

Sandridge Parish Council



JERSEY FARM WOODLAND PARK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Met at 7.30pm at Marshalswick Community Centre on Monday 17th January 2024.

PRESENT:

Parish Councillors - Jenny Roberts (Chair), Carol Chalkley, Carol Higgins, Adam Twidell, Maurice Wells
District Councillors – Michael Jones
Warden – Mark Carter
Public Members – John Forward, Carol Higgins, Frances Leonard, Anne Thomas

OFFICERS:

Emma Hostler - Deputy Clerk
Rebecca Pannese – Project, Amenities and Community Engagement (PACE) Officer

ABSENT:

Parish Councillors Julie Oakley, Luke Sieger
Public Member Jamie Burrows

642. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Raj Visram and Clyde Martindill.

643. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

Mark Carter declared an interest as a self-employed contractor for Sandridge Parish Council.

644. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18th September 2023, having been previously circulated, were taken as a correct record and it was, unanimously;

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18th September 2023 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

645. MATTERS OF REPORT

- The Committee welcomed a new Public Member Johanna Houlahan. Cllr Michael Jones also joined as a District Councillor representative.
- New wooden security posts have been installed opposite Woodland House and the Chiltern Road entrance with timber sourced from two nearby felled oak trees. All works were undertaken by Cllr Wells, Cllr Twidell and Mark Carter.
- Mark Carter has felled the deceased Chestnut tree adjacent to the war memorial. This has produced a number of short/wide timber posts available for repurposing and currently stacked in the community garden.

- Mark Carter has also felled four deceased ash trees from the South-West Plantation. Mark reported that further ash trees are infected and will eventually need to be felled. Young trees, including oak and hazel, are growing in the new woodland spaces created.
- Mark Carter continues to clear the drain at the bottom of FP 29 following ongoing problems with water run off onto St Helier Road. John Forward reported on excavation works undertaken by local residents to understand the extent of blockage in the soakaway. Further discussions will be required with Herts County Council to improve the drainage and make good these temporary works. Mark Carter agreed to install temporary chestnut paling fencing as a safety precaution.
- The Parish Council is in discussions about a D-Day 80th Anniversary event on the Woodland Park on 6th June which will involve a beacon lighting ceremony.
- The Parish Council has started planning for a Summer Event 2024 on the Woodland Park – a provisional date of Saturday 1st June has been set.
- The privately owned woodland compartment opposite the North Plantation and the Hazel Coppice did not sell at a recent auction. The Parish Clerk has written to both the owners and the auctioneers proposing a meeting to discuss future management of this portion of the Woodland but has not received a reply.
- Cllr Ternouth is liaising with local residents regarding a rights of way application for the footpath that runs through the above private woodland to be included on the HCC definitive map.
- Parkrun made an early transition to the winter course due to wet weather conditions. The race director has also been provided with a barrier key for use in emergencies.
- The PACE Officer has submitted the Green Flag Award application for 2024.

646. A JOINT PROPOSAL FOR A WOODLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN PREPARED BY ANNE THOMAS AND MARK CARTER

Members previously received a copy of a joint proposal prepared by Anne Thomas and Mark Carter of a Woodland Management Plan which aims to increase biodiversity and climate resilience through a programme of tree thinning and identification and nurture of future veteran trees. Anne Thomas spoke briefly about the plan and some discussion ensued around reduction of squirrel damage, wildflower planting and communication of management activities to parish residents and park users. The plan was well received by all members following which the proposal was seconded by Frances Leonard, and it was;

RESOLVED

To adopt the recommendations contained within the Woodland Management Plan, including proposed timeframes and costings, which will be incorporated into the current 5-year management plans for Jersey Farm Woodland Park.

647. A PROPOSAL FOR A MEMORIAL TREE AVENUE PREPARED BY CLLR MAURICE WELLS

Members previously received a copy of a report from Cllr Wells which contains two proposals: the first to plant an avenue of trees in the Woodland Park; and the second to dedicate these as memorial trees available for adoption by local residents upon payment of a fee. Members noted that the current Woodland Park memorial bench programme has reached capacity. Councillor Wells spoke briefly about his proposals, questions were asked, and some discussion ensued particularly around location and practical aspects of the memorial scheme. The first proposal was seconded by Cllr Twidell and it was, unanimously;

RESOLVED

That an avenue of trees is planted on the Woodland Park subject to further agreement from the Committee on location, species, size and spacing which will be brought to a future meeting by Cllr Wells.

It was agreed that the second proposal to dedicate the newly planted trees as part of a memorial programme for local residents be deferred until the details for planting are further underway and better understood by the Committee.

648. AN AUDIT OF WOODLAND PARK INTERPRETATION BOARDS

Members previously received a copy of an audit report from the Project, Amenities and Community Engagement (PACE) Officer on the condition of all the interpretation boards on the Woodland Park and costs associated with repair or refurbishment of the fabric of the boards. Some discussion followed regarding extent of repairs, including whether it is necessary to relocate some of the

boards, and alternative ideas for funding the works. It was agreed that the PACE Officer with assistance from Cllr Wells should begin the works, determining extent of repairs on a case-by-case basis, and undertaking as much refurbishment as could be completed from the £2,000 budget allocation for 2024-25. It was, unanimously;

RESOLVED

That the PACE Officer should begin a programme of refurbishment of the interpretation boards, beginning with the two boards at the Chiltern Road and Jersey Lane entrances, and keeping the Committee informed of progress. A £2,000 budget allocation has been made for all refurbishment works during 2024-5.

649. A LIST OF BLUE-SKY IDEAS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

Members received a summary list of ideas arising from a recent informal meeting to discuss the future of the Woodland Park with the suggestion that some of these may be deserving of consideration at future meetings. In order to do so it was agreed that Members should review the list and highlight any ideas that may be of interest for the next meeting. The Committee can then decide which ideas are worthy of further research and presentation at future meetings. The Deputy Clerk will schedule a March daytime meet and walkabout on the Woodland Park, to replace the pre-meeting walkabouts which are generally considered too time pressured, where some of these ideas can be discussed further.

650. REVIEW OF ANNUAL MANAGEMENT PLAN AND CURRENT EXPENDITURE

Mark Carter informed the Committee that the only task remaining from the 2023-24 management plan was the hedge cutting which is currently underway. Members noted a spend to date of £17,849 against the annual budget of £20,335.

651. SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NEXT MEETING

Terms of future licencing for Parkrun

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the JFWP Management Committee will take place at Marshalswick Community Centre at 7.30pm on Monday 25th March 2024.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.58pm.

Chair

Date