

Minutes of a meeting of
Recreation & Amenities Committee
Held on Thursday 30th June 2022
At School Green Centre commencing at 19.30

Present: N Boyer, E Brown, I Clarke (Chair), P Emmment, P Jahromi, L James, M Jones,
I Montgomery, D Peer, R Tatla

Attending: B Winton (Clerk)

22/RA/38 Public Questions

38.1 There were no public questions.

22/RA/39 Apologies and declarations of Members' Interest

39.1 No apologies had been received for this meeting.

39.2 There were no declarations of members' interests.

39.3 There were no changes to members' declarations of pecuniary interest.

22/RA/40 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

40.1 The minutes of the committee meeting of 26th May 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed as such by the Chairman.

Proposed: Cllr Emmment
Seconded: Cllr Brown
Approved: Unanimously

40.2 The following matters arising were covered:

62.2.3 The next report on maintenance work is due in August 2022

1.6 Suitable Access to Spencers' Wood Pavilion. A visit by an engineer had been arranged.

7.2 Orchard Rise Allotments. Discussions with Wokingham Borough Council were ongoing and some work at the site has been noted. The Clerk had restated the position that SPC would not take on the site until it was fit for purpose.

34.2 The Clerk has provided an update to BDS regarding the discussion at the previous meeting on the Millworth Lane proposals. BDS had provided a revised layout and were working on initial costings.

36.3 The Clerk confirmed that the Link Visiting Scheme payment would need to be regarded as coming from the 2022/23 budget allocation.

37.1 The discussion of bollards was an item on the agenda.

37.3.2 The next quarterly Bookings analysis was intended to be provided at the July committee meeting but as that meeting had been cancelled this will now be presented at the August meeting.

22/RA/41

Works Update

41.1 Progress on new MUGA and outdoor gym equipment for Spencers' Wood Recreation Ground

Work had begun on the play equipment on Thursday 23rd June and was progressing well with completion expected on Monday 4th July. A maintenance hole cover had been discovered when some of the existing tarmac had been lifted resulting in an extending of the area to be covered and a slight repositioning of the equipment. There was an additional cost of £1,124.01 + VAT.

The MUGA was out for planning consultation and at the time of the meeting two objections had been posted on the planning portal by members of the public.

Post meeting note – three objections in total were posted

41.2 Update on Proposals for Millworth Lane

The Clerk has provided an update to BDS following the discussion at the May R&A Committee meeting. A revised drawing had been received and an initial estimate of the magnitude of costs was awaited. The Chair also advised on plans for toilets for the tennis club.

22/RA/42**Community Services****42.1 Sports Strategy Group**

The University of Reading had started work on the High Copse site with concrete being removed and plans progressing to remove the overhead power cables in the area and bury them instead.

42.2 Community Services

Cllr Brown provided a verbal update. The Welcome Club had been struggling to recruit but now had two new volunteers. There was a surplus of just over £500 from the Jubilee picnic event and the organisers intended to share this amongst some local charities. The Car Service were advertising for drivers and the advert was on the SPC website.

There was a discussion about a Christmas Tree for Spencers' Wood Village Hall following a suggestion that the Council had previously agreed to provide one. The Clerk was asked to write and confirm the arrangements for a tree with the SWVH Committee. Cllr Jahromi suggested considering planting permanent Christmas Trees. The Clerk would ask the new Facilities Manager to consider the implications and viability of such an approach.

ACTION – Clerk to write to SWVH Committee about provision of a Christmas Tree

ACTION – Clerk to ask Facilities Manager to consider planting permanent Christmas Trees

42.3 Pavilion Youth Club

Cllr Boyer had visited on Wednesday 29th and the session was well attended. The Clerk advised that there had been provision in the budget for extending the hours of the Youth Club and so the additional hours required to provide two sessions on a Wednesday for different age groups is budgeted for. The intention was to revert to just one session during the summer holidays where overall numbers are reduced.

22/RA/43

Grant Applications

43.1 3rd Shinfield Brownies

It was felt that more information was required before any decision on making a grant could be considered. In particular, it was felt that any grant would be better focused on those who had specific financial challenges that may prevent them from attending an activity rather than a general contribution towards the unit. For example, activity x would cost £y per person and it was felt that z children would be unable to participate.

