



# SAWSTON PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the RECREATION & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON 16 APRIL 2019  
At Link Road Parish Council Offices - Meeting commenced at 7.30pm**

**PRESENT:**

**Parish Clerk** Jo Keeler

**Councillors**

Neil Reid (Chairman)

Rajni Padia

Janet Martin

Colin Groves

Beck Laxton

Brian Milnes

Kevin Cuffley

Anand Pillai

+ Alan Poole – Head Groundsman  
Mr Ian Reeves – Sawston & Babraham Cricket  
Mr Colin English – Sawston Greyhound FC

**1 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN OF THE RECREATION & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE FOR THE ENSUING YEAR**

This is deferred to the July meeting.

**2 TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE RECREATION & OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE FOR THE ENSUING YEAR**

This is deferred to the July meeting.

**3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor David Bard  
Councillor Mike Mallows

**4 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FOR THIS MEETING**

None

**5 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2018 were read, confirmed and signed.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Kevin Cuffley and **seconded** by Councillor Janet Martin to **accept** the minutes.

**VOTE: 8 FOR : UNANIMOUS**

**6 MATTERS ARISING – New information only**

None

**7 SPORTS CLUB MATTERS**

Mr Ian Reeves gave an update on their request for additional storage at Spicers pavilion. He explained he had a meeting with Councillor Kevin Cuffley, Councillor Rajni Padia, Councillor Neil Reid, Clerk – Jo Keeler and Head Groundsman – Alan Poole on site to discuss the options. The Cricket Club looked into the cost of having a metal container which could be positioned on the concrete base where the bike racks are at the far end of the pavilion. This was discussed at length and then agreed that the Cricket Club should look into the cost of building a brick garage in keeping with the existing building. The committee were not happy with having a metal container on this site. Once Ian has some more information the Clerk will

organise a meeting with Councillor Neil Reid, Councillor Rajni Padia, Clerk, Head Groundsman and the Cricket Club to discuss.  
Funding options were also discussed with Mr Ian Reeves.

Mr Colin English wanted to let the committee know that he has recently had problems with the cleanliness of Lynton Way pavilion on a Sunday after it not being cleaned by the clubs using it on a Saturday. The Clerk confirmed the clubs should leave the pavilion as clean as possible. They are not expected to clean the toilets etc but are expected to sweep up.  
The Clerk made some signs for the club to put up on a Sunday asking for players not to go into the pavilion with their boots on. Since this the problem seems to have diminished. Mr Colin English was asked to take pictures and let the Clerk know of any problems in the future so the Parish Council can take action.

**8 REQUEST FROM PAPWORTH TRUST/OWL TO STORE EQUIPMENT AT MILL PAVILION WHILE THEY ARE HIRING IT**

The Clerk explained no that no one from Papworth Trust was present and that Mr Craig Geange from Romsey Mill was present as they are looking at hiring Mill Lane pavilion for the youth club on a Thursday and also wants to ask if they can store some items. Councillor Neil Reid invited Mr Geange to explain to the committee what they require.

Mr Geange explained that there are quite a few youths that hang around Mill Lane pavilion so they are considering holding the Thursday night youth club at the pavilion so they can engage with them. They have asked if they can store a table tennis table there, most other items can be taken away with them each night.

This was discussed but the Parish Council's policy is that the pavilion halls are left empty for other users. There is a small shed at the back of the building which they could possibly use instead. This was discussed.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Brian Milnes and **seconded** by Councillor Beck Laxton to **RECOMMEND TO FULL** that the Clerk identifies ownership of the shed and if it is the Parish Council's then we offer it to Romsey Mill who have agreed they would repair and make good before they use it.

**VOTE: 8 FOR : UNANIMOUS**

**9 REQUEST FROM BABRAHAM FOOTBALL TEAM TO USE LYNTON WAY RECREATION GROUND**

The Parish Council has been asked by Babraham Football Club if they can use Lynton Way recreation ground for next season.

This was discussed and the Head Groundsman said they would be able to play either Saturday afternoons or Sunday mornings but the Sawston teams would take priority.

