

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee
Held on 2nd October 2024 at Benians Pavilion, at 6.00pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Cllrs Gebbett, Coulson, Medhurst and M Pullen
IN ATTENDANCE:	Jo Tsigarides Clerk, Victoria Ursulean Assistant Clerk
APOLOGIES:	One member of the public
	None

24.83 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

24.84 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Clerk was made aware that residents situated behind Lymington Bottom Green have been cutting back some overhanging branches from the junction at Lymington Bottom next to Lymington Bottom Green which had been impacting on the visibility at the junction. They had indicated that they were able to continue doing this but that the wildflower beds had had a further impact on this. Cllrs discussed changing the shape of the wildflower bed, installing a mirror asking the contract gardener for advice. Some photos would be taken and the matter discussed at a future meeting.

Cllr M Pullen asked why the gate technology item had not been included on the Agenda, as agreed. As there had been some issue with the accounting software, the report that the Committee had requested had not been produced and so there would have been insufficient information to inform a decision. The funding window had also ended. Cllr M Pullen also requested to have 'items for consideration' as an agenda item in the future.

24.85 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

24.86 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the 18th September 2024.

24.87 OS SWELLING HILL POND

24.87.1 To review and approve quotations for groundwork tasks.

Quotations for the groundwork tasks had been circulated including using scalpings for the path around the pond, filling in the revetments and making the steps safe. Cllr Coulson noted that it does get very boggy around the pond and wondered if scalpings would be sufficient. Cllr Gebbett said that a sluice gate is required to be able to control the level of the water. Cllr Medhurst agreed, mentioning that the PC is responsible for the health and safety of those visiting the pond. Officers were asked to obtain quotes for a sluice gate.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting awaiting further quotes.

24.87.2 To discuss use of Siltex at pond.

The Angling Club were asked for their advice on the use of Siltex in the pond. The consensus was that Siltex was not cost effective or suitable.

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbett which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was agreed not to action the use of Siltex or a similar product.

24.87.3 To consider ongoing costs for Swelling Hill Pond

The Committee were asked to consider ongoing costs for the pond so that they could make a recommendation to F&GP. Following a discussion of outstanding matters along with building up a sinking fund for future desilting, the Committee agreed that £15 000 per annum would be appropriate.

24.88 OS RECREATION GROUND

24.88.1 To discuss LED lighting specifications and review any quotations if available.

The Clerk noted that a list of SAPCA registered companies had been asked for quotes regarding changing the floodlights on the practice pitch to LEDs. On looking at previous work done to the floodlights on the tennis courts, this had cost the PC under £2,000 and the work had been carried out on six lights, there are only four on the pitch. It was anticipated that quotations would be ready for discussion at the next meeting.

24.88.2 To receive funding update following meeting on 1st October 2024

The Clerk attended a meeting on the 1st October 2024 for towns and parishes with grass football pitches to enquire into funding available. Verti-draining was a suggestion from the meeting as a good way to drain the pitch and make it firmer. The Clerk stated that it takes three years to see a result from this. The Clerk is awaiting a quotation from Alton Town Council, as they have the equipment and hire out their grounds team.

Various funding streams were discussed at the meeting, which would be available following an FA assessment. A follow-up meeting had been booked on the 23rd October 2024 to explore these options.

24.88.3 To consider security measures at Bowls Club.

Cllr Gebbett explained that the PC is responsible for the fencing around the Bowls Club and on inspection with Cllr Medhurst, noted that it was in poor condition. He requested getting quotes on updating the fence to either a 7 or 8 foot high one. He also stated that the Bowls Club would benefit from CCTV. Cllr Coulson noted that the Police report from a recent intrusion stated that it was a one off and probably wouldn't happen again.

24.88.4 To approve cost of sockets for practice pitch relocation.

The Clerk told the Committee that there were two volunteers to install the sockets and would check the insurance. She suggested carrying out a site visit with Councillors to understand exactly where the new sockets should be placed. Cllr M Pullen also recommended moving the goals from socket to socket to allow the ground to recover. Cllr Gebbett advocated planting bushes around the Oak tree, and appropriate planting would be agreed on email, following advice.

On the proposal of Cllr Medhurst which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was RESOLVED to purchase two sockets for the practice pitch at a cost of £85.

24.89 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

24.89.1 Quotations for Willow tree at Kingswood Copse

The Clerk explained that a resident had been in touch regarding a Goat Willow tree behind their fence. They were concerned that it was dead, and the branches would fall on to their summer house. The resident is a tree surgeon and requested to reduce the tree to a monolith. Another tree surgeon had also inspected the tree, concluding that the tree was in good health with some diseased limbs. They recommended a reduction or a reinspection in the Spring, when the tree was in leaf. The Committee requested that the Arboricultural consultant was contacted to assess the tree.

