

FRIENDS OF SOUTH PARK

Minutes of the fifth Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 10 October 2018 St Clement's Family Centre, Cross Street, Oxford

Present

Committee:

Rob Waterston (Chair)
Lesley Court (Secretary)
Andrew Lack (Treasurer)
Liz Rooke (Membership)
Sarah Lane
Peter Rooke
Amanda Wood

Oxford City Council:

Chris Bell, Green Space Dev't Manager
Caroline Chanides, Green Space Dev't Officer
Charlotte Maciszonek, Events Officer
Vanina Velikova, Events Officer
Councillor Jamila Azad
Oliver Bayliss, Community Safety Problem Solving Officer

Thames Valley Police:

PCSO Fiona Heaver

PCSO Jacob Soanes

PCSO Lauren Hobbs

Members:

Rosemary Clayton
David Colbeck
Catriona Davidson
Jane Denby
Ann Edmunds
James Ferguson
Roger Jenking
Tom Knollys
Sylvia Lymbery
Helen Moorhouse

Supporters:

Rachel Sanderson (Oxford Preservation Trust)
Chris Langston (Oxford Round Table)

Neil Holdstock (Oxford Round Table)
Philip Lockley (St Clements Church)
Rosalynn Funnell (Team Leader - Brookes Community Wardens)
Andrew Mudd (Brookes Community Warden)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Margaret Chambers, Christine Colbeck, Patrick Denby, Joanna Gilmour, Gerdi Hayward, Richard Hayward, Mike Kent, Sandra Kent, David Saunder, Rodney Tulloch and Paul Wolf.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 October 2017 were approved as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

In response to a question from Sylvia Lymbery, Chris Bell informed the meeting that although there were self-closing gates on the play areas there would not, in line with Council policy, be any on the external entrances.

4. Chair's Report

The Chair was delighted to be able to report that the Park Management Plan (PMP) was finally available, having been signed off by the new portfolio holder, Cllr Louise Upton, two days earlier. In the near future it would be published on the City Council's website and uploaded to the FoSP website, and members were encouraged to read in particular Section 5, the Five-Year Action Plan. The formal thanks of the committee were given to Chris Bell, Caroline Chanides and Peter Rooke for their considerable input to this document, which would be used as a basis for future management of the park.

As a result of the recent antisocial behaviour in the Park, action had been taken by the Council to cut back foliage and move benches, because the Police had found stashes of drugs and knives hidden in the park. The Chair assured the meeting that if it transpired that the move of benches from one muddy area to another caused a problem FoSP would ask the Council to consider other action.

There had been two working parties during the previous year: the usual litter pick after the Fireworks Event and clearing undergrowth along the fences behind gardens at the top of Morrell Avenue, and there would be another working party on Sunday 25 November. The Committee had worked with the Council to try to reduce the amount of litter generated over the summer period mainly (but not exclusively) by foreign language students. All members were encouraged to pick up any litter they came across. It was suggested that there be a tax on language schools to help pay for litter clearance.

Neil Holdstock and Chris Langston of Oxford Round Table invited members to join the litter pick on Sun 4 Nov following the next Fireworks Event, which was being held on 3 November. The Round Table have asked all caterers to supply reusable cups, plates, etc. and to use plastic that crushes rather than shatters. The new waste management firm they are using had been appointed specifically because they were aiming for zero landfill.

Regarding events held in the park during the past year, Common People had not caused significant problems, but there had been some issues with the Foodies Festival, particularly concerning loud music. These concerns had been relayed to the Events Team for consideration when arranging events for the following year. It was unfortunate there had been no toilet facilities for the Foodies Festival as a water pipe had fractured on the first day.

Some members had questions regarding the distillery (TOAD). The distillery part of the venture appeared to be successful and the latest information available to FoSP was that work on the restaurant and toilets, which formed part of the second planning application, was due to begin soon. Details would be relayed to FoSP members as soon as they were known.

Members of the Committee had been monitoring the health of the newly-planted trees, but watering had not been necessary this year.

As well as dealing with issues of antisocial behaviour, litter, noise and barbecues, the Committee had been trying to arrange the demolition of the derelict toilet block, which is an authorised Council graffiti-wall. A quote for this work had been obtained and a Section 106 Council grant applied for, but this had not been successful.

The Committee had carried out a visual survey of the railings to ascertain their condition. Replacement of the railings would be an expensive undertaking and there have been suggestions that they could be replaced (at least in part) by another form of perimeter. It was important to work out a safe and well-managed arrangement which would also prevent unauthorised vehicles entering the park. Rachel Sanderson said that Oxford Preservation Trust felt very strongly that the railings are a historic feature of the park and would prefer to see them replaced rather than removed. However, their covenant on the park covers the use of the park and not the railings. Chris Bell said that it would cost approximately £400,000 to replace a mile of railings. The Chair agreed that we need ongoing discussions with the Council and OPT about a viable way forward.

5. Treasurer's Report

Andrew Lack reported a year-end balance of £1550.61. During the year £175 in subscriptions and donations had been received, as well as two payments of £250 each from the Round Table re the litter picks from the previous two years. Expenditure had been £137.60.

The Treasurer said the Committee had been looking at replacing the table tennis table at the top of the park: the previous one had been vandalised about two years previously. The supplier will

contribute £500 towards a new, vandal-proof table, and FoSP could contribute. It was planned to re-site the table further in from the gates to deter vandals. The meeting approved this plan.

6. **Election of Officers**

It was proposed by David Colbeck that all four officers be re-elected en masse, seconded by Rosemary Clayton. These are:

Chair: Rob Waterston

Treasurer: Andrew Lack

Secretary: Lesley Court

Membership Secretary: Liz Rooke

The motion was carried unanimously.

7. **Election of Committee**

One committee member, Tim Eden, had resigned; Michael Crofton-Briggs, who had attended meetings as the representative of the OPT, had also stood down. The Chair thanked both for their contribution over the year.

The remaining committee members would therefore be: Sarah Lane, Peter Rooke and Mandy Wood. These were proposed by David Colbeck, seconded by Rosemary Clayton, and agreed unanimously.

8. **Any other business**

(a) Meetings between City Council and OPT: Rachel Sanderson explained that annual Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) meetings were held between the Council and OPT: these cover South Park and Shotover Park (given by OPT to the Council in 1951 and 1952 respectively). The next meeting would be held on 14 November and a representative of FoSP would attend the meeting (as detailed in Section 6 of the PMP).

(b) Friends of Headington Hill Park: David Colbeck informed the meeting that 108,000 spring bulbs had been planted on land immediately outside South Park, which he hoped would provide an attractive display.

(c) Oxford Brookes: Rosalyn Funnell (Team Leader) and Andrew Mudd (Student Community Warden) described some of their team's activities. The Community Office send regular messages to students re barbecues but there were a few repeat offenders, despite the fact that there are proper BBQ facilities on campus. Some of the team would be joining the litter pick on 4 November.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next AGM will be held on 16 October 2019.

Following a refreshment break, representatives of Thames Valley Police were available to answer questions.

Dockless hire bikes: The Police were aware of issues regarding dumping of these bikes.

Drug dealing: PCSO Fiona Heaver asked anyone witnessing drug-related activity to phone 101 as the Drugs Team wanted to be aware of the extent of the problem. People should usually phone 101 but if they saw a deal in action they should phone 999.

Fiona explained the term "county lines" with reference to drug dealing.

Asked if certain cars were recognisable, she said her team held a lot of intelligence and that car details should be reported to them if observed as part of drug dealing activity.
