



**Minutes of the Parks Committee held In the Market Hall, The Square on  
Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025 at 5.30pm**

Present: Councillors; D. Cole, L. Piper, N. Kenneally, J. Hutchings, J. Tadman, J. Allen, H. Parker

In Attendance: Town Clerk (TC), Assistant to the Town Clerk (ATTC)

Absentees: **No absentees**

**1600. Apologies for absence**

Councillor S. Preston & D. De ste Croix

**1601. Declaration of interests**

Councillor H. Parker asked that councillors declare any interests as they arise.

**1602. Public Open Question Time – To receive questions form the public**

There were no members of public present.

**1603. Parks' Meeting Minutes – To agree and sign the Minutes of the Parks' Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> July.**

**Councillor J. Hutchings proposed that the minutes of the committee meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2025 be signed as a true record and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor J. Tadman and approved. (5 For, 2 Abstentions, 0 Against).**

**1604. Matters arising**

Page 299, Item 1594 : Cllr. J. Hutchings queried if the wooden bench is still situated in the park. Brief discussion ensued. The TR will remove the wooden bench.

**1605. To review the Parks Committee Action Plan**

The Parks Committee reviewed the Action list. Cllr. L. Piper informed the committee that the previously amended term for the Cricket Club Lease. Cllr. J. Tadman queried the new food vendor at HASP, TC clarified that they are trading on TDC land not HTC land.

**1606. To discuss and note the Parks' Income & Expenditure and Budget for the year 2025/26**

The committee reviewed the parks income & expenditure. The TC informed the committee that the recently approved virement to transfer the Sunlounge Project's VAT back into the project is visible on the 'Reserves Transfer' sheet, however, not on the 'Earmarked Reserves', this will be investigated with Scribe.

Cllrs: H. Parker & J. Allen reassured the Parks committee that they review the finances monthly and reconcile each item. Brief discussion ensued. The TC asked the committee what financial documents they would like to receive for Park Committee Meetings noting that each councillor has access to all financial data with their Scribe login.

**Councillor J. Tadman proposed that the following financial documents are presented to the Parks Committee: Parks Monthly Budget & Earmarked Reserves) and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor J. Hutchings and approved (Unanimous).**

**1607. To discuss and agree the furniture required for the completion of the Sunlounge**

Councillor H. Parker presented several ideas for furniture to place in the Sun Lounge, Badock Gardens. Further discussions ensued. Cllr. L. Piper suggested visiting the Holsworthy Area Sports Pavilion (HASP) to inspect the furniture they have purchased and evaluate whether their furniture would be suitable for the Sun Lounge – Badock gardens as HASP have completed thorough research and gained experience since their opening several years ago.

Cllr L. Piper recommended option for commercial seating rather than from a company like IKEA. Cllr. J. Hutchings agreed and confirmed that the cost of the chairs used at HASP are approximately £40 each

Cllr H. Parker explained that the biggest issue is the room divider, due to the need for a screen or shutter and the associated costs, which are high. Discussion ensued. Councillors discussed the logistics and agreed this would likely require three tables with four chairs each, giving a total of 12 chairs. Cllr J. Tadman suggested starting with one table and four chairs initially and reviewing the need for more later. Further discussion occurred. Cllr. J. Tadman also emphasised that the shutter would be a priority over the furniture due to health and safety and food hygiene regulations.

It was agreed that Cllrs N. Kenneally & J. Hutchings would research shutter prices and suppliers. Cllr H. Parker and the TC will visit the Pavilion, which if required Cllr. L. Piper can assist with arranging the best time to visit. Cllr. J. Hutchings will source the measurements for

**1608. Stanhope Park**

The TC informed the committee that the ROSPA reports have been received, whereby the basket swing has failed, and has been quote £950 to replace, however this will be presented to Full Council to discuss and agree. The TR will remove the basket swing if advised by Academic Facilities Ltd, to prevent any further issues until a solution has been agreed. However, the TC did inform the committee that majority of the ROSPA report is green.

The Tc updated the committee on the newly purchased roundabout. The roundabout is currently experiencing issues which may be affecting the bearings; however the contractor will be investigating this with the manufacturers to understand if the warranty is still valid. Brief discussion ensued. The TC advised the committee that a press release needs to be published online to keep constituents informed.

Cllr. J. Hutchings noted that the previous roundabout did not experience these issues and there was not a major drainage issue. Further discussion ensued. Cllrs L. Piper & J. Hutchings briefed the committee on the history of Stanhope Playpark noting that it was designed with the drainage in mind and to prevent the drainage causing issues with the play equipment and to allow all year-round use.

The committee queried whether there is a drain that is blocked which is causing the current issues. In addition to whether it is solely the roundabout effect or the whole play park. Further discussion ensued.

The TC informed the committee that the replacement memorial plaques have been received and will be erected by the Town Ranger tomorrow. Cllr. J. Hutchings would like to be present when the TR replaces the memorial plaques. This is to get a photo and post about it and to note the plaques have recently started being damaged after several years of being intact.

Cllr. J. Tadman suggested that as the 80<sup>th</sup> Armistice Day is approaching, could poppies be added to each of the plaques. Brief discussion ensued. Cllr. J. Hutchings suggested writing to all the sponsors of the trees as part of the refurbishment of the plaques to ask if they'd like to donate toward the refurbishment or pay for the refurbished plaque.

