



FAIR OAK & HORTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

held on Monday 22 January 2024

at the Parish Office, 2 Knowle Park Lane, Fair Oak

P – present, Pt – part of the meeting, Ab – absent, Ap – apologies

Ab	Cllr Anderson	P	Cllr Couldrey	P	Cllr Meech
P	Cllr Barrett	P	Cllr Douglas	Ap	Cllr Scott
P	Cllr Bird	P	Cllr Forfar	P	Cllr Smith
P	Cllr Broomfield	P	Cllr Higby	P	Cllr Stuppel
P	Cllr Chivuchi	Ap	Cllr Marsh	P	Cllr Tennent

Officers in attendance: Mel Stephens, Clerk; Michelle Leadbitter-Allen, Deputy Clerk; Martin Johnson, Operations Manager; Jo Cahill, Finance Officer; Siobhan Strand, Community Development Officer.

Apologies: Cllrs Marsh & Scott.

PUBLIC SESSION

One member of the public was in attendance and spoke under Minute Number 94.

Three members of the public were in attendance for Minute Number 95 (application PN/23/96630). No formal representation was made to the Council on this matter.

92 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllrs Broomfield, Couldrey, Douglas & Tennant for Minute Number 95.

93 MINUTES (PAPER A)

RESOLVED:

- That the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 18 December 2023, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record; and
- That the delegated planning decisions from w/e 24 November, 8 December & 29 December 2023 be noted.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair proposed a change in the order of business as members of the public were present that had requested to speak regarding the future of Upper Barn Copse Play Area. All members agreed.

94 UPPER BARN COPSE PLAY AREA (REPORT D)

A member of the public presented his case for not decommissioning the play area, the salient points included but were not limited to the following:

- As an NHS worker and parent, he expressed his concern over the lasting residual effects of closing areas of recreational value were having on children,
- The play-area was situated in a unique position in a quiet cul-du-sac which was safe & welcoming to local children and the wider community
- Play area used by local preschools,
- The local community were keen to invest in the play-area by means of seeking financial support to perform repairs and purchase equipment,
- He hoped that the community and the council could work together to meet a favourable outcome for all concerned.

The chair thanked the member of the public for his compelling presentation.

A short video was shown to those present which had been recorded at the Upper Barn Copse Play Area by the Operations Manager, which showed the deterioration of the timber on the play equipment and how they had been inspected.

The Chair then ran through the findings and recommendations given by an independent play consultant Dave Bowen, who had inspected the play area on the 19 January as directed by the Council.

His findings and subsequent recommendations are listed below:

- The equipment was manufactured and installed around June 2010 and had probably reached the end of its useful life expectancy as it is coming up to 15 years.
- Council operatives should check the bolts on the Herras fencing for tightness, as a gap had been deliberately opened in the fencing to gain access to the equipment.
- The council should put up laminated signs advising that the play area is closed.
- There was evidence of rotting and ageing in many timbers with some having small pockets where water could get in and further speed up the rotting process.
- All timbers appeared to be at the same stage of deterioration and life expectancy.
- There were three self-closing gates (one in the woodland) which with a little maintenance and checking could be reused elsewhere in the Parish.

- The timber fence around the play area had also been damaged which would need extensive work to repair to an acceptable standard.
- The Impact absorbing surfacing appeared to have come to the end of its useful life.
- As the new Crowdhill Green Play Area was within such a short walking distance away on a generally level established path, Mr Bowen had suggested that the Upper Barn Copse Play Area be decommissioned with the ground reinstated to grass as per the surrounding area.
- The Council should keep the existing path through the play area to the woodland and formalise a route through to Kinver Crescent (Crowdhill Development) following the desire line and using a Breedon Amber or Cotswold self-binding gravel to do so.
- The Operations Manager went on to add that the £5 000.00 quoted in the video was to replace the six rotten timbers identified during the inspection. It was likely that more timbers would be identified at the next inspection, with more each year after that, which if not replaced would render the play area unsafe for use.
- The Operations Manager also clarified that the indicative quote of £20 000.00 was to replace the multi-use play unit.
- The Chair reiterated that the members would be choosing one option from those presented in the report which would then undergo considerable community consultation before a final decision was made on the level of play provision at Upper Barn Copse.
- The options informed by the results of the structural testing report received and the costs for reinstatement works, were as such:
 - (a) **Option One:** To undertake immediate repair work at an estimated cost of £5,500, which would maintain the status quo. Regular structural tests of the timbers would need to continue as the timbers would continue to degrade over time.
 - (b) **Option Two:** Part Decommissioning of equipment and fencing requiring immediate repair. Area to be enhanced with new planters, shrubs, and trees with minimal costs of approximately £ 400.00 for decommissioning and planter creation.
 - (c) **Option Three:** Full Decommissioning and redesign of the site with a focus on nature recovery and sensory experience. Some costs for redesign of this site would be sort Eastleigh Borough Council as part of extended Bee and Tree Corridor Project.

