

Marlborough Town Council



Amenities & Open Spaces Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held Monday,
9 October 2023 in the Council Chamber, Marlborough Town Hall at 7pm

PRESENT	Councillor Mark Cooper	Chair
	Councillor Nicholas Fogg	Town Mayor
	Councillor Andrew Ross	
	Councillor Noel Barrett-Morton	
	Councillor Lisa Farrell	Vice Chair
	Councillor James Sheppard	
	Councillor Susannah O'Brien	
	Richard Spencer-Williams	Town Clerk
	Dawn Whitehall	Corporate Services Officer
ALSO		
PRESENT	Councillor Emily Trow	Observing
	Plus 1 member of the public	

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no questions.

247/23 APOLOGIES
Apologies for absence were received from **Councillor Luson**.

248/23 DECLARATIONS
Councillor Cooper – agenda item 13 – Cemetery Report.

249/23 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS
In August, and following an action agreed at the previous meeting (*Min. No. 108/23*), **Councillors Cooper, Farrell, O'Brien** and the **Town Clerk** met with **Anna Forbes, Project Manager for Action for the River Kennet (ARK)** who showed them around Stonebridge Meadow, where lots of good schemes were taking place. It was a good visit, and the **Chair** encouraged anyone who hasn't visited it recently to do so.

250/23 MINUTES
RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held 10 July 2023 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair

251/23 ACTION LOG

Members noted the updated Action Log.

252/23 GROUNDS MANAGER'S REPORT

Members noted the Grounds Manager's report, and the **Chair** thanked **Mr Weatherly** and his team for their hard work.

Councillor Farrell asked when the Skate Park lighting would be working again.

ACTION: expedite repair of faulty timer switch for Skate Park lights

253/23 TREE REPORT

Members noted the report of agreed works to trees. A discussion about the rare Black Poplars at Stonebridge Meadow included:

- The tree surgeon had recommended removal of deadwood and height reduction, which had been agreed by the Committee at the previous meeting
- A number of mature trees had already been lost, and there was a risk that the size of the existing canopy added to the likelihood of damage to the Black Poplars during high winds
- ARK disagreed that the work was necessary

Members noted the tree surgeon's advice and gave their full support for the work to proceed as planned.

254/23 COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

Members noted the Town Clerk's report listing the current year's priorities and considered priority projects recommended for 2024-25:

- Members fully supported works to improve and protect the surface of Marlborough Common when used for event parking, noting that the success of Marlborough Rugby Football Club would likely bring an increase in numbers of spectator vehicles
- Members noted that there might be an opportunity to bring Grounds staff PPE/workwear forward if current year budget allows
- Whether to move the cemetery extension to the top of the list for 2024-25

RESOLVED: that the priority projects to submit to the 2024-25 budgeting process were agreed with one change

1. Cemetery extension
2. Workshop extension
3. Grounds works vehicle replacement
4. Grounds staff PPE and protective workwear uniform
5. Biodiversity management
6. Land at Tin Pit
7. Parking arrangements at Marlborough Common
8. Salisbury Road Recreation Ground

9. Training area at Marlborough Common

255/23 **FINANCE REPORT AND 2024-25 BUDGET**

Members noted the finance report for month 5 and considered the Committee's budget requirements for 2024-25 to submit to the annual budgeting process.

The proposed budget included the replacement of 3 vehicles, and the overall increase of approximately £18,000 reflected increases in market rates, e.g. fuel, tools and service provider rates.

RESOLVED: that the proposed 2024-25 Amenities & Open Spaces is agreed for submission to the annual budgeting process

256/23 **WYE HOUSE GARDEN PLAY AREA**

The **Town Clerk** gave a verbal update on the project to upgrade the toddler's play area at Wye House Gardens:

- Town Council staff had cleared and levelled the site
- A date had been agreed to erect a new fence
- Sleepers and timber for planters and seating had been delivered
- Suitable modular wooden play equipment designed for very young children had been identified

The **Chair** thanked all involved.

