing and building stronger communities, 4, adaptation and making the community more resilient.

Due to time constraints, this matter could not be fully discussed but will be a priority on the next Agenda for full discussion where it is hoped that the AEO will have further information from ATC about successes and challenges.

### **22.10 The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.29pm**