HARWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Lands Committee of the Harwell Parish Council

Thursday 01st February 2024 at 19:30, Committee Room, Harwell Village Hall

Public Session – Prior to the Start of the Meeting

None.

Members Present:

Chair	Cllr J Hawthorne (JH)
Members	Cllr M Bajar (MB)
	Cllr C Convery (CC)
	Cllr M Rickets (MR)
	Cllr T Pearson (TP)

Officers Present:

Locum Clerk	Mrs L White

Public and Press: None.

Meeting Started: 19:31

23.13.1. Chairman of the Committee

23.13.1.1. To elect a Chairman of the Committee for the year ahead. [LGA 1972 ss15(2) and 34(2)]

Resolved: Approved Unanimously to appoint Cllr J Hawthorne

23.13.1.2. To receive Chairman's acceptance of office [LGA 1972 s83(4)]

The Chair of the committee signed the declaration of acceptance of office, the Locum Clerk countersigned it.

23.13.2. Apologies for absence. [LGA 1972 s85(1)]

23.13.2.1. To receive apologies for absence.

None.

23.13.2.2. To record Councillor Substitutions, allowed under the Terms of Reference of this Committee.

None.

Cllr J Hawthorne
Chair of the Committee

27 February 2024

23.13.3. Declarations of Interests [LA 2011 s31]

23.13.3.1. To receive declarations of interest for items on this agenda

None.

23.13.3.2. To consider requests for Dispensations [LA 2011 s33]

None.

23.13.4. To approve the minutes of previous committee meeting [LA 1972 Sch 12. Para 41(1)]

23.13.4.1. Meeting held on 16th November 2023.

23.13.4.2. Matters arising from the minutes not elsewhere on the agenda.

It was asked that the stile be updated to the latest British Standard, it was noted that the current decision of the committee was to stop it wobbling / make it safe, not upgrade it. To upgrade the stile would need to go on a future agenda.

23.13.5. To review the Terms of Reference for this Committee and approve amendments to be presented to the Full Council. Appendix A

Resolved: Approved by majority the Terms of Reference as detailed below, to be put to the Full Council for formal approval, noting that any potential conflicts of interest regarding allotment holders being committee members will be addressed as appropriate by the standing orders and code of conduct.

1. Remit

To manage all aspects of "Lands" within the Parish of Harwell for which the Parish Council has responsibility, including but not limited to Play Area; Allotments; All Leased Land; Cemetery & Church Yard; Recreation Ground; Recommendation of Fees in conjunction with the RFO; Grass Cutting; General Grounds Maintenance and improvements; Tree and Shrub Planting; Parish Office including equipment; Footpaths etc.

2. Meetings

Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Harwell Parish Council Standing Orders.
To meet regularly once per month, nominally 2 weeks either before or after the regular Parish Council meeting.

The Clerk will minute all meetings of the Lands Committee and minutes will be submitted to the Parish Council at the next meeting after approval for adoption.

3. Appointment of members

The Committee will be comprised of 4 core members with a quorum of three. Members will be appointed at the Annual Council meeting. The Chairman will be elected by the Committee at its first meeting after the Annual Council meeting, they may also appoint a Vice-Chairman. The Clerk / Assistant Clerk will allow

Committee membership substitutions to be made with any councillor of Harwell Parish Council to ensure any given meeting is quorate.

4. Delegated Authority

The Committee has s101 delegated authority to manage all matters as detailed in the scope below on behalf of the Parish Council, with the exception of items listed as "recommendations" below.

5. Scope

Land Matters

The Committee, liaising with the Clerk, and referring to the Lands Management Plan where this has been approved, will manage on behalf of the Parish Council all land which belongs to the Parish Council, or is the responsibility of the Parish Council, including:

a) All play areas, including inspections
b) Allotments
c) All lands leased out - Freeman Orchard, the Tennis court, the Harwellian, the Bowls Club area and the pavilion*, note, only the full Council can approve and sign leases*.
d) The Cemetery & Churchyard
e) The Recreation Ground
f) *Recommending of rents and fees for approval by the Council.* (Allotments, Cemetery, Pitches and special events)
g) Ensuring that a safety check of play area equipment is carried out once a month by a councillor alongside weekly checks by grounds staff
h) Pitch management and usage
i) Grass cutting (frequency and timing)
j) General grounds maintenance, improvements and equipment
k) Shrub & tree planting
l) Parish office and IT equipment & strategy
m) Ecology and wildlife issues, assisted by the Environment Committee
n) Access to Council-owned property
o) Litter and dog fouling measures
p) Seating & Signage
q) Promotions and events
r) Health & safety issues
s) Footpaths
t) Risk Assessment
u) To draw up plans for new projects including costings, obtaining quotes and sourcing (including application for) funding or spending withing budgets allocated by the Council, predominately the 4000 Cost Codes.

Rights of Way

The Committee shall appoint a volunteer to organise an annual footpath walk to ensure that all rights of way within the parish are maintained and to review and highlight any problems with the rights of way. The Committee shall check that all footpaths and bridleways within the parish are well sign-posted and passable, that when necessary overgrowth and fallen trees etc. on Parish Land are removed and that stiles, and gates are kept in good repair.