24.89.2 To review pathway quotations for recommendation to Full Council

The Committee considered a project to install a pathway along the side of the football pitch and through the Cemetery (see circulated documents). The project had been stalled due to a lack of funding, but there had been an indication that if worded in the correct manner, the Council may be able to access the S106 environmental funding. The site was complicated as due to the tree root protection zones, there would have to be a 'no dig' construction and it had been difficult to get quotations.

Cllr M Pullen asked about the original logic behind getting a path installed. The Clerk said that it was initially part of the community building project to give safe passage for children, pushchairs etc. and that the Council had resolved to proceed with this pathway, up until the access road to the children's play area to meet that aim, along

with offering hard standing to the football club. It was noted that it might need planning permission to install as the pathway would go on to a highway. Cllr Gebbett asked about the viability of the proposed footpath as it doesn't connect to any other footpaths in Brislands Lane.

Cllr Gebbett suggested having a sign to direct people through the estate behind the football field which would mean they avoid the dangerous section of road which has no current path. He also proposed only running that path through the Cemetery so that the pinch point on Uplands Lane could be avoided without the expense of installing a path all the way along.

The Committee felt that they wanted to consider the project further before making any recommendations and the Clerk would obtain quotations for just the Cemetery portion. The Committee did not wish to pursue obtaining a third quotation at this stage.

244.89.3 To propose any considerations to F&GP Committee ahead of budget setting for 2025/2026.

The Clerk would enquire as to whether there would be an increase in fees from maintenance contractors to factor into the budget.

The Committee were asked to consider any future projects that would need to be recommended to F&GP as part of the budget process. The Committee agreed that £2000 should be requested for Badger Close, that some funding should be put aside for the LED light project and Councillors were asked to notify the Clerk of anything further by email by the 16th October 2024.

24.89.4 To consider methods to strengthen security at the football pitch/recreation ground.

Cllr Coulson noticed that one of the dragons teeth had rotten and probably requires a new one. All the Councillors agreed to do a survey of the site and make a list of ways in which to improve security.

24.89.5 To review accessibility to tennis courts and MUGAs

Cllr Medhurst had requested that this was considered as a project, and quotations were being sought. The Committee discussed various accessibility options and concluded that they would prefer something permanent.

24.90 OS AREA UPDATE

24.90.1 To receive report

The Clerk stated that the allotments have a delivery on the 1st November 2024 of mushroom compost. Also, that a memorial bench had been installed on the cricket ground.

Location	Action Required	Status	Notes
Badger Close	Boundary Encroachment	In progress	Clerk to research further.
	Badger Orchard	In progress	Water bags removed – to agree bramble treatment.
	Badger Run upkeep	In progress	Hedge cut 25/09/2024.
Cemetery	Cemetery inspection		Completed.
Lymington Bottom Green	New bench – FM Care.	Complete	Installed 04/10/2024

Oak Green parade	Flower bed maintenance Repainting of car parking spaces.	Ongoing To do.	Awaiting signage. To review spacing and repainting – future meeting.
Recreation Ground	Containers	In progress	Site meeting to be arranged.
	Skate Park	Pending	Area to be repainted.
	Tennis courts	Completed	
	Football pitch/club Footway along football pitch	Ongoing Pending	Ongoing Liaison with Club regarding use. Awaiting quotes.
	Water refill point	In progress	Awaiting future costs following request to reduce or replace.
Climate change mitigation	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	Interim inspection 12 th July 2024.
	Bus stop maintenance	In progress	New panels for Gospel Hall installed w/c 23/9/2024. Clean booked 10/24.
Swelling Hill Pond	Silt removal project	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	Completed

Kingswood Copse	Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife.	In progress	Plan decided at meeting – Clerk to follow up.
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24.90.1 To receive update from tennis coach

The Clerk had been told by the tennis coach that he was currently recruiting a new coach and would take the PC upon their offer of £4 per hour per court once a new coach had been selected.

24.91 OS EVENTS

24.91.1 To receive update on fireworks display.

The Clerk said she would circulate the details by email as she had had a meeting that day with the PTA.

24.91.2 To discuss Christmas tree preparations/event

Cllr Coulson suggested that the Christmas lights switch on and the Carol event happen on the same day, possibly the 12th or 14th December 2024. The Clerk advised that this would tie in with the installation of the tree and that the lights could be arranged around this.

24.92 Meeting closed at 7.30pm

24.93 NEXT MEETING 6th November 2024