

OTFORD Parish Clerk: The School House
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MINUTES of a MEETING of OPC RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

at The School House on Monday 19 August 2019 from 7:30pm

Present: Cllr M Evans (in the Chair), Cllr P Clucas, Cllr I Roy
Also Present: Mrs K Drake (OSA), 2 members of the public (for the duration of the Public Forum)
Clerk: Mrs S Holt

Public Forum:

A member of the Allotments Association raised concerns about the methods employed by the Parish Council regarding work to trees during the nesting season and how this work should be handled in the future.

The person was advised that trees are only worked on by a professional tree surgeon employed by the Council. In the case of the Hawthorn tree removal in the Allotments it was noted that as concerns had been raised regarding the possibility of nesting birds, the Parish Clerk had contacted the tree surgeon and requested that a check was made prior to the tree being removed. The tree surgeon confirmed that this check had been done. In the future, the Parish Council will continue to take advice concerning work to trees from the professional tree surgeons employed by the Council.

1. Apologies for Absence – Cllr J Lawrey and Mr M Richards (OAA).
2. Declaration of Interest - None.
3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting. The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 29 April 2019 were signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
4. Matters arising from the previous meeting not covered elsewhere on the agenda – None.
5. Allotments
 - a A written report was received from the Allotments Association.
 - b Plot Lettings. All the plots are currently let. One person is on the waiting list.
 - c Unkempt plots. An inspection was carried out on 5 June and it was noted that a large number of plots were looking good and being well cultivated. A few were not being looked after and these made areas look untidy and uncared for. Letters have been sent to allotment holders of the worst plots. The Parish Agent will be contacting a number of plot holders who are having difficulty maintaining their plots in order to determine their intentions. 7/19
Clerk/OAA/ME
The next inspection will take place in September.
 - d Plot number markers will be considered at the OAA meeting as they are proving hard to obtain. 6/19 Continuing
 - e The Ash tree beside the footpath at Mill Meadow needs the ivy cut on the trunk. It was agreed that Cllr Clucas will progress this at the work party. 29/18 PC
 - f The removal of the hawthorn tree has been completed. 30/18 Completed
 - g Bee Hives. OAA will discuss this at their next meeting. 45/18 OAA
 - h It was agreed that the roots of the Willow as well as the roots of an Elder will be ground out. Continuing
 - i Ash tree overhanging the stream by Mill Meadow. The tree has been removed. Completed
 - j Water Tap. The repairs have been completed. 8/19 Completed
 - k Judging. The annual judging of the allotments took place on 16 July with 28 allotments being considered suitable for judging compared with 20 the previous year. three plots were awarded gold, nine silver and sixteen bronze standard. Four more were commended their efforts.
 - l The Allotment Open Morning and Scarecrow Competition was held on 20 July. This was well attended.
 - m Work to trees identified in the tree survey carried out in November 2018 has now been completed.
It is RECOMMENDED that where possible, tree work is scheduled for winter months. 19/19 Council to consider
 - n Allotment Rents. The rent increase of 20p per rod agreed in September 2018 will go ahead in October 2019. It was Agreed not to increase the rent for October 2020.

o	Allotments Rents. The Clerk will prepare a five year income/expense report.	20/19 Clerk
p	Water Tanks. Lids have now been fitted to the water tanks thanks to Mr Thomas.	22/19 BT
6. <u>OSA</u>		
a	A written report was received from Mrs Drake.	
b	OCC reported that the metal poles around the cricket square will be replaced by plastic poles. Hazard notices will be attached. To date this has not been carried out.	Continuing.
c	Post and Rail Fence. It is understood that a new application is being prepared for post and rail fencing around the floodlit football pitch. Oxford PC will wait for a formal application before considering this again.	9/19
d	OJJFC has asked for extra storage at both the Hale Lane and High Street recreation grounds. Cllr Clucas and Mr Thomas will be looking into this.	2/18 PC/BT Continuing
e	Grass Cuttings/Compost. The Cricket Club has removed the cuttings from the Recreation Ground and a new scheme for the contractors to put the cuttings in a bin which is then removed for emptying by Brian Thomas has been instigated. At present, the scheme is working well.	5/18 Completed
f	Amalgamation of OJJFC and OUFC/New Leases. The football clubs have amalgamated. New signed leases for the pavilions are awaited.	21/19
g	Mr Thomas has reported boys in the playground wearing football boots. This has been denied by OJJFC. OSA has asked the Club to make parents aware that children in the playground need to be supervised at all times and that football boots are not permitted.	12/19 Completed
h	OSA reported that two defibrillators are being purchased for use in sporting emergencies. One will be placed on the Eric Dilley Pavilion and one on the Hale Lane Pavilion.	
i	Grant Application. OSA has made an application to OPC for a grant for the purchase, fitting and electrical connection of two defibrillator boxes. It is RECOMMENDED that this is considered by F&GP.	23/19 F&GP to consider
j	It is RECOMMENDED that F&GP consider running a defibrillator training course for the public and publicising where the defibrillators are located.	24/19 F&GP to consider
7. <u>High Street Recreation Ground</u>		
a.	A report was received from Brian Thomas.	
b	Dog Fouling. Following discussion at Council, the recommendation to display notices stating 'Please keep dogs on a lead when sports are being played' was considered. It was agreed that the notices will be displayed and an item placed in the Newsletter. Large signs will be erected at each entrance. One for dog fouling and one for keeping dogs on a lead.	25/19 Clerk
c	Trim trail equipment. The first half of the over 12 equipment has been delivered and is being installed. The second half will be ordered in September 2019.	26/19
d	Condition of the electricity meter box by the tractor shed. This has been checked and is safe.	6/18 Completed
e	Waste bin to be placed on the patio. This is awaiting fitting. Mr Thomas has been asked to assist.	Continuing
f	Spring seats in the playground. Following the Playground Inspection, it is recommended that both spring seats are replaced and the play surface repaired. F&GP Committee will consider the quotes and make a recommendation to Council.	33/18 Clerk/BT F&GP to Consider
g	Entrance points to the Recreation Ground. It was agreed that the entrance points get very muddy and it needs more than the 'crete' material. Mr Thomas will be asked for suggestions. It is also noted that the concrete by the kissing gate on the car park side is eroding.	36/18 Clerk/BT Continuing
h	Picnic Bench. A replacement has been delivered and installed.	1/19 Completed
i	The hedge behind the football pavilion has been cut but the hedgerow between the tennis courts and the petanque court needs lowering as it is growing through the fencing.	2/19 BT
j	Burnt Tree. Following the damage to a tree when the picnic bench was incinerated, the dead branches have been removed.	13/19 Completed
k	It was noted that vandals are climbing onto the youth shelter and putting items into the tree. The items have now been removed. Access is being gained from the Youth Shelter. The back of the Youth Shelter has been repaired and the top has been coated in anti-climb paint.	14/19 Completed
l	New seats, chains and bearings are on order for the youth swings.	
m	Tennis Court Chain Link Fencing. This fencing will need to be renewed before too long. It was agreed that F&GP will be asked to create a Reserve for the replacement.	27/19 F&GP/Clerk