257/23 **NEW CEMETERY**

Members noted the Town Clerk's report and considered whether to proceed to public consultation concerning a land swap, or alternatively whether to install a columbarium:

- A land swap would be dependent upon receiving a parcel of land from GreenSquare Accord at Rabley Wood View/Tin Pit (anticipated for May/June 2024)
- Consultation would be to 'commoners' (i.e. registered electors) and key stakeholders
- Whether to use the Town Council's website consultation tool
- Whether a 'poll card' referendum would be possible (dependent upon Wiltshire Council's elections team)
- Whether to clearly state the Town Council's preference for a 'yes/no' response

RESOLVED: to recommend to Full Town Council that a consultation about a land swap be conducted in May/June 2024 to enable the Cemetery to be extended

ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AT SALISBURY ROAD RECREATION GROUND

Members noted the Town Clerk's report and recent incidents of antisocial behaviour and/or minor criminality at Salisbury Road Recreation Ground (and Coopers Meadow), and considered proposals to help reduce future occurrences. Discussion points included:

- Whether the police were using the CCTV effectively
- Whether there could be a more visible police presence
- Whether to revisit proposals to install a car park barrier
- Whether an automatic barrier using smart technology (e.g. ANPR : automatic number plate recognition) could be installed
- Whether operation of a manual barrier system would be dependent upon staff, hirers or could be outsourced to a security company
- Whether questions about policing ongoing antisocial behaviour at The Recreation Ground could be highlighted at the Area Board meeting on 10 October where the Chief Constable would be present
- That more engagement and action was needed from all parties to safeguard young children from the influence of drugs and the attention of drug dealers
- Whether to approach the new Head at St John's School to seek a partnership approach
- Whether to ask Wiltshire Police to provide more specific reports to Full Town Council meetings, including the number of incidents reported vs those investigated/solved
- Whether to install additional lighting, and/or use existing lighting more effectively, as a deterrent

Members supported the proposals in the Town Clerk's report with the addition of the installation of a car park barrier and improvements to lighting at the Marlborough Community & Youth Centre, car park and skate park.

RESOLVED: That, with two additions, the proposals are agreed and to seek endorsement from Full Town Council

1. Install additional CCTV cameras to cover all aspects of the Community and Youth Centre external boundaries (namely the aspect facing the field) where possible
2. Replace the existing bin with a more robust bin and relocate within view of CCTV
3. Set up a youth council to represent the experience of young people using the Recreation Ground and other open spaces to the Council, partners and the community
4. Seek to create the right partnership response including the police, schools, youth service providers and parents to ensure the right culture setting for the Recreation Ground
5. Seek to utilise the Community and Youth Centre more for the benefit of children and young people
6. Seek endorsement of 3, 4 and 5 from Full Council
7. Install a barrier at the entrance to the Community and Youth Centre car park

8. Improve lighting

ACTIONS: investigate feasibility of automatic/ANPR barriers and ask Wiltshire Police for detailed reports for Full Council meetings

Councillor Farrell took the Chair for the following item

259/23

CEMETERY REPORT

Members noted recent grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial that had been issued, and Memorial Inscriptions that had been approved.

260/23

ALLOTMENTS

There was no verbal update as **Councillor Luson** was unable to attend the meeting.

261/23

MEMORIAL BENCH REQUEST

RESOLVED: that the application for a memorial bench at the Diamond Jubilee Orchard on Marlborough Common is approved

262/23

REWILDING REQUEST

Members considered whether to support a request from resident Sara Daw proposing that strimming of footpath MARL30 is suspended March-October to allow wildflowers and wildlife to flourish, and to forward the request to Wiltshire Council under the Wild about Wiltshire scheme:

- Whether leaving the area uncut from March to October would prevent students using the space to sit and meet socially
- Whether the request related to the border of the path only, rather than all grass areas
- Whether the request specifying the exact area to be left unmown was clear enough
- Whether to strim paths through wild flowers in the wider areas, similar to those at Marlborough Common
- Whether the end-of-season mow would be conducted by Wiltshire Council or its contractors, with all materials removed from site
- Whether to trial for a year

RESOLVED: to support the resident's request to Wiltshire Council to leave the borders of footpath MARL30 unmown between March-October to enable wildflowers to flourish: to be mown at the end of September with all material removed and to trial the scheme for one year

The meeting closed at 8.02 pm

Signed: Date:
Chair