



North Hinksey Parish Council



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Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Committee held at 8.00 pm on Thursday 13th October 2022 at Seacourt Hall and via video conference

Those present: Cllrs Berrett, Dowie, MacKeith, Potter and Rankin (Vice Chair)

In attendance: Mrs Linda Morrison Allsopp (Clerk).

There were no members of the public present in person and one by zoom.

In the absence of Cllr Blase, Cllr Rankin the Vice Chair, took the Chair.

1. Apologies for Absence from Cllrs Blase (Chair), Bolder, and Kay who attended by Zoom

2. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda – none

3. Approval of Draft Minutes of the Recreation & Amenities Meeting held on 28th July 2022

In the absence of the Clerk, the Minutes were taken by Cllr Potter, who apologised for their late return. Approval proposed by Cllr Rankin seconded by Cllr Berrett with unanimous agreement.

4. Questions from Members of the Public- None

5. Louie Memorial Fields Management –

- a. To review report of Quarterly Health & Safety Inspection. Paper 1
Report has not been provided yet.

- b. Pavilion: To receive an update from the Pavilion Working Group.

The Planning Application has been submitted and has gone out for consultation.

Consultation period is the normal three weeks but because it is Public Money it is likely to go to Committee. No update from the working group because no recent meeting and there has been no discussion yet on materials. Noted that a Committee being formed to make urgent decisions if they are required between Parish Council meetings, to meet on an ad hoc basis.

- c. Skatepark: To receive an update from the Skatepark Working Group.

Cllr MacKeith reported that the contractor, Canvas had proposed a plan costing £260,000.

She had pushed back for the plan to be within budget and reminded the contractor that the aim is to provide a facility for beginners because experienced skaters have other facilities locally. John Flood the Canvas contact was instructed after the last Parish Council Meeting NHPC need all the requested documents by Friday, for the Parish Council Meeting on the 20th of October. Individual suggestions are being submitted to the Website which Canvas are trying to incorporate but there has not been a meeting to bring everything together. It was suggested that John Flood be invited to present the plans at the October Parish Council Meeting. Proposed by Cllr McKeith and seconded by Cllr Berrett. Unanimous approval.

If John Flood agrees to attend, the Chair of working group will inform rest of the members to give them the opportunity to attend.

- d. Recruitment of Louie Memorial Playing Fields Occasional Caretaker to cover holidays and sick leave: Being undertaken by the Personnel Committee.

The Clerk informed the meeting that the present caretaker has resigned, giving the opportunity to review the Job Descriptions for both posts. The Chair of NHPC, the Chair of Louie Memorial Pavilion Trust are meeting with the Clerk on Friday evening to discuss changing the Caretaker Job Description to that of a Grounds Keeper, since the Trust do not want the cleaning services and the Job Description for the Occasional post will match.

- e. Issues with Picnic Benches – to note and advise.

The picnic benches are being vandalised on a regular basis. Vice Chair advocated items in the Sprout and on Facebook encouraging people to “Name and Shame” the vandals. It is appalling that community assets are being destroyed in this fashion. Others felt that things in public places get vandalised. Just fix and move on. New play equipment attracts vandalism. Can’t keep spending public money in this way when people vandalise the resources. Committee noted that an additional budget entry needed to cover this for next year. Cllr Potter supported a more positive statement, highlighting the benefits of the benches illustrated with pictures from the Jubilee and the Pop Up Cafes. Cllr Berrett volunteered to draft and circulate, an article.

- f. Update from North Hinksey Volunteers – none provided.

- g. Update on Fen Management – consideration of longer-term management priorities and confirm membership of the working group.

Adam Bows gave a verbal report on a survey he has in draft form which he will circulate when complete. Some of the information highlighted is the fen catchment is small only 2,000 square metres. The fen is a junction with permeable limestone at top of the hill with water filtering down to the bottom clay where water emerges as springs. The peat is 600 cubic metres and stores a large amount of carbon. This has a positive effect on the NHPC carbon footprint and needs to be retained.

At the bridge water polluted by nitrates from run off from farmland. This results in a lot of rank growth fed by the fertiliser in the water. At the bottom end the water is much less polluted and there is a spring there where the willows were removed. The clean water and the limestone in it encourages rare plants. The results of Adam Bows survey mirrors the report published 12 years ago, which found 60 species. Not too many species have been lost. Found parsley water dropwort and wild scabious both very rare and it is encouraging that they have established. Creeping Jenny and bugle are hard to find so should still be there. Management Plan provided by Adam Bows has been circulated. Cut fen once a year. Recommendation to take down the large crack willows and continue the pollarding of the others in a 3–5-year rotation.

Committee wait for the full report which will also be circulated to the working group.

The next Recreation and Amenities Committee meeting is January is there anything else the committee need to consider in the interim? The cut and rake is already booked. The plant reintroduction is not urgent. Trees can be done until February, so a decision can be made at the January meeting. Adam Bows suggested the introduction of a dip well with a data logger and asked if NHPC would be happy to share the costs. It was suggested that Adam’s group apply to NHPC for a grant. Adam Bows was thanked for the work he has done.

Working group in 2019 was Cllrs Potter, Allen, Dowie and Cllr Blase joined as chair of Recreation & Amenities they were joined by Voirrey Carr, Adam Bows, Judy Webb, Julia Hammett, and the Conservation Volunteers. Cllr Dowie was asked to call everyone together for a meeting to reconvene the group. Adam Bows report will be available by the end of October and he is happy to quote for the tree work. Progress with decisions from last meeting.

- h.** Discussion of Louie Memorial Car Park gate locking policy and request for gate closers. Clerk had brought to the meeting the two padlocks purchased as agreed at the last Parish Council meeting, but it was highlighted that the gate to the Upper Louie Memorial Field also had bollards with small padlocks. Numbers to be used on the first occasion proposed by Cllr Rankin, seconded by Cllr MacKeith and agreed unanimously. The idea of having Gate closers for the personal gates to the Upper Memorial Field received a positive response and the Clerk was asked to take a quote to next Parish Council Meeting. Recommended times of opening and closing were agreed at the last meeting and are included in the last minutes. It was suggested that the times and padlock be implemented from the 1st November, but this will depend on negotiations with the volunteers.

6. Memorial Garden, Nature Reserve and Orchard –

- a.** To receive an update on the work to path by Minns and the non-return of key. Work on the Bridge has been completed. Clerk asked to email again requesting the return of the padlock key.

7. To review R&A Budget – Invoices and Budget Reports

Nearly all those present had attended the Finance and General Purposes committee meeting which had discussed the reports. Committee looked at recommendations for next year's budgets. Allotment trees need to be looked at, this had also been highlighted in the plot inspections and the root systems of large trees can cause problems. They can be pollarded, but it is expensive with big trees with branches that are difficult to reach. Action on the trees next to Seacourt Stream was postponed because the flood alleviation scheme, might do some of the work. Already a budget for work on trees in the copse, designed to roll over and pay for the next regular tree survey. Create a budget for trees in the allotments and playing fields.

8. Any other items for information – request that the Jane Chapman memorial tree be add it to next week's Parish agenda.

9. Date of next meeting: 8pm on the 12th January 2023.

Meeting closed at 9.35 pm