The Clerk suggested that it may be possible to offer in kind support by allowing a sleepover at the School Green Centre using Grazeley and Shinfield rooms and the kitchen and subject to a risk assessment including Safeguarding.

ACTION – Clerk to obtain more information from the unit leader

ACTION – Clerk to offer option of use of School Green Centre

ACTION – Clerk to consider if the application form could be revised to provide additional guidance to applicants and more information for members

43.2 3rd Shinfield Guides

The same comments and actions as for the Brownies applied to this grant request.

43.3 Aldergrove School Jubilee Grant

It was agreed that a grant of £290 would be paid.

Proposed: Cllr Jahromi

Seconded: Cllr Brown

Approved: Unanimously

43.4 Whiteknights Jubilee Grant

The Clerk advised that upon further investigation this school had been paid a grant of £840 (based on £2 per pupil and 420 pupils on the books) by the Locum Clerk although there was no record of this having passed through committee. The Committee agreed that the payment was in accordance with the terms of the Jubilee Grant and NOTED the payment.

43.5 CAB Wokingham

It was agreed that a grant of £1,250 (and not the £3,000 requested) would be paid and that no grant request from CAB Reading would be considered if received. The Clerk advised that he was in discussion with CAB regarding regular visits by their van to School Green Centre.

*Proposed: Cllr Emmment
Seconded: Cllr Jahromi
Approved: Unanimously*

43.6 Keep Mobile

Cllr Brown advised that Keep Mobile were very busy within the parish and there was a tangible benefit to residents by supporting this application. It was agreed that a grant of £1,365 would be paid.

*Proposed: Cllr Brown
Seconded: Cllr Montgomery
Approved: Unanimously*

43.7 Help for Ukraine

Cllr Jahromi gave members a report of his most recent visit to Poland and about the homelessness, hunger and general shortages refugees from Ukraine were suffering. Cllr Jahromi had hoped that one option would be to provide one or more ambulances as most such vehicles in eastern Ukraine had been destroyed. All members were very keen to support those refugees, but it was recognised that the costs involved in providing ambulances was beyond the funds available.

The Clerk proposed that he investigate what practical help could be offered. This may take the form of using School Green Centre as a holding location for donations of a list of priority items e.g. blankets, sleeping bags and baby food. This could take place over a week and then be transported to Poland through a reliable source to ensure the aid gets to those who need it. Shinfield Parish Council could offer to make a financial commitment up to a set limit to supplement donations made by residents. Such an effort could be timed to coincide to mark the 6 months since the start of the Russian invasion.

ACTION: Clerk to investigate how the most practical help can be provided to Ukrainian refugees and engaging the local community to do so

43.8 The Link Visiting Scheme

The Clerk advised that a letter of thanks had been received from The Link Visiting Scheme for the grant of £900.

22/RA/44 Other Items

44.1 Pride in our Parish

The Chair advised that there was a balance of £6,993 in the reserve set aside for this purpose and set out three possible applications for those funds.

- a) To consider replacing the Turkish Oak tree at Millworth Lane with replacement native trees
- b) To replace the tree on Shinfield Village Green planted in 2019 but which had since died
- c) To plant additional shrubs at Spencers' Wood following the installation of the new fitness equipment

The replacement of the Turkish Oak should be considered alongside the proposals for Millworth Lane. The additional planting at Spencers' Wood could be assessed once the new fitness equipment and MUGA were in place.

It was agreed that the replacement of the tree on Shinfield Village Green should be progressed.

Proposed: Cllr Jahromi

Seconded: Cllr Tatla

Approved: Unanimously (to replace the tree on the Village Green)

ACTION: Clerk to arrange replacement of the tree

The Clerk was asked to find out if all the works from the tree survey had been completed. Councillor Peer asked if there had been any movement on a tree in memory of the previous Chairman Peter Hughes.

