



St Andrews Parish Council

**Minutes of the Grounds Maintenance Committee Meeting
Held on Wednesday 13th September 2023 at 7:30pm
at Redhouse Community Centre, Frankel Avenue, Swindon**

Councillors Present: Daniel Adams, Jake Chandler, Steve Heyes, Sue MacDonald, Paul West, Bradley Williams and Vince Williams
Officer Present: Emma Sylvester – Parish Clerk
Luke Jones – Grounds Maintenance Manager (GMM)
Public Present: 1

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

18. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None

19. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meetings held on 21st June 2023 as a true record.

20. Members **RESOLVED** to bring forward Agenda Item 6 Correspondence to after Agenda item 4 Public Recess

21. PUBLIC RECESS

A parish resident read out a letter to the parish council regarding rewilding asking if the parish council will increase the areas of wildflowers and offered to volunteer with other community groups they knew of. The Chairman thanked the resident for attending the meeting and offering help. He said that members would be discussing an extension to the current areas that had been left to rewild.

22. CORRESPONDENCE

The Chairman reported that this item had been discussed under Agenda Item 4 Public Recess.

23. Members **RESOLVED** to bring forward Agenda Item 16 Field Boundaries.

24. FIELD BOUNDARIES

The Grounds Maintenance Manager spoke on his report regarding areas where the parish could leave areas around open spaces without cutting to make additional wildflower areas.

Members agreed with the areas.

RESOLVED

Subject to permission from Swindon Borough Council it was agreed to leave areas unmown as follows and detailed in the attached maps in the Minute Book:

Roman Villa – 3m wildflower buffer

Diamond Jubilee Park

Standen

Delius



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It was agreed for the Grounds Maintenance Manager to write to the four houses on Kingdom Crescent who overlooked the planned wildflower strip at Delius, letting them know the parish council's plans.

Members thanked Luke for his hard work in putting together the proposal.

25. ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED To elect Cllr Daniel Adams as Vice Chairman to the Grounds Maintenance Committee.

26. OPEN SPACES

Members received the open spaces spreadsheet. The GMM reported the team were struggling to keep up as the grass was still growing and the brambles and shrubs had shot up. He added that manpower was not to full capacity.

27. VEHICLE/MACHINERY

(i) Members noted lease end dates for vehicle and machinery as follows:

Vehicles Summer 2025 to Summer 2026

Equipment Summer 2025

(ii) Members discussed purchasing vehicles and machinery at the end of their leases. The GMM recommended purchasing the following items and reported the estimate cost:

Trimax 400 Snake £5,400 +VAT

Bomford Robin 4.3 Hedgecutter £3,500 +VAT

Timberwolf TW160PH Wood

Chipper £4,850 +VAT

HiLux £12,000 + VAT

Members agreed to keep the recommended items and discussed how this would be funded.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the above items were purchased at the end of their lease and funded through the precept over a period of 2 years.

(iii) Members discussed a brief for tender documents, and it agreed that there would be separate briefs for the different items required. This could be as follows:

Tractor and 2 x Ride on mowers

2 x Tipper Trucks

1 x EV Vehicle

It was agreed to discuss this further at the next meeting.

28. POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Clerk reported that there had been a minor accident involving one of the men using a hedge cutter and following this procedures and risk assessments had been reviewed. Members discussed whether the team had appropriate PPE. The GMM reported that there are thicker trousers, but this increases the fatigue on the worker.

RESOLVED

For the GMM to investigate alternative PPE.



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RESOLVED

To approve the following procedures and risk assessments:

Ride on Procedure

Shrub and Hedge Cutting Procedure and Risk Assessment

Side Arm Flail Procedure

Strimming Procedure

Wood Chipper Procedure and Risk Assessment

Mowing Equipment Deck Maintenance Procedure and Risk Assessment

29. SHRUBS AND HEDGES

(i) The GMM reported on the responses following the consultation regarding cutting the hedge at Joyce Close to 4ft due to difficulty in accessing the hedge.

RESOLVED for the GMM to letter drop the houses in the close before each cut requesting that cars are moved. If GMM still has difficulties to bring the issue back to committee for further discussions.

(ii) Members considered a report from the GMM regarding Elstree Way requesting that permission is granted to remove a section of shrubs and replace with grass along the top section by the traffic lights. This would be a project with Haydon Wick Parish Council who also cut the shrubs along this stretch of road.

RESOLVED to agree in principle to the projects and request that the GMM bring the item to the next meeting with costs.

30. TREES FOR CLIMATE

The GMM reported that he had met with possible contractors regarding the planting of the trees however had only received one quote totalling £3,500 to plant the trees with guards and supporting and then £8,000 for maintenance. The GMM reported that it wasn't clear yet whether the parish council would have to pay this money and then claim back via the grant application with Swindon Borough Council.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that this project goes ahead.

31. BOLLARDS TO PREVENT VERGE PARKING

Members noted correspondence received from Swindon Borough Council(SBC) regarding bollards on verges and **RESOLVED** to accept SBC's position that stones are not placed on verges to prevent parking and the parish council will follow the guidelines.

32. DEPOT (Standing Item)

Cllr V Williams presented to members the proposed depot space at Swindon Borough Council's Waterside site. Members discussed how the space could be used. It was agreed to wait for further information from Swindon Borough Council before any decisions were made.

33. BUDGET

Members received accounting reports as attached in the Minute Book for Ground Maintenance. It was agreed for Cllr V Williams to work with the Clerk and GMM to put forward a draft budget at the next meeting.



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34. ROAD SWEEPING AND VERGE CUTTING

Members received correspondence from Swindon Borough Council on road sweeping and verge cutting services they will provide. Members had concerns regarding verge cutting on Tadpole Lane and the clearing of the gateways on Thamesdown Drive.

The meeting closed at 9:42 pm.

Chairman _____

Date _____