

**Minutes of Histon & Impington Nature & Biodiversity**  
**7:30pm, Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023**  
**Community Room, Recreation Ground, New Road, Impington**

**Nature & Biodiversity Committee Minutes**

Membership: 6 + 2 ex-officio

Appendices: 1 Quorum: 3

<b>Agenda No:</b>	<p><b>Present:</b> Cllrs: Joseph Adam, Aga Cahn, Tom McKeown, Sarah Smith (Chair)  <b>Ex Officio Members:</b> Cllrs: Yvonne Murray  <b>Clerk:</b> Theresa King  <b>HICOP/HI Trees:</b> Dan Mace  <b>Tree Officer :</b> Daphne Fisher</p> <p><b>2 vacancies</b></p>	
<b>NB23/020</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>	
<b>020.1</b>	Cllr Stonham (personal); Cllr Murray (personal)	
<b>NB23/021</b>	<b>MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS</b>	
<b>021.1</b>	None declared.	
<b>NB23/022</b>	<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b>	
<b>022.1</b>	No public present	
<b>NB23/023</b>	<b>To Approve minutes of the meeting held 3<sup>rd</sup> October (Appx 1)</b>	
<b>023.1</b>	Proposed Cllr McKeown. seconded Cllr Adam, all in favour and approved.	
<b>NB23/024</b>	<b>Matters Arising from Previous Meetings</b>	
<b>024.1</b>	Discussed as agenda items and some included in three-year plan discussions.	
<b>NB23/025</b>	<b>Tree works as a result of the 2023 Tree surveys</b>	
<b>025.1</b>	<p><b>To receive update on works required including information from the Tree Officer</b></p> <p>Daphne Fisher gave an update on her report of work undertaken so far in relation to the February 2023 tree surveys. She has reviewed all the surveys and recommended some changes, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some trees have declined over the summer;</li> <li>some trees are not Parish Council owned;</li> <li>some trees have revealed more in the late summer with leaves still on the trees;</li> <li>and the surveys always recommend felling all dead trees, whereas the committee would like to provide more habitats for nature and biodiversity.</li> </ul> <p>Wherever possible, Daphne has suggested leaving trees as habitat monoliths, however leaving trees with diseases could lead to further trees being infected. One Horse Chestnut tree, located in the Coppice, where felling is recommended, is potentially a tree that could be denoted as an Ancient tree, and it has been agreed for an expert in ancient trees to survey the tree in January 2024, as recommended by Histon and Impington Green Spaces (HIGS), to provide recommendations as to work to be done on it. Daphne had also provided areas where the committee should consider the principles and processes of tree care in order to update the tree policy, in areas such as leaving standing wood.</p> <p>Of major concern was an epidemic of sooty bark disease at The Copse, where trees were situated on land of the Parish Council, Histon Football Club Holdings and County Council Highways. Parish Council land had 25 affected trees; details in item 25.5. Concern is that the spores from the fungus that causes the disease can also cause disease in humans. Spores are usually spread from height, from the end of stems, but can come from dead wood as well, e.g. logs left on ground.</p>	