After discussion it was;

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Option Two was the Council's preferred option which would commence with the immediate decommissioning of play equipment deemed unsafe by inspectors,

- (b) That the Clerk be instructed to undertake community engagement with residents with all options presented by the public to be considered; and
- (c) That the Council consider further the outcome of community consultation before making a final decision on the level of play provision

The member of the public thanked the council for its professionalism and considered approach in this matter and looked forward to the consultation process.

Action: M Stephens

95 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Cllrs Broomfield & Couldrey declared a pecuniary interests in applications F/23/96631 and PN/23/96630 as a members' of the Bishopstoke, Fair Oak and Horton Heath Local Area Committee. They did not participate in the discussion and did not vote.

Cllr Tennent declared a pecuniary interest in applications F/23/96631 and PN/23/96630 as a member of the Hedge End, West End and Botley Local Area Committee. He did not participate in the discussion and did not vote.

Cllr Douglas declared a non-pecuniary interest in application PN/23/96630 as her property was near the development and she had already made previous comment. As her property was not near the proposed access route or entrance to the development, she concluded that there were no issues under common law that prevented her from remaining in the meeting to speak and to vote.

The Council considered the following planning applications: -

Application No: F/23/96631

Description: Construction of an internal distributor road and associated footways, cycleways, lighting, landscaping and SUDS basins, and diversion of Public Rights of Way footpaths FOHHF 701 and 702 as part of the One Horton Heath development (proposal constitutes EIA development).

Site: Land between Burnetts and Fir Tree Lane

RESOLVED:

That the response prepared by the Clerk, as set below be submitted to Eastleigh Borough Council.

“Given that there has been recent and historical flooding and drainage issues in and around the site, it is important that the hydrological design of the site is adequate. Without a robust scheme in place, the cumulative issues will be compounded and will worsen over time, this will be untenable for residents, visitors and local wildlife.

The Parish wishes to put forward its concerns as a holding statement, pending a response from the Local Flood Authority and will submit further comments once it has reviewed the LFA's submission."

Application No: PN/23/96630

Description: Prior Approval Notification for agricultural access from Pembers Farm Avenue (second application)

Site: Pembers Hill Farm, Mortimers Lane, Fair Oak, SO50 7EA

Following discussion among members and input from members of the public present which had been permitted to speak, it was;

RESOLVED:

That the Council submit their objection the application on the grounds of highway safety, and request the applicant continue to make use of their current access.

96 CHAIRS ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were none.

97 CLERK'S UPDATE

The Clerk gave a presentation, attached at Appendix 1 to these minutes.

98 FINANCE REPORT (REPORT B)

The Council considered the finance report which highlighted the Council's latest budgetary position.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) That the BACs payments be approved.

Action: J Cahill

99 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

The Community Development Officer gave a presentation, attached at **Appendix 2** to these minutes.

100 WILDLIFE AUDIT ASSESSMENTS (REPORT C)

The Council considered the outcome of the ecological assessment undertaken in summer 2023 at Twynams Field and Lapstone Farm. Members also considered the actions already undertaken by officers and proposed action and maintenance plan as set out in Appendix 3 to Report C.

The Operations Manager advised members that certain elements of the plan had begun as part of existing work practices and that he was confident that the remaining actions could be managed by the team as part of planned works.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the report highlighting the ecologist findings as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted;
- (b) That the action and maintenance plans for both sites as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved;
- (c) That a scoping exercise for a pond redesign at Knowle Park and possible pond creation at Lapstone Farm be agreed; and
- (d) That the Clerk be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Chairman and Cllr Marsh as Chairman of the Climate Change Task & Finish Group, to oversee the implementation of these plans with regular reports back to the Council.

Action: M Stephens

101 FINANCIAL ADVICE TO LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Council considered a request received from a local independent financial advisor to provide free advice to the public using the leaf room at WCC as well as writing an advice column in the Council's E-Bulletin.

In discussing the proposal, some members expressed their concern regarding the potential risk to the Council in promoting financial advice to residents. In addition, other members felt that the request should be refused as this activity fell outside the remit of the Council.

It was therefore;

RESOLVED:

The offer be declined.

Action: M Stephens

102 HCC FUTURE SERVICES CONSULTATION

The Clerk had prepared a draft response for councillor review.

As the deadline for the consultation submission was not until the 31 March, the Chairman requested that the draft paper be circulated to Councillors to submit their views to the Clerk, so that she could prepare draft submission for final consideration at the March meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft response be circulated to members for their view and comments back to

the Clerk; and

- (b) That the Council determine a submission to Hampshire County Council at the March Council meeting.

Action: M Stephens

103 WORK PROGRAMME (REPORT E)

The Council considered the work programme and made minor amendments.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be agreed subject to the amendment that Upper Barn Copse consultation response be considered at the March or April meeting.

104 MEETING DATES (REPORT F)

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the meeting dates as set out in Report F be agreed: and
- (b) That the meeting scheduled to take place on 15 April 2024 be moved to 22 April 2024.

Action: M Leadbitter-Allen

Signed Chairman.

This was all the business and the meeting closed at 7.27 pm.

Appendix 1: Clerks Update Presentation

Appendix 2: Community Development Officer Presentation