

## **FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee Held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2025 commencing at 6pm at Benians Pavilion**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>Cllrs Gebbett, M Pullen, R Pullen, Rymer and Medhurst</b>
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	<b>Victoria Ursulean Assistant Clerk</b>
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	<b>Three members of public Cllr Coulson</b>

#### **25.11 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Coulson sent apologies which were duly accepted by the Committee.

#### **25.12 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Resident one commented that he was attending due to item 6.1.

Cllr R Pullen wanted to address matters arising from a meeting that would take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025 with members of Four Marks School PTA. He mentioned that the number of Councillors attending should be reduced and the committee had agreed that it would take place with just two Cllrs in attendance.

#### **25.13 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

#### **25.14 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES**

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, it was decided not to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 as a comment was missing.

#### **25.15 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/REVIEW**

##### **25.15.01 To consider permission for Drone Club to fly from the Recreation Ground.**

Cllrs Medhurst and Coulson had been in contact with a member of the Drone Club and are awaiting a document which will communicate a way forward for the Club at the recreation ground. This will be presented to the Open Space committee and then Full Council.

Cllr R Pullen wished to raise a point of order to ensure that the wording on future agendas will offer a resolution.

##### **25.15.02 To consider installing a container on the football pitch**

It had been requested to have a hard standing for the football club to contain their equipment in which Cllrs felt would be easily vandalized and have items taken from. They had suggested a container instead, but questioned what they would need additional storage for considering a shed and a container are already in use by them. It was mentioned that as goal posts are so big, they would not fit inside a container.

Cllr Gebbett closed the meeting at 6.14pm to discuss the item with Resident two. It was agreed that the VETs team would definitely be continuing their use of the pitch, but it was uncertain if the Saturday team would persist. The meeting was reopened at 6.17pm. Cllr R Pullen said that as a team, you have to register by June. Therefore, it was agreed to defer this item until June. However, if we know more information about usage before then this item will be moved to an earlier meeting to allow more time for something to be organised.

##### **25.15.03 To review usage of cricket pitch area for football use**

Cllr Gebbett had written a document outlining multi-usage criteria for the cricket pitch. He stated that he had taken advice from various sources to accomplish this and suggested that it form the basis of a policy which can be presented to Full Council.

Cllr R Pullen said that the FA are currently reviewing the criteria for the number of players in different age groups, and that the youth groups (9v9) could be reducing to 7v7. Usage of the cricket pitch for football will depend on the age group allowed. Cllr Gebbett suggested that any document created can be reviewed in the future.

Cllr Gebbett allowed each Cllr two minutes to assess the proposal document. Cllr M Pullen noted that previously the biggest pitch allowed on the cricket field was 11v11. He believed the document contained opinions instead of facts. Cllr R Pullen felt the document was too long. Cllr Medhurst said that he was happy

to allow limited use of the cricket field for football but was concerned that when the weather is bad, the pitch will not be left in good condition for families to use at their leisure.

Cllr Rymer mentioned that she thought the document was very agreeable but was concerned that use for the community as a whole was being limited by allowing football on the Cricket field.

All Cllrs agreed that a final policy document was yet to be discussed and decided.

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbett which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councillors in agreement it was **RESOLVED** to approve use of the lower third of the cricket field for football, subject to the approval of the revised policy document, therefore becoming multi-use.

#### **25.15.04 Strategy for the football pitches including grant applications**

Cllr M Pullen proposed to move this item to the Sports and Recreation working party. Cllr Gebbett queried the terms of reference for the Sports & Recreation working party and Cllr M. Pullen confirmed that it had none or any members. Other Cllrs were happy to apply for any grants available. Cllr Medhurst believed that if the pitch was in good condition, it would encourage teams to use it.

#### **25.15.05 To consider Archery Club request for additional usage**

The Archery Club had requested 8 additional days of usage over the following months. Cllrs noted that they already pay £500 per year, but as it was additional use there should be a charge. There will be two 'have-a-go' sessions which the Cllrs felt did not warrant additional charge due to these sessions encouraging new members. However, there will be two short courses taking place which Cllrs felt should be charged at £25 per day due to the fact that it will limit recreational use of the ground and also will cause wear and tear on the field. Cllr M Pullen was happy to promote archery but felt there should be signage to indicate when the field is in use to promote awareness within the community.