The TC informed the committee that the TR's biweekly park checks are now being recorded electronically. Further discussion ensued. A photo showing the tree roots on the lower path of Stanhope playpark was displayed on screen for the committee to review. Discussion ensued. The committee would like to review a photo which includes a tape measure for reference to allow them to understand how severe the damage to the path is.

Cllr. L. Piper suggested asking TDC & DCC for their policy regarding the height & width for slip, trips and falls.

*Councillor N. Kenneally exited the meeting at 18:33*

#### **1609. Skateboard Park**

There were no additional updates regarding the Skateboard Park.

#### **1610. To discuss and recommend to Full Council a future replacement plan for the Parks Polaris vehicle.**

The committee reviewed several quotes received from our current vehicle contractor. Cllr. J. Tadman noted that if an electric vehicle were to be purchased then the council need to consider the costs of installing a charging point. The TC informed the committee that the current vehicle is nearing 10 years old and is begin to cost a significant amount of funds to keep on the road, which is currently required to water plants, erect and dismantle the market and much more.

Cllr L. Piper suggested approaching suppliers on the Industrial Estate rather than relying solely on the current contractor. Cllr J. Hutchings suggested the option of reaching out to local businesses for sponsorship to aid with the cost of the vehicle and noted that the current supplier is likely to be the cheapest contractor. Discussion ensued. The committee agreed to seek quotes from multiple companies.

TC noted that the vehicle is nearing the end of its lifespan. Cllr J. Hutchings requested details of the mileage and the original purchase date, in order to better understand whether the

high repair costs are due to heavy use or poor maintenance. It was confirmed that the vehicle had been purchased brand new.

Cllr J. Allen observed that the costs were not unusually high for an older vehicle. Cllr L. Piper asked whether leasing could be considered. Cllr Tadman suggested exploring hire purchase, sponsorship opportunities in exchange for advertising space, and full purchase options. Cllr J. Tadman also stressed that an electric vehicle remained a suitable option for this environment and assumed that a towbar for trailers would be included in the price as this is required to continue working effectively.

The committee agreed for the TC to source additional quotes from several vehicle suppliers for a vehicle whereby the cost is inclusive of the towbar suitable for the trailers.

**1611. To discuss drainage issues in Stanhope Park**

TC noted that, since being in post, she had received feedback from the Primary School and had been working with Cllr Parker in this regard. The previous drainage report was shared on screen. Cllr J. Tadman stated that it should be referred back to Full Council, noting that it represents a significant financial commitment for a small council. He added that a decision is required either to commit to the purchase or to defer it. Cllrs Parker and Hutchings both stated that they did not see the report as relevant at this stage. Further discussion ensued.

Cllr. L. Piper suggested that a quote is sourced for a drainage surveyor. Further discussion ensued.

Councillor J. Hutchings proposed for Cllr. L. Piper to source a quote from a drainage surveyor with a maximum spend of £5,000 from the Parks budget and be agreed. This was seconded

**1612. To discuss matter relating to the Parish Paths**

Cllr J. Tadman informed the committee that the TC and himself are engaging with DCC regarding the replacement of signage on the Parish Paths. Further discussion ensued. The committee would also like the TC to enquire about resurfacing the paths.

**1613. To discuss and agree public access hours to Badock Gardens.**

Councillor H. Parker informed the committee that a recent comment on Facebook encourage this agenda item to be discussed. It noted that accessible access to Badock gardens is limited, therefore would like to discuss and agree opening times for the side gates of Badock Gardens, to improve accessibility during the day.

Councillors discussed why the gates are shut, noting that it could encourage theft and vandalism. Further discussion ensued. Cllr. J. Allen noted that the TR recommends checking if the insurance coverage would differ if the gates are left open and that the TR would not recommend opening the gates 24/7 without having CCTV in place. IT was suggested to open 1 gate up, if the other could be locked in the closed position.

Cllr. J. Hutchings noted that not many people are aware the gate is there and making it more obvious by keeping it open which could encourage anti-social behaviour. However, the installation of CCTV could help to reduce any potential antisocial behaviour. Mobility scooter access was also discussed. The committee discussed opening the gates during TR's working times only. Further discussion ensued.

Cllr. L. Piper emphasised that one gate should still be shut and locked, noting that the TR will be able to alter this to enable one gate to remain open whilst the open remains locked to prevent unauthorised vehicle access

The Parks committee agreed to await the CCTV installation, then open one gate whilst the other remains' shut while the other is left open. The committee will then review the possibility of reopening both gates. TR will observe how best to lock a single gate securely.

*Councillor J. Hutchings exited the meeting at 19:18.*

**1614. Correspondence.**

There were no correspondence items to report to the committee.

**1615. Town Clerk's Report.**

The Town Clerk had no additional items to report to the committee.

**1616. Exchange of information**

Councillor D. Cole updated the committee on the progress with the graffiti by the newly erected VJ Day bench. D. Cole has contacted the property owner who will be sending someone to hopefully repaint the wall.

**Councillor J. Tadman proposed that in view of the special or confidential nature of the following business to be transacted, it is advisable, in the public interest, that the public and press temporarily be excluded and they will be instructed to withdraw. This was seconded by Councillor L .Piper and agreed. (Unanimous)**

**1617. Update on Stanhope Park Insurance Information.**

The committee discussed the agenda item in part 2.

**Councillor J. Tadman proposed the committee leaves Part 2 and be agreed. This was seconded by Councillor D. Cole and approved. (Unanimous)**

**1618. Close**

Councillor H. Parker closed the meeting at 19:22

Signed.....

Date .....