



Arborfield & Newland Parish Council

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Clerk: Mrs Hilary Carless

Minutes of a Parks Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 9th January 2024 at 7.30 PM at The Pavilion, Arborfield Park.

Present: Cllrs Starkey (Chair), Stevens, Strong

In attendance: Mrs Carless, Clerk; Mr Watts, The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), Cllr Bailey (part)

Also Present: No members of the public were present.

1. **Questions from members of the public in respect of the business on this agenda.** (allotted time – 15 minutes)
No members of the public were present.
2. **To receive any apologies for absence.**
No apologies received.
3. **To receive any declarations of interest on items on the agenda.**
No items of interest were declared.
4. **Minutes of Council Meeting**
The minutes of the Parks committee meeting held on Monday 6th November 2023 were approved with all in favour.
5. **To organise a replacement tree at Pound Copse following the partial felling to tree T2**
Following some discussion, it was decided that a native tree (Oak, Rowan, Hornbeam) would be most suitable as a replacement. Action will be taken to identify a specimen to purchase within a set budget and to seek agreement from Wokingham Borough Council prior to planting (VS).
6. **To note that the Tree Preservation Order on works to Pound Copse has been approved by Wokingham Borough Council and note the dates for the works to be undertaken by Calibra Tree Care.**
Calibra will undertake the necessary work in two phases. The first phase will be on 12th January and the date of the second phase is yet to be determined but will occur before the start of birdnesting season on 1 March. Residents have been informed about the closure of the Copse on 12th January via the website and Facebook (HC).

7. Capital Expenditure Plan on park equipment – To consider the expenditure for the next planned items of equipment.

Although identified as low risk following a safety inspection by The Play Inspection Company Ltd in August 2023, the ground surfacing under the zipwire would benefit from renewal. Currently, weather conditions are not amenable to the work being done now but will be completed later in the year. One quote has been received and a further two quotes are to be sought, preferably from local companies (CW).

Cllr Bailey entered the meeting.

8. To Control the spread of White Poplars in the park.

A resident has reported that an area of White Poplars is multiplying in such a way that they are invasive and impacting other species. Advice is to be sought on how to safely control this issue (HC).

9. To discuss requirements for the play equipment at the park in accordance with the received report.

A resident reported that the zipwire tension was slack. Vitaplay who installed the equipment and repaired the wire in August 2023 confirmed that, in their opinion, the wire was at an appropriate tension. The Play Inspection Company Ltd is back in February for their six monthly inspection and have been asked to specifically report on the zipwire tension.

10. To discuss and agree action on the flower bed at Melrose Gardens.

The memorial rose planted in the flower bed at Melrose Gardens has now been removed by a resident. The box needs to be removed and area either seeded or turfed. This task will be completed shortly (ES).

11. To receive any updates on costs and budget for new park equipment.

The type of equipment and associated costs to replace the Sport Activ game were discussed in depth. It was decided that more investment was needed to provide adequate space for the type of equipment that would benefit the community. It was agreed that the area be resurfaced and a goal/basketball combination of equipment would be installed in the next financial year. To be considered in daylight (Committee).

Adding an additional play item to the single spinner will be undertaken dependent on funds.

12. AOB

a) Ancient Churchyard wall

Progress will be made to make the wall at the Old Churchyard safe. The decision was made to fence around the wall so that the public can still enjoy the ancient monument (HC/CW).

b) Walks

Progress has been made on setting up three local walks for the public to enjoy. Once complete, the walks will be available on the Arborfield and Newland Council website and Facebook. (VS/ES/PS/HC)

c) Poperinghe Way byway

The Parish Council is aware of the serious damage being done by bikes, 4x4s making the by way impassable. Contact will be made with WBC to see what action can be taken (VS/HC).

13. Next meeting - Councillors to consider items for discussion at the next meeting.

The next Committee meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 5th March 2024.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 20:45.