It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk email the Archery Club their thoughts and agree on an affordable amount.

#### **25.16 OS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

##### **25.16.01 To discuss additional actions for Allotment Association, including electricity, fencing and trees.**

Cllr Medhurst indicated that during the last committee meeting for the Allotment Association, he had confirmed that the Parish Council have responsibility for the trees and fencing surrounding the allotments.

He felt that it would be beneficial to employ an Arboriculturist to assess the trees as there is a lot of dead wood and possibly thin them out. He also noted that the fencing next to Jubilee Fields is failing due to overgrowth of hedges and that this should be secured. Cllr R Pullen suggested using the Lengthsman for this task. It was also suggested to provide the allotment shed with electricity due to the high number of power tools required. The Assistant Clerk agreed to get some quotations for this.

#### **25.17 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

##### **25.17.01 To approve recommendations for Open Space contractor.**

The current OS contractor no longer has capacity to carry out the work required so Cllr M Pullen explained and the Assistant Clerk had met with three contractors and gained quotations from them and one other which had been supplied to the Cllrs prior to the meeting. Cllr M Pullen said that his preference was contractor 1 due to professionalism, his work with other Councils and schools and fair price. Cllr Rymer suggested that we garner references in the first instance and Cllr R Pullen requested a price for line marking and hedge cutting be included. Should this be issued and reasonable, they can be formally engaged.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to use Contractor One subject to final price and references.

##### **25.17.02 To review and approve plans for Christmas lights 2025**

Cllrs felt the cost of the new lighting scheme was expensive and requested the Assistant Clerk look at other avenues. Cllr Gebbett suggested that we approach the councils list of electrical contractors and ask them if they could support this requirement and if so, ask for a quote. Cllr M Pullen agreed that he would follow up with a local resident who had some experience with erecting Christmas lights

#### **25.18 OS AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS**

##### **25.18.01 To note area update.**

Location	Action Required	Status	Notes
Badger Close	Boundary Encroachment	In progress	Clerk to research further.

	Badger Orchard Badger Run upkeep	In progress In progress	Water bags removed – to agree bramble treatment.  Hedge cut 25/09/2024.
<b>Cemetery</b>	Cemetery inspection		Completed.
<b>Lymington Bottom Green</b>	New bench – FM Care.	Complete	Installed 04/10/2024
<b>Oak Green parade</b>	Flower bed maintenance  Repainting of car parking spaces.	Ongoing  To do.	Awaiting signage.  To review spacing and repainting – future meeting.
<b>Recreation Ground</b>	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  Ongoing	Ongoing Liaison with Club regarding use.
	Water refill point	In progress	Awaiting future costs following request to reduce or replace.
<b>Climate change mitigation</b>	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 <sup>th</sup> July 2024.
	Bus stop maintenance	In progress	New panels for Gospel Hall installed w/c 23/9/2024. Clean booked 10/24.
<b>Swelling Hill Pond</b>	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	Contractor accepted.
	Steps	Pending	
	Revetments  Pathway	Pending  Pending	

<b>Kingswood Copse</b>	Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife.	In progress	Plan decided at meeting – Clerk to follow up.
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## **25.19 OS EVENTS**

### **25.19.01 To discuss the Village Picnic.**

The Assistant Clerk had included a list of those already involved in the Village Picnic and asked Cllrs if they would like to have an eco-fair as per last year. Cllrs felt that it was not well received last year. It was recommended that a working party be created to discuss the picnic in further detail.

### **25.19.02 To discuss the litter pick**

Cllr Rymer said that the Church of the Good Shepherd also carry out litter picking and would like to be involved. The Assistant Clerk mentioned that posters had been put up and it had been advertised on social media and their website.

Cllr M Pullen requested that VE Day and the fireworks event be added to the next agenda.

**25.20 Meeting closed: 7.33pm**

**25.21 Next meeting: 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025**