



Wickham and Knowle Parish Council

Wickham Water Meadows Committee

Minutes of the Wickham Water Meadows Committee held at Knowle Village Hall, Monday 14th October 2024, 7pm

Committee members present:

Cllr Craig Manuel (Chair), Cllr Sheila Chambers, Cllr Leah Greenbank, Cllr Ben Sawyers (Vice from)

In Attendance: Sophie Thorogood, Parish Clerk & RFO
2 Members of the Public

1. Vice Chair –

RESOLVED: Cllr Sawyers was elected as Vice Chair of the Committee, as proposed by Cllr Greenbank, seconded by Cllr Chambers and carried.

2. Apologies for absence – Cllr Burt

3. Declarations of interest on Agenda: None declared

4. Public Session – 2 members of public were in attendance and offered their help if needed with any queries as both used to be part of the Committee in the past.

5. Minutes of the Meeting 14th October 2022: The minutes were taken as correct; no Councillors present were in attendance at the time

RESOLVED: Minutes of the Meeting were approved and signed as a true record, proposed Cllr Manuel, seconded by Cllr Greenbank and carried.

6. Current work needed at the Water Meadows:

Clerk has arranged a morning session with a new Lengthsman company to the footpath that runs through the Water Meadows, as this footpath is a register Hampshire Rights of Way footpath. If the Council are happy with the work, this new Lengthsman company can be used again in the future.

The handyman engaged to carry out work to Knowle Village Hall is able to carry out remedial work to the benches and tables that have been damaged by disposable barbecues. The handyman has carried out similar work for another Parish Council working alongside a Men's Shed; the Wickham Men's Shed are keen to work with the Parish Council for projects around the Parish.

Stands for a disposable barbecue are needed for the picnic tables to protect them once refurbished.

ACTION: Clerk to source a new metal bin inside the Water Meadows by the picnic area, and to source barbecue stands.

7. Committee's terms of reference:

RESOLVED: To recommend to Full Council adoption of the Committee's terms of reference, as proposed by Cllr Manuel, seconded by Cllr Sawyers and carried.

8. Tree Survey:

RESOLVED: To accept quote 1 from Arbor Eco Consultancy for £700, as proposed by Cllr Manuel, seconded by Cllr Greenbank and carried.



Wickham and Knowle Parish Council

9. Water Vole channel work:

The Committee went out to tender in July 2022 for some new fencing to the side stream, having applied for a grant of £5,000 from Portsmouth Water for the work. 3 tenders were received, and the preferred contractor, Aquascience, was chosen for a contract price of £6,180 ex VAT.

85% of the grant, £4,250, was paid upfront into the Parish Council's bank account on 9th February 2022 but was not put into an earmarked reserve at the time. The remaining 15% grant can only be paid upon completion of the project. Portsmouth Water operate on a 5-yr grant cycle which ends on 31st March 2025, and are chasing the Council for an update as part of the grant conditions.

In the resignation of the old Clerk and the handover period from locum to new permanent Clerk, this project was not progressed. Aquascience have confirmed they will honour the initial price of £6,180, however they required a water vole survey to be carried out. The issue being the survey could only be carried out during the breeding season, whilst the fencing work could only be completed once the breeding season was over. There was a chance the Council would have to wait a whole year's cycle before the project could be completed.

A member of public present, who has been trained by South Downs National Park to carry out a water vole survey, offered to help facilitate contact between the Clerk and the Authority to help resolve the survey query.

RESOLVED: subject to approval from South Downs National Park regarding the water vole survey, it was proposed to recommend to Full Council to accept the quote of £6,180 from Aquascience for the water vole channel work, as proposed by Cllr Manuel, seconded by Cllr Sawyers and carried.

- 10. **Charity AGM:** The meeting must be held before 31st January as the Charity accounts for 2023/24 are due for submission to the Charity Commission by this date. Ideas for an AGM were to walk around the Water Meadows at lunchtime, then walk to the Tennis Clubhouse for a meeting. Date agreed of 13th January 2025, 12.30pm.

2 members of public left the meeting 7:54pm

11. Motion for confidential business

- 12. **Bostons rent review:** Whilst assembled as a Committee, the Clerk ordered several Title Deeds and Plans from Land Registry for the area around Bostons barbers and the water meadows. It was discovered that HP599869 for the land on which The Old Forge, Fareham Road, Wickham, sits, is registered as belonging to the Parish Council and not the Water Meadows Charity as previously thought. Therefore the Policy & Finance Committee will manage the rent review for the barbers.

The Clerk and Cllr Manuel to arrange to meet with the owners of Bostons before engaging a company to carry out a market appraisal of the building. The results of which will be reviewed at a future meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee.

Meeting Closed, 8:55pm

Signed.....

Date.....