



Arborfield & Newland Parish Council

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Parish Clerk: Mrs Hilary Carless

Minutes of a Parks Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 2 July 2024 at 7.30pm at The Pavilion, Arborfield Park

Present: Cllrs Starkey (Chair), Strong, Bailey, Stevens, Akers-Douglas

In attendance: Mrs Carless (Parish Clerk), Mr Watts (Responsible Financial Officer – RFO)

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 were 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 13 May 2024 were approved with all in favour.
5. **To give updates on previous agenda items:**
 - a) Old Churchyard – The Clerk has been in contact with Oxford Diocese and Historic England to try to understand the Council’s position and to assess what can be done to preserve the site. Historic England are interested in arranging a site visit which the Clerk and Cllr Starkey will attend. The Diocese are investigating the records of the Church Commissioners and at the Diocesan Registry. Making progress on this matter will be a lengthy and time-consuming process.
 - b) The flowerbed at Melrose Gardens – Committee members removed dead box hedging and dug over the site on 28 May. The timing of tree planting is yet to be determined.
 - c) Poperinghe byway (Wokingham Lane) – the Clerk is still working towards the installation of CCTV cameras in this area but a few obstacles have been met hence the delay in progress.
 - d) Walks – Cllrs Stevens and Starkey have put together Walk 3. Final checking is to be done and PS will put up direction disks as he does so. Include QR codes for the walks in the July edition of the Arborfield News as a centre page pull-out.

6. Installation of Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)

The MUGA has now been installed. In order to promote the MUGA, we will approach selected local users to help us to raise the profile of Arborfield Park in the local press. The re-surfacing of the zipwire area has also been completed.

7. Expenditure on Playground repairs

A number of repairs are required on the playground equipment at Arborfield Park. The total of these repairs exceeds the £3,000 budget allocated to the Parks Committee. Expenditure on repairs totalling £1,645 plus VAT were proposed, seconded and unanimously approved by the Committee. The remaining repair work will be taken to the next Parish Council meeting.

8. Expenditure on Handyperson equipment

The RFO explained how much the Handyperson was contributing to the Parish, how pro-active he is in identifying and resolving issues and how well he communicates with the Clerk and the RFO. Tasks are planned and executed efficiently. However, many of the jobs on the work schedule require some additional equipment. The total cost of this equipment is £1,100 plus VAT. Expenditure on Handyperson equipment was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed by the Committee.

9. Outcome of gates trial period

As there have been no notable incidents at the Park in the last three months, the Committee requested that a policy on gate opening and closing be taken to the next Parish Council meeting for approval. It was noted that Pod Point, the supplier of EV points, may be able to instal an EV charging point in the car park if the car park is accessible 24/7.

10. Any items for consideration to include items for the next meeting agenda. For information only.

- Wildflower meadow at Arborfield Park – to involve Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust
- Revisit the Parks 5 Year Plan
- Consider working towards Best Kept Village

11. Date of the next meeting - The next Parks Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 3 September 2024.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at **20:56**.