



Highcliffe & Walkford Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of **Amenities Committee** held on 29th April 2024 at 14:00 in The Old School House, 254 Lymington Road, Highcliffe.

Present: Cllr A Sofianos (chair), Cllr T Butcher, Cllr R Ede, Cllr W McNeill

Also Present: The council's solicitor. **In attendance:**, the clerk, Tom Brindley.

24A/1 (Agenda Item 1) Apologies for Absence: Apologies were accepted from Cllrs A Martin and J Webster

24A/2 (Agenda Item 2) Chairman's remarks:

- 1 The chairman welcomed the council's solicitor (Meeson and Spurdle).
- 2 Members were reminded to make any declarations of interest ahead of the item to be discussed.

24A/3 (Agenda Item 3) Declarations of Interest: None

24A/4 (Agenda Item 4) Public Participation: None

24A/5 (Agenda Item 5) Minutes of Amenities Committee meeting of 4th December 2023

- 1 The minutes were agreed, and the chair authorised to sign.

24A/6 (Agenda Item 6) Transfer of BCP Council Assets: Bluebell Close, Highcliffe High Five and Highcliffe Recreation Ground

1. The chair outlined the background to the transfer of these assets from BCP Council
2. Bluebell Close Transfer
 - a. The council's solicitor outlined the Transfer Deed and asked for questions.
 - b. The solicitor explained the only land to be transferred was the play area and not the adjacent amenity land.
 - c. Members requested the words "after consultation" be inserted at 12.6.5.
 - d. The solicitor advised that the deed should be signed by the Proper Officer, in this case that is the Parish Clerk.
3. Highcliffe Recreation Ground Transfer
 - a. The council's solicitor outlined the Transfer Deed and explained the Overage and Pre-Emptive rights clauses.
 - b. Members noted that before the transfer could be completed BCP Council needed to:
 - i. Supply a list of equipment, original supplier, insurance valuation
 - ii. Supply a list of existing hire agreements
 - iii. Attend an inspection of play area, pavilion, public toilets and vegetation.
 - iv. Instigate any repairs identified in the inspection.
4. BCP Council Service Level Agreement (SLA)
 - a. Members noted that the SLA covered existing sites at Wingfield, Lakewood and Nea Meadows as well as the new sites at Bluebell Close and Highcliffe Recreation Ground.
 - b. The SLA as drafted was to run for one year only. In order to include planning for any event which spanned two financial years, and to give each party a fair notice period, members recommended that the SLA be on a rolling two-year basis, to be extended annually, with one year's notice either way.
 - c. Members noted this would also allow the SLA to include the two-year free maintenance agreement for the Pavilion and Toilets.

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- d. Members noted that no warranty beyond the initial pre-transfer repairs was offered for play equipment.
- e. Members recommended that Schedule 4 be redrafted to cover the 2024 Food and Arts Festival only.
- f. Members recommended that Schedule 5 be created as a template for any future event where BCP is engaged by HWPC to act as the Event Consultant. Detail on this schedule to be delegated to the Clerk and Amenities Chair in consultation with the council's solicitor.
- g. Members recommended that Clause 7 be redrafted to support the above two points, and to clarify that the relevant terms will only apply if BCP is engaged by HWPC to act as Event Consultant.
- h. Members recommended that Schedule 1 paras 6 & 7, and Schedule 2 para 4, be amended to address drafting errors identified regarding references to Services.
- i. Members recommended that Schedule 3 Part 1 clause 5, Highcliffe Recreation Ground be reworded to match Wingfield Sports Ground.
- j. Members recommended that Schedule 3 Part 2 (Gang mown grass and Sports fields) include references to minimum/maximum grass lengths to guide mowing frequencies.
- k. Members recommended that the details of the two-year free support for pavilion maintenance toilet maintenance, toilet cleaning and sports ground maintenance be included in the SLA not the Transfer Deed.
- l. Members recommended that Bluebell Close be included in the SLA.

5. Recommendation to Council

- a. That, subject to satisfactory amendments and completion of the tasks listed in minute 24/6-4 above, authority is delegated to the Proper Officer, in conjunction with the Chair of the Amenities Committee and the council's solicitor, to sign on behalf of the council. the Transfer Deed for Bluebell Close, The Transfer Deed for Highcliffe Recreation Ground and the Service Level Agreement.

24A/7 (Agenda Item 7) To recommend the appointment of Dr Chris Gleed-Owen to update the Nea Meadows site management plan.

1. Members noted that the Nea Meadows Site Management Plan was written in 2012 by the then Christchurch Borough Council and was intended to last for 5 years. It has never been updated. [Nea Meadows Site Management Plan 2012](#)
2. Dr Chris Gleed-Owen BSc (Hons) PhD MCIEEM, Director & Principal Ecologist, CGO Ecology Ltd - www.cgoecology.com a Highcliffe Resident has offered to update the plan following a fresh set of surveys. See note annexed to these minutes.
3. The exact cost will be negotiated and where volunteers can be used for surveys costs can be defrayed.

4. Recommended to council

- a. That Dr Chris Gleed-Owen be engaged as a consultant to update the Nea Meadows Site Management Plan
- b. That a budget of £16,000 be assigned to the project.
- c. That procurement rules be waived due to the specialist nature of the work
- d. That the clerk together with the chair of the Amenities sub-committee agree the detailed specification and costing.
- e. That the Environment Committee oversees the update and receives regular reports from the consultant.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 15.45 pm.

Signed

Date.....

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Memo from Dr Chris Gleed-Owen

Tom,

Thanks for this. I/we would certainly be interested in updating the Management Plan (MP). I will need to put some thought into pricing it.

I presume it will require some elements of consultation with the Friends group as well as the PC and possibly others? Resource will need to be set aside for that. Minimum 1 or 2 days, but potentially more if wider consultation involved.

Also, I suspect a lot of the content is out of date. Some of the plant species are unlikely to be present, and I would be very surprised if water vole is still present (especially if mink is here as suggested by P&D today). Hence it really needs an updated habitat survey, botanical survey, mammal, bird, and invertebrate surveys. These would then feed into the updated MP.

Habitat survey - Using both Phase 1 and UKHab systems, 4 days fieldwork/mapping/reporting, can be done now/any time of year.

Botanical survey – Floral list updated with reference to the previous list(s)/survey(s), ideally May-July, 4 days fieldwork/reporting.

Mammal survey – Suggest trailcam survey, minimal time deploying/retrieving, winter/spring, can be repeated, 2 days video review, depending on number of cameras. Some nocturnal bat monitoring would also be very informative, suggest minimum 3 days Apr-Sep.

Bird survey – A scoping survey can be usefully done with around 3 days fieldwork/reporting, spring/summer (breeding) but wintering also useful.

Fish survey – The lake could be netted or electro-fished, but the angling club may have a good idea of what is in there anyway.

Invertebrate survey – Can be scoped/sampled and simple IDs done in 2 days of fieldwork/reporting, but detailed work requires at least several days of specialist ID time. Netting/dipping the brook gives good info on the fish there too.

What is the likelihood of budget being available to update these surveys? The MP could be updated without them, but it would contain a lot of speculation.

The writing of the MP itself would need at least 5 days. I don't think all the background content is needed. The existing MPs can be cross-referenced for that. The focus needs to be on the management objectives (section 3) and methods. The previous objectives need to be reviewed and updated to current policy frameworks/objectives. This is a fair amount of work in itself.

A big question is how realistic any management targets/objectives are in relation to likely budgets available. I presume a lot of work was previously done by volunteer groups, possibly organised by Robin Harley and/or the Friends group? Targets need to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound).