

HILDENBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Pavilion and Recreation Ground, Riding Lane, Hildenborough TN11 9HY

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Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee held on Wednesday 04 September 2024 in the Pavilion, Riding Lane Recreation Ground at 7.30pm

MINUTES

PRESENT: Cllr C Wynne Cllr I Sklavenitis Cllr M Coles
 Cllr M Wills Cllr L Gabriel Cllr A McNeil
 Cllr M Connor

ALSO PRESENT: Julia Church, Clerk

1. Apologies for absence.

Apologies received from Cllr Harrowing due to a family commitment

2. Declaration of Personal or Prejudicial interests.

Cllr McNeil declared an interest in Item 9 as a governor of Hildenborough CE Primary School.

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 03 July 2024.

Cllr Sklavenitis proposed two motions to amend the minutes,

- for Item 4 to read: "The Clerk's Report was noted."
- for Item 14.3 to read: "Clerk to clarify the outcomes of the investigations in 2011 as to the PC's legal responsibility for water encroachment and flooding from its land."

Both motions were passed, and pending amendments being completed the Minutes approved.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the July meeting

Regarding Item 9 of the July Minutes, Cllr Sklavenitis reported an ethernet cable had been installed from the Committee Room to the Jim England Room, providing a cost-effective extension to the Farmers' Market stallholders from the Parish Council WiFi.

5. Clerk's Report to include Maintenance Contractor's Progress Report.

The Clerk's Report was noted.

6. To consider the quotes from Tree Craft, RWE, Tree Services and Landscape Services for remedial work recommended in Tree Craft's inspection of the Open Spaces' trees.

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Parish Council, the RWE quote be approved with a view to all the work being carried out before next season.

ACTION: The clerk to add the item to the Parish Council meeting agenda, being held on 11 September 2024.

7. War Memorial:

7.1 To consider the quote to replace all the wooden perimeter posts.

See Item 7.2.

7.2 To consider applying to the Hildenborough War Memorial Trust to fund the repairs.

Approved. **ACTION:** The clerk, in response to Kent County Council request, (who hold the War Memorial Trust's funds), will forward the Maintenance Contractor's quote for carrying out the repairs.

8. To consider the additional information from "The 2 Minute Foundation" with regards to the installation of a Litter Picking Station.

After consideration of the additional information from the 2 Minute Foundation, it was agreed not to proceed, as currently no suitable location is available in the village.

9. To further consider Hildenborough CofE Primary School's request to plant a tree/trees adjacent to the new footpath in the Recreation Ground or another suitable location.

Having been informed it is oak trees that are available, the committee now proposed that the Village Green would be an appropriate site for the planting of two oak trees by the pupils of Hildenborough CofE Primary School.

ACTION: The clerk to notify the school of the proposed site for the oak trees and to suggest the school seek advice from the Hildenborough Conservation Group on what future tree seeds to grow that could potentially assist with re-planting in West Wood.

10. Open Spaces review of Working Groups' verbal reports.

On their visit to West Wood on Wednesday 28th August, the Open Spaces Working Group reported the following:

- The new picnic area was looking very nice with the large planter ready for planting but the other benches in West Wood were looking shabby and would benefit from sanding/painting.
- The pond seems to be bedding in well and it was considered that the silted area adjacent to the pond would benefit from some planting of native plants such as hawthorn and blackthorn so that brambles do not take over. The area is still cordoned off and warning signs and a throw line will be installed later this month.

ACTIONS: The maintenance contractor to install the three warning signs and two throw lines, once the warning signs have been delivered to the Parish Council. The Clerk to ask the Conservation Group for advice regarding the type of planting to carry out on the silted area.

- It was noted that a fence needed attention at the pump cycle track:
ACTION: Clerk to request that Three Counties Landscapers cut back the vegetation that is encroaching onto the fence and the Maintenance Contractor carry out the necessary repairs to the fence.

On their visit to the Village Green and Recreation Ground on Wednesday 4th September the Open Spaces Working Group noted the following:

- The group noted the deterioration in the condition of the Goldrush tree on the Village Green that is being supported by a frame.