<p>025.2</p>	<p>The spores are released in summer, less in winter, and trees which are stressed from being close together are more susceptible. Item decided later in the agenda.</p> <p><b>To agree plan of works required and agree process for the scheduling of the works</b></p> <p>The surveys noted 71 trees requiring work or monitoring and were undertaken before the growing season. The Tree Officer has worked through all the surveys and presented her comments and suggestions on each one in a spreadsheet, presented to committee on screen. Consideration has been made for safety e.g. trees over footpaths, or where they pose a risk to the public, or those where there are infectious tree diseases. The Tree Officer suggests the Council's Tree Policy should include a policy on leaving dead wood standing, and whether to fell dead trees or leave, making sure that tree surgeons are aware of any changes to policy. Any trees left will eventually fall and therefore must be included on regular inspection routines.</p> <p>The Tree Officer highlighted 25 trees on the survey should be felled, 8 pollarded and left as habitat monoliths, and she also highlighted that some trees surveyed as being dead have leafed up since the surveys were undertaken. The Tree Officer also found trees that needed attention that were not recorded on the surveys, e.g. the Homefield Park sycamores with sooty bark disease recently removed; this included 41 more trees, some which could be left as habitat monoliths but definitely 13 more to be felled. Those to be felled would be those where the outcome is obvious e.g. leaning over a driveway. The Tree Officer also suggested asking for advice from tree surgeons on 12 others as to whether they could be safely left.</p> <p>One tree noted by survey at Old Infant School Field. Tree is part of a line of six intertwined maples, and removing one may impact the others. Options include felling five of the trees, or pollarding all at 3 metres, or coppicing all the trees and managing the regrowth as a hedge. <b>Committee agreed to delegate to Tree Officer and Cllr McKeown to review these trees and conclude action required</b>, providing feedback to the Highways, Drainage and Formal Spaces Committee as the area is a formal space.</p> <p>One ash tree has been identified with honey fungus at the Copse; as this is an infectious tree disease, the tree needs removing but then question is what to do with the stump – leave, remove or approve the use of fungicide. After discussion with the Tree Officer, <b>Committee agreed to remove the tree</b> and use Jeyes Fluid on the stump as recommended by a tree surgeon. There will be a need to monitor stump and other trees to see if they get infected.</p> <p><b>Committee agreed to delegate to RFO, Cllr Smith and Tree Officer to review remaining trees on survey, obtain additional quotations where needed and agree contractors to undertake work.</b></p>	<p>DF, TM</p> <p>RFO, SS, DF</p>
<p>025.3</p>	<p><b>To review requirements for work on large trees at the Green and The Coppice and agree way forward and action required</b></p> <p>Large Beech tree at entrance to the Coppice noted for felling on survey, Tree Officer has suggested pollarding creating a habitat monolith and this was agreed by Cllrs Smith and Murray on visiting the site. There is a risk that, if the tree lives following the surgery, the branches may grow large enough that the tree will become unstable again, so it will need checking in five years or so and there is in general a long term commitment in pollarding. <b>RFO to obtain quotes for</b></p>	<p>RFO</p>

<p>025.4</p> <p>025.5</p> <p>025.6</p> <p>025.7</p>	<p><b>pollarding, noting that long term commitment is accepted.</b> Tree surgeons to also be asked to confirm tree will be stable if pollarded.</p> <p>Large Horse Chestnut on the Green, directly behind the pump, noted on the survey as showing decay. Tree Officer confirmed decay seen. Tree Officer felt that if removed, other trees will grow into the space, Cllr McKeown felt it was not the right spot for a monolith, Dan Mace agreed. Committee to consider planting another tree further up to complete the line of trees. Cllr McKeown and Dan Mace suggested leaving a stump of 30 cm to allow residents to sit on stump. <b>Committee agreed to fell the tree, asking for a 30cm high stump to be retained.</b></p> <p><b>To review information on Dutch elm disease affecting trees near Manor Field and agree way forward and action required</b></p> <p>Dutch Elm disease is spread by beetles. Trees could be left but may infect other trees, not just those on Parish Council Land; they could all be felled whether they are completely dead or not; or they could be felled if dead and parts removed from affected part of live trees. Cutting the trees part way down might encourage better growth as Elms can grow from suckers and this seems to be the way these trees are now growing. <b>All agreed recommendation to fell dead trees and removed affected part from other trees.</b> RFO to obtain quotes for any additional work and add to schedule of works.</p> <p><b>To review information on sooty bark disease affected trees at The Copse and agree way forward and action required</b></p> <p>At the Copse on Parish Council land, 25 trees are showing signs of disease; 10 sycamores, 8 Norway maples and 7 trees dead so long it is hard to see what species they were. The Norway maples are alive and only showing minor signs of disease, these to be monitored. Of the other 17, 13 are dead and 4 alive, but 3 of these latter trees are missing their crowns and showing signs of the disease on their stems so recommendation is to fell to avoid spread of disease. The remaining two-stemmed tree has one badly affected stem, recommendation is to remove this. Total to be felled 16 sycamore trees and one pruned. <b>Committee agreed recommendation. It also agreed to find out from other woodland managers how they manage for these diseases.</b> Dan Mace noted thinning of the trees would benefit the others.</p> <p><b>To consider schedule of additional work required as identified by the Tree Officer, agree process and scheduling of the works</b></p> <p><b>Delegated to Cllrs Smith, McKeown, RFO and Tree Officer to review recommendations, obtain quotes and suggest plan of works.</b></p> <p><b>To approve pollarding of two sweet chestnuts on land at the Coppice which are encroaching on a neighbouring property with low branches over the driveway and branches in contact with the roof of its house: Tree 1 pollard at 6m above ground as previous, Tree 2 pollard at 9m above ground, Contractor 1: £500, Contractor 2: £1600</b></p> <p>Tree Officer had inspected trees and recommended Contractor 2 undertaking works as contractor had recommended best method of pollarding tree for the future. Proposed Cllr Smith, seconded Cllr McKeown, <b>all agreed to proceed with Contractor 2.</b></p>	<p>RFO</p> <p>SS, TM, RFO, DF</p>
<p>NB23/026</p> <p>026.1</p>	<p><b>3 Year Plan Projects</b></p>	

