

**Minutes of the meeting of the
PARKS, OPEN SPACES, CONSERVATION & FOOTPATHS COMMITTEE
held on Monday 29th July at 9:00pm
in the Rochford Day Centre, 33a Back Lane, Rochford**

Cllrs present: Chair A MacPherson, Mrs L Dalby, R Gardner, T Hargrave, Mrs L Massey, S May, & Mrs M Weir.

Also present: Two members of the public.

P 24/14 Apologies for non-attendance at meeting:

Apologies were received from Cllr L Fane.

P 24/15 Declarations of any:

a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interest;

b) Other Registrable Interest; or

on any matter on the agenda for 29th July 2024:

Cllr Mrs L Massey declared an interest by virtue that her spouse was a regular contractor for Council.

Members **accepted** the declarations made.

P 24/16 Public Forum:

Two members of the public were present.

P 24/17 To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2024 and to approve the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting:

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 17th June 2024 were **approved** as a correct record and Members approved the destruction of the notes in respect of that meeting.

P 24/18 Financial Report – July 2024:

There were no questions and Members **accepted** the Financial Report.

P 24/19 Action List Update – July 2024:

24/19.1 St Mary's Church had been asked to consider if they would want Church Strip in the future for additional graveyard space. The land would need to be consecrated for this to be considered; the church would need to take the matter to the Diocese of Chelmsford. It was further noted that for land to be consecrated, it would need to be owned by someone in the first instance. Works to cut back vegetation along the bridlepath behind Church Strip would commence shortly.

24/19.2 The wall mural would be completed within the year.

24/19.3 The Clerk would be undertaking a site visit to Lincoln Road to see if the water discharge issue into the Nature Reserve was still ongoing. Chair A MacPherson would attend with the Clerk.

24/19.4 The Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) report had been received and deferred to the Health & Safety Sub-Committee; a Fire Management Policy was under consideration. It was agreed to close the item.

24/19.5 The bye-law signage for Magnolia Park was in progress.

24/19.6 Members were referred to Agenda item 7 (Minute P 24/20).

24/19.7 The Clerk was still to find out about the closure of the Team Wilder Programme.

- 24/19.8** The Clerk would be organising a site visit to Spencers brook. Following the pennywort removal works, the re-establishment of a barrier would need to be considered. Chair A MacPherson would attend; Cllrs S May and Mrs L Massey would also try to attend, dependent on personal commitments.
- 24/19.9** Cllr L Fane was due to send a list of providers who offered the solar energy guarantee.
- 24/19.10** Advice from Council's regular contractor was required in relation to the open grassed areas and the recommendations made in the Eco-Audit.
- 24/19.11** Further information was required about the Eco-Audit recommendation of 'edible forestry'; it was hoped more would be understood after the return visit of the Eco-Audit consultant.
- 24/19.12** The Woodland Trust Nature Detectives information had been posted on Council's Facebook page but had gained no traction or interest.
- It was **resolved** that Members noted and accepted the Action Update List and agreed to the removal of the closed items.

P 24/20 Magnolia Park compound surfacing – see Clerk's report:

Members readdressed the need for the hard-standing surfacing, with some Members unsure why the area needed this and why the matter had been raised when there had been no historic issues. It was explained that the surfacing would allow for easier servicing, cleaning and general maintenance of the machinery. It was further noted the tractors would also often be covered in dog excrement and this needed to be washed off in a suitable area. Members raised concerns about the environmental impact of using concrete for the surfacing, noting Council's commitment to be carbon neutral in the coming years.

Cllr Mrs L Massey left the Chambers at 9:11pm.

The Chair provided some information sourced from the internet on the long-term environmental impact differences of concrete versus tarmac, reporting concrete tended to be less environmental damaging than tarmac when looked at over time. Members felt further information would be needed to make an informed decision.

Cllr Mrs L Massey returned to Chambers at 9:13pm.

It was **resolved** that the matter be deferred until the Eco-Audit return visit had been carried out, where advice about the best form of eco-friendly surfacing could be obtained.

P 24/21 Summary of Decisions:

- Clerk and Chair to attend Lincoln Road to check on possible water discharge into Nature Reserve.
- Clerk to organise site visit to Spencers brook for assessment of potential barrier installation. Chair to attend. Cllrs S May and Mrs L Massey to also attend, if available.
- Further information required about the Eco-Audit recommendation of 'edible forestry', the return visit of the Eco-Audit consultant to add clarity before any decision.
- Decision regarding adding hardstanding to an area in the Magnolia compound to be deferred until further advice sought from Eco-Audit consultant.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 9:16pm.

Chair