Cllr J Hawthorne
Chair of the Committee

27 February 2024

If footpaths need to be cut back, or fallen trees removed the matter should be referred to the Clerk for appropriate remedy in accordance with the Council Policy for Trees and the Maintenance of Public Open Spaces, and/or to OCC as appropriate.
The Committee should whenever possible ensure that hedgerows alongside footpaths and bridleways are maintained as good wildlife habitat:

- The committee may initiate projects to enhance wildlife habitat on Parish Council land using parish budget.
- The committee may *recommend to the full council* projects to enhance wildlife habitat off Parish Council Land and recommend funding sources.

Any problems identified with rights of way should be referred to FixMyStreet for appropriate action and remedy.

6. Harwell Community Orchard Group [HarCOG] Sub-Committee

HarCOG is nominally a sub-committee of the Lands Committee, with 7 members, at least 1 being a Councillor, and not more than 3 being Councillors of the Parish Council with a quorum of 3. The Locum Clerk advises the Council that the set-up of the Sub-Committee needs to be verified for its lawfulness, particularly as it appears to have been set up to manage monies held by a different organisation, not the Parish Council.

23.13.6. To review the Action Tracker and agree further actions related. Action Tracker

See Action Tracker

23.13.7. To receive a report from HarCOG Sub-Committee and agree actions related.
Appendix B

To send letter of thanks to HarCOG Sub-Committee for their recent works, and ask them for a proposal for the May 2024 – April 2025 season for the Orchard to allow the council to grant a licence to manage it rather than the current Sub-Committee arrangement.

23.13.8. To receive items of correspondence and agree actions arising.

None.

23.13.9. Matters for future discussion.

Feast Store – Clerk to contact the Scouts to see if they have any thoughts on the fixing of the feast store.

23.13.10. To confirm the next meeting 27th February 2024, 20:30.

Confirmed.

There being no further business to be transacted the Chairman Closed the meeting: **20:40.**

Cllr J Hawthorne
Chair of the Committee 27 February 2024

Number	Title	Update	Action Owner	Open/ Closed
Land-2023-001	Staff and Work Planning	**19 October 2023 -** To delay further discussion until after the Staff Roles have been formally Assessed. **16 Nov 2023** - Clerk has spent time with the staff, to produce actual list of tasks which are done. **01 Feb 2023** - To bring the current maps to the next meeting, to make a decision on the mowing schedule and general work planning.	Clerk	Open
Land-2023-002	Potential For Apprentice Grounds Staff	**19 October 2023 -** To ask at next OxLEP meeting if there is any apprenticeship levy available. **16 Nov 2023** - some funding available, but not asertained what percentage of funding would be available. **01 Feb 2023** - Not currently need based on current workload.	Cllr Convery	Closed
Land-2023-003	Barrow Road	**19 October 2023 -** To contact Taylor Wimpy regarding the "lonely" strip of land down the side of the fence they errected. MoP to send applicable documents to the Clerk. **16 Nov 2023 -** Ongoing. **01 Feb 2024 -** To respond to the Parishoner, that this is not a highway, this is a civil matter and the parish council can't take action on private land.	Clerk	Open
Land-2023-004	Rewilding - Maps	**19 October 2023 -** To find the original map of the area to not mow. **16 Nov 2023** - Ongoing **01 Feb 2024** - MR to see if they have a map.	MR	Open
Land-2023-005	Rewilding - future year's proposal	**19 October 2023 -** To produce a rough proposal for next year and draft questionaire/survey for villagers to gauge their thoughts - to being to 16th Nov Meeting. [To include Rowstock parishoners also] **16 Nov 2023** - Ongoing **01 Feb 2024 -** To bring questions ot the next meeting and questions will be placed in both the Harwell News and Facebook page.	Cllr Convery	Open

Land-2023-006	General Village Mowing	**19 October 2023 -** To produce map - what is mowed by the parish, what is mowed by other organisations. **16 Nov 2023 -** Ongoing Ongoing **01 Feb 2024** - Ongoing multiple maps now available, and need to be rationalised in to one difinitive list.	Clerk	Open
Land-2023-007	Registration of Land	**19 October 2023 -** To register all council maintanined land, which is not under ownership of the parish council. **16 Nov 2023 -** Ongoing **01 Feb 2024 -** Ongoing	Clerk	Open
Land-2023-008	Playground	**19 October 2023 -** To find out when the next Zip Wire close inspection is due and find out who South Stoke use for maintenance. **16 Nov 2023 -** Ongoing - to find out who installed the play equipment originally & ask Didcot TC who they use. **01 Feb 2023** - Ongoing - Playground checklist to be sent to everyone, and consider formal training of a playground inspection in the future.	Clerk	Open
Land-2023-009	Church Yard	**16 Nov 2023 -** MR to seek verification of the management responsibility of the Church yard. **01 Feb 2024** - Verified through minutes and Church Records, the Church Yard AND the Church Yard Trees are the PC's Responsibility.	--	Closed
Land-2023-010	Flower Survey	**16 Nov 2023** - JH to write to Cub group with thanks and offer to attend a future meeting to receive the data. **01 Feb 2024 -** Ongoing	JH	Open