



Minutes of a Meeting of the  
**AMENITY COMMITTEE**  
 held on  
 Tuesday 1 August 2023 at 8:00pm

**PRESENT:** Cllrs: Hilary Doyle (Chair), David Ellis, Matthew Furber, Katherine Giles (Deputy Chair) and Ian Leake, Kiran Meka

**Also Present:** Ceri Rance, Parish Clerk, Purveen Hira, Amenity Officer,

11. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Beal and Cllr Fish and reasons supplied to the Clerk.

12. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Both Cllrs Doyle and Furber declared an interest in agenda item 4.3 Allotment Rule Changes.

13. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

14. **REPORTS FOR DECISION**

14.1 **REPLACEMENT OF PLAY EQUIPMENT ON FOXLEY FIELDS**

The seesaw located in the toddler play area and the wooden bridge, which is part of the activity trail on the junior play area, both on Foxley Fields, need to be replaced due to broken parts. The seesaw is one of the oldest pieces of play equipment in the Parish. Following discussions, the Amenity Officer and Clerk were asked to obtain quotes for a different type of seesaw and to ensure that disposal and removal costs were included. A revised quote for the wooden bridge was also requested which should no longer include the steppingstones. A report will be prepared for the next Council meeting.

14.2 **RED ROSE ALLOTMENT RENT CHARGES**

The Parish Council agreed to align the rental periods of the allotment sites. The Pocket Copse rental period runs from January to December. The Red Rose rental period ran from October and so for this renewal, the rental period will run from October 2023 to December 2024, a period of 15 months, to align the dates with Pocket Copse rental period. Due to the change of the rental period (12 months to 15 months) and the fact that the Red Rose financial situation is in profit, members were asked to consider that no change is made to the rental charges and for tenants to be charged the same rate up to December 2024, when the next rental period will be reviewed.

It was proposed by Cllr Doyle and seconded by Cllr Meka and **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council that the Red Rose Allotment rent charges should not be increased and will run for a period of 15 months.

14.3 **ALLOTMENT RULE CHANGES**

Following the recent increase in allotment issues – specifically lack of cultivation, overgrown and neglected plots, the office has completed a full re-write of the rules to cover both Red Rose and Pocket Copse allotment sites. When the Parish Council acquires the Blue Mountain allotment site, these rules will be transferable. Following some suggested amendments, it was proposed by Cllr Leake and seconded by Cllr McLean and **RESOLVED** to recommend the adoption of the new rules to Council.

14.4 **INCREASING THE TREE BUDGET**

The budget for Tree Work was set at £6,892.60 for the FY23/24. Following the biennial tree inspection report, the costs to carry out the recommended works amounted to £4,555. There have also been some additional costs in relation to the insurance claims totalling approximately £1,200 to date.

The tree inspection report showed further investigations were required on four trees at a cost of £2,480.

With half the budget already allocated/spent in the first half of the year, it was recommended that an additional £4,000 is taken from the Open Spaces Maintenance Reserves, which currently stands at £36,344. This would cover the initial overspend, the additional costs on tree works with a small buffer for any further tree works required during this fiscal year.

It was proposed by Cllr Doyle and seconded by Cllr McLean and **RESOLVED** to recommend to Council to approve the transfer of £4,000 from Open Spaces Maintenance Reserves to the Tree Budget line 21/5.

#### 14.5 **ADDITIONAL TREE WORKS**

The biennial tree report recommended further investigations on four trees. The investigations were carried out in July 2023 and quoted at £2,480. It was proposed by Cllr Doyle and seconded by Cllr Ellis and **RESOLVED** to approve the quote for £2,480 to carry out the additional tree works within the next 6 months.

#### 14.6 **REVIEW OF POLICIES**

The following policies were reviewed and recommended for adoption with no amendments.

14.6.1 Unauthorised Traveller Encampment Action Policy – It was proposed by Cllr Doyle and seconded by Cllr Meka and **RESOLVED** to recommend the adoption of the policy to Council.

14.6.2 Use of Parish Open Spaces Policy and Procedure – It was proposed by Cllr Doyle and seconded by Cllr Meka and **RESOLVED** to recommend the adoption of the policy to Council.

#### 15. **REPORTS FOR INFORMATION**

##### 15.1 **UPDATE REPORT**

The report was **NOTED** and the following comments were made.

##### 15.1.1 Suggested Trees on Foxley Fields to be funded by the Binfield WI

The Binfield Women's Institute has funds to purchase four trees to be planted within the parish. Three to mark the Queen's Jubilee and one to mark the King's Coronation. The Amenity Officer was asked to contact the Parish Council's open spaces contractor for recommendations regarding which species of tree would provide biodiversity value.

##### 15.2 **UPDATE ON OPEN SPACES CONTRACT**

Following the appointment of Pro Landscapes in April 2023, 3 invoices have been received, each amounting to £2,565.67. The April invoice was authorised for payment as grounds work did take place, but the Amenity Officer queried the amount as it was more than expected based on the overall contract value (£21,326) divided by twelve months. The Amenity Committee was made aware of the invoice queries at the June meeting, and informed that no further invoices would be paid until an explanation was obtained from Pro Landscapes. Following investigations by the Amenity Officer and Clerk, it was determined that a totalling issue on the tender document was the reason for the discrepancy. The contract value now stands at £23,500 per annum, which is within the approved budget line 21/1, open spaces maintenance. This amendment was **AGREED** by the committee members.

#### 16. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

Meeting Closed at 21:52

*Alamy Doyle*  
08/08/2023