This was discussed and some councillors had concerns about the usage on this pitch.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Janet Martin and **seconded** by Councillor Anand Pillai to **RECOMMEND TO FULL** we allow them to use the pitch for the next season and review it again year on year. All Sawston Clubs will have priority over using the ground.

**VOTE: 8 FOR : UNANIMOUS**

The Head Groundsmen suggested the Clerk writes to all the current football clubs asking them how many teams they will have for next season.

**ACTION : CLERK**

**10 REQUEST FROM RESIDENTS FOR ADDITIONAL PLAY EQUIPMENT AT MILL LANE RECREATION GROUND**

The Parish Council has had a request for more/different play equipment at Mill Lane recreation ground. A resident has kindly spent a lot of time looking into this and asking other users what they would like to see. A copy of the letter is attached to the minutes.

This was discussed at length and all agreed we should look into this as we do budget yearly for additional play equipment.

The Clerk was asked to write back to the resident to thank them for their time on this and ask her to come along to another meeting as we really need to discuss this with her. Also, the

Clerk should highlight the other play areas we do have within the village and ask her to prioritise the list of options.

Councillor Rajni explained we should have an audit of all our play equipment which the Clerk agreed to send to him to look into.

**11 REQUEST FROM HEAD GROUNDSMAN TO PURCHASE A HAND BLOWER**

The Head Groundsman explained that they do have a heavy duty blower which they use but it will not fit on the ransome mower so if they go to Lynton Way to cut using the ransome mower they then have to go back to the groundstore to collect the van and blower to go back to Lynton Way to clear up. He has got three quotes for hand blower that they will be able to carry on the mower which will save time.

- £210.00 + vat
- £219.00 + vat
- £330.00 + vat

It was **proposed** by Councillor Neil Reid and **seconded** by Councillor Beck Laxton to **RECOMMEND TO FULL** that we go ahead and purchase the hand blower at a cost of £210.00 + vat.

**VOTE: 6 FOR : ABS: 2**

**12 UPDATE ON THE POSSIBILITY OF A SKATE PARK IN SAWSTON**

The Clerk had no update and there was no one present from the Skate group.

**13 GROUNDSMAN'S ISSUES**

**14 PAVILIONS AND GROUNDS**

**Spicers** - None

**Mill Lane** - None

**Lynton Way** – Mr Colin English thanked Alan for his hard work on the pitches the team are really pleased with the state of them. Also, the apposing teams have made positive comments.

**15 CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**16 COUNCILLORS ISSUES AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – CONCERNING RECREATION & OPEN SPACES ONLY**

Councillor Rajni Padia explained he would like to become a Sports Champion for the Parish Council. He explained to the committee his sporting past and how he wanted to get more involved. The Clerk explained that as he is Vice Chair of the Recreation Committee, he will be involved with any meetings that area held between the sports clubs and the Parish Council.

**Meeting closed 8.50 pm**

## Item 10 – Letter from resident

As you know I did some research into what people wanted from Mill Lane Rec in advance of your meeting in April after speaking to my children and friends children who felt it was fairly lacking in its current state, as discussed in my previous emails.

I am more than happy to come along to your meeting to share the information with you, and give an overview of the general feedback i got from people in person. But i have put most of it here in this email too, just in case.

I did two different survey's, one online aimed at parents or those who use the rec with children, as well as one with focus groups at The Bellbird School, as given their catchment they are most likely to use the park, as opposed to other parks in Sawston.

### **Child research results**

75 children surveyed, split evenly between all year groups (so age 4-11).

**When asked what they like best about their favourite park they have ever been to** children generally gave responses suggesting that they were looking for more challenge in their lives, more height to explore, more speed etc as well as more places to hide and explore. I have also broken down responses into age brackets so we can see the difference between what the older children want from younger, as well as where their needs are similar.

Key stage 1 & reception:

high climbing frames (several children gave this example), monkey bars we can reach, a fast zip wire we can get on by ourselves (they gave whittlesford as an example), secret passages and trees, really fast roundabouts, tall tunnel slides, fast slides, big slides, high up ropes and things to climb to the sky.