8. Chalk Pit
- a There is more graffiti on the sign close to the Scout Hut. 15/19 Clerk
- b Mr Thomas will speak to the teacher that runs the forest school to discuss the Chalk Pit and see if there is anything the Council can do to improve his use of the area. 28/19 BT
- c The chalk grassland area had several Bee Orchids this summer and numerous wild flowers. A meeting to discuss how to manage the area will be held in the autumn. 29/19 BT
- d The DVLP plan for the Chalk Pit was considered. It is RECOMMENDED that this is not progressed. It was discussed 4 years ago and was not considered suitable then and nothing has changed. It was particularly noticed that there was no reference made to ongoing management funding. 30/19 Council to consider
9. Hale Lane Recreation Ground/Pavilion/Telston Park
- a Equipment for the over 12s. It was agreed that £5000 would be placed in the budget for this item as a start. Potential items are being costed. 37/18 Clerk Continuing
- b Swing. It was agreed the top bar and cast iron mouldings will be painted and the bolts will be replaced at the end of the chains. Safety matting will be installed under the swing. 38/18 Clerk/BT Continuing
- c A member of the public reported that two of the wooden posts alongside the car park had been broken off and laid to one side. All of the posts in the car park area have been reset and made smaller. Two have been concreted in place.
- d The posts by the Pavilion will be reset at they are loose. 31/19 BT
- e Two planks have been removed from the circular benches due to the posts holding them up rotting at ground level.
- f A large metal fencing panel has been fixed to the back of the youth shelter to prevent children climbing onto the roof.
- g A small group of willow trees have been felled due to complaints from a householder about the trees leaning on her fence.
- h A number of Hazel trees will be coppiced in the winter. 32/19 BT
- i Two Ash trees next to the path into Willow Park are showing signs of advanced Ash Die-back. They will be checked shortly by the tree consultant.
- j A fence alongside the path from Willow Park has been steadily rotting. There is also a large amount of ivy growing over the fence from the garden of the house. The fence is now leaning at quite an angle over the path. The homeowners have not indicated that they are prepared to replace or repair the fence. The footpath may have to be closed at some point. The condition of the fence will be monitored for safety. 33/19 BT
10. Oxenhill Wood
- a DVLP Plan. Cllr Evans will raise this at the next Management Team meeting.
11. Village Green, Pond and Palace Field
- a A large amount of weed has been removed from the pond and several areas of reeds have been cut down to improve the sight lines across the pond for cars and pedestrians. A reduced amount has been cut due to a Moorhen sitting on her third clutch of eggs this year.
- b Problems have arisen with the water supply into the pond decreasing to a trickle. Thanks to the help of several home owners, the problem was tracked down. The blockage has now been cleared. A new map of the pipe line from Friars Pool to the pond has been prepared.
12. Cemetery/Palace Park Wood
- a Woodland Trust. OPC has written to the Woodland Trust and has asked for various reports regarding their plans and budget for work in Palace Park Wood by the end of September 2019.
- b Updating of the burials plan for the woodland cemetery will take place shortly. 47/17 BT
- c The apple trees have been pruned in the Community Orchard. A copy of the drawing showing the placement of each variety will be passed to the Parish Office. 4/19 Clerk/BT
- d Car Park Litter. McDonalds has been asked to clear the area more often and to consider putting in another bin. 16/19 Clerk
- e The new cemetery paths project has started. A specification is being prepared.
- f DVLP Plan. Mr Thomas is preparing a maintenance plan for the area in the event that the Woodland Trust lease is terminated. DVLP will be consulted as plans develop.
13. Youth Activities 5/19 Completed
- The Fun Day took place on 14 August 2019 from 10-2pm and despite being rained on was well attended. Bojangles provided refreshments.

14. Correspondence

15. Other Matters

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| a | Toilets. No further progress will take place until the Surveyor appointed by St Bartholomew's Church has completed his report. | 27/18 Clerk
Continuing |
| b | Trees in Tudor Crescent. It has been reported that trees on the verges in Tudor Crescent need inspecting as branches are being damaged by road users and it is reported that they have never been maintained. This has been reported to KCC. | 18/19 Completed |
| c | Tree Survey. A tree survey of all the Ash trees on Parish Council land will be carried out shortly. | |

16. Date of Next Meeting – Monday 4 November 2019 at 7:30pm.