ACTION: The Maintenance Contractor to install the tree protector that is on order to protect the base of the trunk from damage by strimming. Cllr Sklavenitis to remove a dead branch.

- It was noted that the lime tree on the corner of the Village Green needs pruning back at the base.

ACTION: Cllr Sklavenitis to cut the vegetation back with a chain saw.

- Although a few of the fence posts were leaning over they appeared to still be secure.

ACTION: To consider replacing posts where necessary at a later date.

- The Group inspected the new fencing installed recently at the Recreation Ground playground and were happy the repairs had been carried out well. The new areas of fencing will soon be treated with preservative by the Maintenance Contractor.

- It was noted that the public footpath leading to the Recreation Ground from the Church was overgrown.

ACTION: Cllr Sklavenitis will immediately report the condition of the footpath to the Public Rights Of Way team at Kent County Council and will update councillors.

11. To agree the planting and budget for the West Wood picnic table planter and the Village Green planter.

Cllr McNeil motioned the Parish Council provide a budget of up to

- £100 for the Village Green to include spring bulbs
- £200 for the West Wood picnic area planter for a selection of low-maintenance grasses and ground cover plants.

The motion was passed.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange for the purchase and planting of the bulbs and plants this autumn.

12. To consider and implement the recommendations from the 2024 Annual Inspection of the Recreation Ground and West Wood playground equipment.

Cllr Sklavenitis motioned to allocate £500 from Parish Council funds to enable the Maintenance Contractor to acquire the necessary items to carry out the small repairs identified in the Playground Safety Inspection Reports and to seek quotes for the larger, more expensive tasks.

The motion was passed.

ACTION: The Clerk/RFO to obtain quotes for:

- The Recreation Ground ball courts; remove and replace or repair the damaged supports for the Basketball frame.
- The Recreation Ground playground; to carry out repairs to the worn areas of Wet Pour.
- Order and arrange the fixing up of three warning safety notices, wording as indicated in the Equipment Safety Report.

The Clerk to request the Maintenance Contractor, notes the list of other items that are required and to carry out these repairs during his next playground inspections and to notify the Clerk when completed.

13. PROJECTS

13.1 Recreation Ground Perimeter Footpath

To consider Trueplan Land Surveyor's drawing and the various options for the new footpath.

The options for the new footpath were considered, however it was agreed to seek an expert create a suitable detailed specification to put out to tender for quotations for the construction of the footpath.

ACTION: To seek advice from KCC and KALC for advice on drawing up a specification and using independent consultants.

For the RFO/Clerk to source independent consultants who have expertise in footpath construction and preparation of specifications.

13.2 Village Green Drainage

13.2.1 To consider the legal advice/opinion of the council's responsibility.

Cllr Sklavenitis shared the advice from the KALC legal advisor and the Zurich Insurance legal advisor with councillors for their consideration during the meeting.

ACTION: Clerk to request that Zurich confirm their verbal advice in writing.

13.2.2 To discuss design and provisional estimate for installing a soakaway on the Village Green to improve drainage.

The soakaway and bund potential effectiveness was discussed. The committee agreed to obtain quotes for a survey of the land and advice on mitigation flooding measures, from experts in this field, towards a sustainable solution.

13.3 Information Board for West Wood Pond.

The councillors were happy with the first draft of the design created by Cllr Gabriel and gave her their feedback for a second draft design.

ACTION: Cllr Gabriel to create a second draft featuring further illustrations for consideration at a future meeting.

14. NEW PROJECTS FOR 2025

It was agreed to defer this item until the next meeting of the Open Spaces Committee taking place on Wednesday 16 October.

ACTION: Clerk to invite councillors to put forward ideas for new projects to be considered at the October meeting.

15. CORRESPONDENCE

15.1 E-mail request from user of the Recreation Ground basketball court to provide nets under the hoops.

It was agreed to consider the installation of metal basketball nets when the basketball frames are replaced.

ACTION: Clerk to write to user of the court to notify him of the decision by the Committee.

16. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

There were none.