	<p><b>To review and approve 3-year plan for submission to Finance, Governance and Legal Committee on the 4<sup>th</sup> December.</b> Noting Year 1 of 3-year plan will be the allocated budget for year 2024/2025.</p> <p>The spreadsheet of the budgets was presented on the projector, item amended and updated. Discussion on Operational budgets included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Art line: add item to future agenda, as may need a possible reserve if S106 money is spent. RFO to confirm amount left in Section 106 fund and sunset date.</li> <li>• Trees Maintenance: 24-25 amount increased to allow for additional work from the 2023 surveys, 26-27 next tree surveys so funding for work as a result of these.</li> <li>• Additional operating budget line requested for Tree Officer.</li> <li>• New planting – budget increased to replant after fellings as this will be for a large number of trees. Need and opportunities for additional fundraising also noted</li> <li>• Open Spaces budget retained as is?</li> <li>• Enviro, HILP – change to “Support for volunteer groups”. Mobile Library of things – donation.</li> <li>• Noted there is no Parish Council budget line for climate emergency. – Flag to FGL committee that it is not on anyone committee budget; where should it be? Actions in the climate action plan will need to be costed and financial implications considered.</li> <li>• Biodiversity improvements – budget kept as it but recognised had not been spent yet this year. Committee agreed to go to community and ask for ideas.</li> <li>• Add an operating budget line – Community net zero projects (P23 on NP). 5k per year. This could include a donation to a mobile library of things which is a project the committee is interested in supporting and expecting an approach on. It is anticipated projects from this line would be undertaken in partnership with community groups and, again, that additional funding could be raised through various grants.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion on three year plans and projects included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Street Trees/parklets: Cities are planting in spaces reclaimed from the roadway in side streets to provide more planting spaces, this is known as a parklet or a rain garden. RFO to contact County Council to see if it is would be feasible. Discussion whether it could be added into Neighbourhood Plan so it is requested for new developments.</li> <li>• Add in Cllr McKeown’s suggestions which RFO had not added: graffiti bridge, Art trail (both Public Art projects) and biodiversity projects at any new equipped play spaces.</li> </ul> <p><b>All agreed to extend meeting by 10 minutes.</b></p> <p><b>All agreed amendments</b>, RFO to update spreadsheet and circulate before submitting to FGL.</p>	RFO
NB23/027  027.1	<p><b>Climate Action Plan</b></p> <p><b>To review and agree how the work of this committee impacts climate change, what specific goals/actions the committee can own in a climate action plan, how should progress be monitored and are there any questions or information needed</b></p> <p>Item for next agenda and discussion on SharePoint in the interim.</p>	

NB23/028	<p><b><u>Communicating the November 23 Nature and Biodiversity Committee Meeting and Request Matters For Next Agenda</u></b>  <u>Agreed a key priority for communication and consultation would be the tree works</u></p> <p><b><u>Next Agenda</u> : To review and agree how the work of this committee impacts climate change, what specific goals/actions the committee can own in a climate action plan, how should progress be monitored and are there any questions or information needed</b></p>	
NB23/029	<p><b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 6<sup>th</sup> February 2023</b></p> <p><b>Meeting close: 9.40 p.m.</b></p> <p><b>Appendix 1 : Minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> October</b></p>	

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