ACTION: The Clerk to find out if all the works from the tree survey had been completed

ACTION: The Clerk to check with Chairman Grimes regarding the tree for Peter Hughes

44.2 Robyn's Nest Café

The Clerk provided a summary of the key terms in the licence with Robyn's Nest including the fact that the licence fee was the greater of a percentage of net profit or a fixed amount payable each year (the latter being linked to inflation), kitchen electricity costs were rechargeable to Robyn's Nest and that SPC had no say over prices or menu in the café.

The Clerk set out the costs that had been incurred in fitting out the building for the café and providing the main kitchen elements. Based on the current fixed licence fees these would be paid back in approximately 11 years. If SPC's share of net profit exceeded the fixed amount, then the payback period would be reduced.

Members **NOTED** the report.

44.3 Ryeish Pavilion

The Clerk provided a brief overview of the current condition of the building and internal layout. Members were asked for their thoughts on possible uses. Cllr Tatla advised that midwives were no longer permitted to operate from GP surgeries and as a result midwifery services in Wokingham borough were being provided across a range of various locations at a significant cost. She suggested that this may be a feasible option for the pavilion. Cllr Boyer stated that any consideration of options for the pavilion should include considering whether to demolish it if no viable use could be identified.

The Chair advised that he intended to return to the conversation in September and asked members to give more consideration to possible alternative uses. The Clerk stated that he could arrange a visit before the September R&A meeting to allow members a chance to view the building in its current state. The Clerk was also asked to raise the pavilion as a possible option for midwifery services to see if there was any possible interest.

A possible plan of action was to identify uses that may be acceptable to SPC, investigate what would be required to make adaptations to the building and seek expressions of interest before working with a preferred partner to redevelop the building to generate a meaningful return for the Council.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange site visit in September

ACTION: Clerk to establish possible midwifery interest in the building

44.4 Deer Leap Park

There appeared to be little happening at the site although Cllr Boyer advised that from a discussion at the Planning & Highways meeting on 9th June the play equipment had been ordered on a 15-week lead time.

44.5 Chapel Lane Pre-School

The Clerk advised that he has not yet been able to progress this matter.

44.6 Bollards for School Green Centre

The Clerk produced a sample of a black recycled plastic bollard as had been requested at the previous meeting. This was preferred to the oak and other options previously considered.

Proposed: Cllr Tatla

Seconded: Cllr Jahromi

Approved: Cllr Montgomery voted against. All other voted in favour of the black recycled plastic bollard for Village Green

44.7 Cricket Issues

The new pitch at Manor is theoretically available for play from 22nd July 2022. However, SPC have proposed to University of Reading to delay taking over the pitch until 2023. This would allow the pitch more time to bed in and avoid UoR having to install a temporary pavilion (and allowing them to progress with a permanent building). In return for the deferment SPC would avoid having to take on the ground maintenance cost until 2023. Members NOTED the update.

44.8 Newsletter

The Clerk advised that he would be convening a meeting of the working party next week to discuss the hard copy issue to go to all households and encouraging residents to sign up for the electronic version. He confirmed that provisions would be in place for anyone not able to access the electronic version. Members NOTED the update.

44.9 Orchard Rise Allotments

This item had already been discussed in the meeting as noted in 40.2 above.

44.10 Replacement Bus Shelter at Spencers' Wood

Members NOTED that the insurance company had agreed to pay the costs of removing the damaged shelter (already carried out) and of providing a replacement shelter. This would be as close in appearance to the previous shelters as possible.

44.11 SPC assistance for WBC Garden Forest Scheme

Laura Buck from Wokingham Borough Council had given a presentation on tress at the Annual Parish Meeting which had included details of this scheme. The Clerk advised that he had agreed to the use of a room at the School Green Centre for the storage and distribution of bare root trees (a range of six native varieties such a rowan, hazel and silver birch) to those residents who had requested them (72 residents had requested a total of 155 trees). The dates were to be confirmed but would be in October or November 2022.

44.12 Use of Council Land at Grazeley

The committee considered a request for the possible use of council land near Grazeley as a site for the temporary storage and onward distribution of vehicles and equipment. It was felt that the site was inappropriate for such use and would require change of use and planning permission which were not expected to be forthcoming. Members agreed not to proceed any further with the request.