Generally the younger children expressed a desire to challenge themselves but at a level they could do without help, so they could be independent.

Key stage 2:

fast zip wires, steep zip wires, swings that go high, big slides, high rope climbing, playing football (only 2 children mentioned this), anything a bit dangerous, woods and bushes for hiding in, monkey bars that are a challenge, trees for climbing.

**When asked what the best park for them personally would have in it and how it might feel there** they generally across all ages suggested they were seeking more challenge, that everything felt too safe and therefore boring locally, that they wanted to take more risks to see how much they could do and try new things and most of all they nearly all talked about wanting opportunities to play with, in or near water. I have again broken down suggestions into year groups.

Key stage 1 & reception:

monkey bars we can reach without being lifted, treehouses/dens (about half said this), much bigger slides, tunnels, something taller than a building to climb, twirly slides, sandpits with hidden bones and treasure to dig for, water slides, rope bridges, swimming pools.

key stage 2:

water, swimming pools, smooth paths to skate/scoot/bike on, higher/riskier/scarier climbing, bigger/more exciting/faster zip wires, animals, a rollercoaster, hills to play on and roll down, places to hide high up, one child suggested a MUGA but others were quick to say they didn't like these - when asked why they said they don't have the equipment for them so they are just boring, flat spaces.

I then showed them photos of different kinds of parks that i found online or have visited myself, we discussed them and then i asked the children to vote for the one they thought they would want to go to most often, the results are as follows:

1. This park had a range of equipment but most noticeable was a large sandpit with small climbing and diggers - 5 votes
2. This park had lots of climbing at all levels, was natural and had a tree house at the centre - 9 votes
3. This was an all natural park with large rocks, log piles etc - 6 votes
4. MUGA - 2 votes
5. Splash pad - 46 votes
6. This was a standard park with similar equipment to the parks in sawston, including a zip wire - 3 votes

Obviously i realise that some of these requests are unrealistic, i think it's clear that children generally feel that parks have become too safe and uninteresting, they seem to be looking for challenge, so any new equipment you invest in should take this into consideration and i think it would be really great to have children involved in any choices/design where possible.

**I also did an online survey aimed at parents, these are the results:**

There were 84 respondents who went to the park with children ranging from 0-17 (broken down into over half being between 5-9, followed by around 35% being 0-4).

**when asked what they felt their children used the most at Mill Lane Rec** most respondents said the larger climbing frame and swings (including large basket swings), with the smaller climbing frame making up the next biggest majority.

**When asked to select which equipment they felt their children played with most at other parks** they had been to, the four most popular were slides, climbing frames, splashpads/water play, with zip wires being the most popular by a small majority.

**When asked what kind of opportunities** they felt their children would be most drawn to at a park the following were the most popular; opportunities to take risks/challenge themselves (most popular), opportunities to play in water or get wet (close 2nd), opportunities to play in nature, opportunities to hide. The least popular responses were opportunities to play sports or play with sounds/music.

The final question asked what they, **as parents would like to see at the park on mill lane**, i have categorised them as follows and added how many respondents mentioned them;

- climbing for smaller children - 3 (all mentioned how although there is a small climbing frame, it cannot be used independently)
- splash pad/water play - 28
- wildlife area/natural play - 6 (including a mention for wooden apparatus as metal gets too hot in summer)
- climbing opportunities that are bigger/more challenging - 5
- zip wire - 15
- exercise equipment - 2
- more safety features - 12 (this included fencing to stop dogs getting in and children getting to the road, litter, and equipment being closer to aid supervision)
- shelter/picnic area/benches - 9 (including one mention for toilets)

- more swings - 1
- sandpit - 6
- dens - 1
- skate area - 2
- bigger slides - 3
- rope swings - 2
- MUGA - 1
- ground level trampoline - 1

Looking at both the adult and child responses I would generally say that most are looking for more challenge and independence for children, but with some added safety features for younger ones, plus there is a lot of interest in water play, I imagine as it is good for all age children and adults. I know of a lot of local parents who would help with fundraising to make this happen too.

Let me know if you have any questions.