



Wallingford Town Council

**MINUTES
of a meeting of the
PARKS, GARDENS, ALLOTMENTS &
OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE
held on Monday, 4 September 2023 at 7.00 pm
in Wallingford Town Hall**

Present

Members: The Mayor, Cllr Dan Beauchamp
Cllr Steve Holder (Chairman)
Cllr Katharine Keats-Rohan
Cllr Ros Lester (Vice-Chairman)

Officers: Michelle Taylor, Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer
Scott Wells, Parks and Estates Manager

Others: 4 member of the public
0 members of the press

229/23 MEETING PROTOCOL

The Chairman outlined the protocol that would be following in the conduct of the meeting and explained that the meeting would be shorter than usual due to insufficient numbers of Members being available for the planned duration.

230/23 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Acreman, Ebrahimjee and Hendrie

231/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

232/23

MINUTES

It was proposed by Councillor Lester, and seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan, and

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee held on 5 June 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

233/23

ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Committee reviewed progress on 'open' actions agreed at previous meetings.

234/23

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A resident asked about the horse chestnut tree next to the Coach and Horses Pub on the Kinecroft, in particular whether the tarmac around the base would soon be taken up. The Chairman explained that the Council was waiting to see the effects of removing the dead wood earlier in the year and that the final decision on the tree was due to be taken at the meeting of the Full Council on 23 October 2023. The tree was not an item on the agenda of this meeting.

235/23

SEASONAL REPORT

The Parks and Estates Manager spoke to his report on the seasonal activity of the Parks and Estates Team in June, July and August 2023. He highlighted three aspects: the development of the green space in New Road, behind the Green Tree Pub, the proposed art installation in the Rest Garden where further quotations were being sought and the management of the 'low mow' areas.

Action:

Signs to be installed to discourage parking on the green space behind the Green Tree; and Cllr Holder to speak to neighbour who has contactors working

236/23

SIX-MONTH WALK AROUND

The Chairman reported on the last six-month walk around where there had been a particular focus on the water feature in the Castle Gardens. The team were waiting for Cllr Hendrie to return from holiday before progressing this further.

237/23

HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDIT

The Committee considered the most recent health and safety audit which identified three areas: railings on the Castle Gardens, people climbing on the St Nicholas Ruins (where there were also issues with security) and fencing around the Castle Motte. A contractor was now dealing with the latter in partnership with the Earth Trust.

Action:

Audit recommendations to be actioned once quotations garnered;

Security for the St Nicholas Ruins to be considered at the next meeting

238/23

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Chairman reported that there had been no accounts of significant anti-social behaviour, as had happened in the summer of 2022 at the Riverside. The youth group TRAIN were now working at the Riverside and since the Splash Park had been renovated, there had been increased family presence. The Committee also commented favourably on the apparent increase in police patrols.

239/23

EVENTS ON PUBLIC SPACES

The Committee noted events that would be taking place on Council-owned property during the rest of calendar year.

It was proposed by Councillor Keats-Rohan, and seconded by Councillor Beauchamp, and

RESOLVED that the request from Hatwells Fair to trade regularly on four days (rather than three) in the run-up to the first Bank Holiday in May, be approved, as long as they are charged appropriately.

240/23

BRITAIN IN BLOOM

The Chairman reported that the Town Clerk and the Parks and Estates Manager would be attending the awards ceremony on 27 September 2023 where feedback on Wallingford's submission would be received.

Action:

Review action once the feedback from Britain in Bloom has been received and report back

241/23

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

(a) Community gardens and orchards

This would be deferred to the next meeting when discussions with the developers of Winterbrook Meadows would have taken place.

(b) Equipment for 'low mow' areas

This issue was being considered as part of a forthcoming 5-year strategy day for the Parks and Estates Team and to understand the short and long-term needs and opportunities

(c) Electric vehicles

This issue was being considered as part of a forthcoming 5-year strategy day for the Parks and Estates Team.

242/23

ARBORICULTURE

The Committee considered a recent survey by Think Trees focussing on the five horse chestnut trees in in the north end of the Kinecroft. The County Council Tree Officer had confirmed that one of the trees had died.

It was proposed by Councillor Holder, and seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan, and

RESOLVED that tree T2 be reduced to a height of 3m, as advised, with a coronet cut, to allow habitat for invertebrates, as part of the next round of tree surgery in the next six to twelve months

Action:

Reduce dead T2 tree to advised height with 'coronet' cut in the next six to twelve months

It was proposed by Councillor Lester, and seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan, and

RESOLVED that the dead wood within trees T3 and T5 be removed as part of the next round of tree surgery

It was proposed by Councillor Holder, and seconded by Councillor Lester, and

RECOMMENDED that a Trees Working Group be established by the Full Council

Action:

The establishment of a Trees Working Group to be considered at the September meeting of the Full Council

Mulching to be considered at the next meeting

243/23

VARIATION OF AGENDA ORDER

It was proposed by Councillor Holder, and seconded by Councillor Lester, and

RESOLVED that due to shortage of time, all agenda items after Item 14 would be deferred to the next meeting, with the exception of Items 18 (Bull Croft), 28 (Exclusion of Press and Public) and 29 (Team update).

The Chairman confirmed that bulb-planting could go ahead without consideration by the Committee, for example on St John's Green and the Harwell Estate 'Hot Dog'.

Action:

Reschedule items to next meeting of the Parks, Gardens, Allotment and Open Spaces Committee

244/23

BULL CROFT

The Chairman gave the latest update on contact with the Lawn Tennis Association about contractor access for the resurfacing of the tennis courts

It was proposed by Councillor Holder, and seconded by Councillor Keats-Rohan, and

RESOLVED that the pedestrian access to the Bull Croft in the High Street be temporarily closed to allow the resurfacing work to be undertaken, leaving the other access points and the park as a whole open, and that the work ideally commence in the half-term to minimise the impact on students.

Action:

Consideration be given to public communications in the run-up to and during the work to minimise frustration; and Cllr Holder to advise the Committee of the decision of the Lawn Tennis Association

245/23

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was proposed by Councillor Beauchamp, and seconded by Councillor Lester, and

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm

Minutes of the meeting of the
Parks, Gardens, Allotments and Open Spaces Committee
held on
4 September 2023,
signed as a correct record

Chairman

2023-09-04 PKS minutes PUBLIC