44.13 Terms & Conditions of Room Hire and use of Bouncy Castles

The Clerk explained that he was currently revising the terms and conditions for room hire at the School Green Centre and Spencers' Wood Pavilion to improve their clarity and ensure that council staff had sufficient provision to allow them to effectively manage potential issues such as excessive noise from an event.

One of the current provisions was that the council did not permit the use of bouncy castles and similar equipment to be used at the venues. The Clerk asked for this to be changed to permit such equipment to be used provided it came from a recognised hire company and that company provided risk assessment, insurance certificates and confirmation of ongoing PIPA maintenance of the equipment (either through PIPA (Professional Inflatable Play Association) or ADIPS (Amusement Device Inspection Procedures Scheme)). All details should be provided in advance of the event planned.

Member agreed to approve the use of this type of equipment on that basis.

Proposed: Cllr Boyer
Seconded: Cllr Peer
Approved: Unanimously

The Clerk asked if members would consider the purchase of such equipment for exclusive use at School Green Centre. Members decided not to proceed with that option. The Clerk offered to provide data on the number of events using such equipment as part of the ongoing reporting of room bookings.

ACTION: Clerk to provide information on number of activities involving bouncy castles or similar equipment

44.14 **Chickens on Allotments**

At the January 2022 R&A Meeting it was agreed that those allotment holders with chickens be instructed to remove them within three months. The Clerk had, in agreement with the Chair of R&A, put a moratorium on this action in the light of a threat of legal action from one of those allotment holders affected.

The Clerk proposed that the three allotment holders who currently have chickens be allowed to retain them for the duration of their holding of an allotment (for animal welfare issues replacement chickens could be obtained). This was subject to them agreeing to comply with a specific set of requirements designed to prevent the animals being a nuisance or encouraging rats and to ensure the welfare of the animals. No new permissions for livestock would be granted and the practice would end with these three allotment holders.

Proposed: Cllr Tatla
Seconded: Cllr Peer
Approved: Unanimously

ACTION: Clerk to put in place specific agreement with the three allotment holders who currently have chickens

22/RA/45

Future Meetings

- 45.1 Members **NOTED** that the meeting scheduled for Thursday 28th July had been cancelled.
- 45.2 Members **NOTED** that the meeting scheduled for Thursday 25th August would now be held on Thursday 18th August.
- 45.3 Members **NOTED** confirmation that the September meeting would be held on Thursday 22nd September 2022.

The meeting ended at 21.50

List of Actions

22/RA/40.2	a) Report on Maintenance work to go to August R&A	Clerk
	b) Orchard Rise allotments to be transferred to SPC when preparatory works have been completed	Clerk
	c) Quarterly Report on Bookings to go to August R&A	Clerk
22/RA/42.2	a) Clerk to write to SWVH committee about the provision of a Christmas tree	Clerk
	b) Clerk to ask Facilities Manager to consider planting permanent Christmas trees	Clerk
22/RA/43.1	a) Clerk to obtain more information on Brownie and Guide grant applications	Clerk
	b) Clerk to offer option of using School Green as a venue for a Brownie/Guide activity	Clerk
	c) Clerk to review application form to provide more information to allow members to be better informed about grant requests	Clerk
22/RA/43.7	a) Clerk to investigate how the most practical help can be provided to Ukrainian refugees and engaging the local community to do so	Clerk
22/RA/44.1	a) Clerk to arrange replacement of the tree on Village Green	Clerk
	b) Clerk to establish if all the works from the tree survey had been completed	Clerk
	c) Clerk to check with Chairman regarding the tree for Peter Hughes	Clerk
22/RA/44.3	a) Clerk to arrange site visit to Ryeish Pavilion in September	Clerk
	b) Clerk to establish possible midwifery interest in Ryeish Pavilion	Clerk

- 22/RA/44.13 a) Clerk to include information on use of bouncy castles Clerk
in future quarterly reports
- 22/RA/44.14 a) Clerk to put in place specific agreement with the Clerk
three allotment holders who currently have chickens

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