



Friends of Murray Park

Minutes of meeting held at 7pm on Tuesday 19th February 2019 at Murrayside Community Centre, Nacton Road, Ipswich.

Present:

Officers: Sue Bird (Chair)
Ian Hardwick (Secretary)
Lesley Fayers (Treasurer)

Members: Malcolm Ebbs Jenny Ebbs Stephen Wright
Veronica White Tracy Rowe

Councillors: None present

Apologies: Dennis Carpenter Cllr Stephen Connolly Paul Gilbert
Cllr Sarah Barber Cllr Bill Knowles Neil Winn MPA
Juliette Clarke Colin Clarke

The Chair welcomed everyone and introduced new member Veronica White.

1. Excluded People

There were no excluded people.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Minutes of the January meeting were agreed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

Action

Dog faeces, litter and holes in the ground are all still significant problems, including regular users not cleaning up behind their dogs, and/or allowing their dogs to dig dangerous holes.

It was thought that the new gates had encouraged more dog owners to use the park because it is now much safer than other very open parks. Some dog owners actually drive right across the town to use our park.

It was noted that wild foxes may be responsible for some of the damage and mess, but it is also known that some dog owners are simply not carrying out their responsibilities.

At the previous meeting, Neil Winn had agreed to arrange for children at the school to produce some posters drawing attention to the problems, but he did not attend the meeting, and had not sent the posters in, although he had promised by email (when sending apologies) to bring them to the April meeting.

Tracy Rowe told the meeting that she often hands a bin liner to some of the people who regularly leave litter in the new courts and or/football pitch, and asks them to be sure to clean up after themselves, and has also picked up after other people's dogs and handed the bag to the owner.

Several members also pick up other dogs' mess when they see it, especially if they think they have missed their own dog defecating.

4. Updates

The Tesco's token scheme appears to be doing well – it has been noticed that a number of tokens are being placed in the box, although there is a close rival in one of the other slots.

The Chair informed members that the application for Grow Wild funding had been rejected, and expressed disappointment that, although there had been many ideas from various parties, no further detail had been supplied.

In the end the Vice Chairman had had to put in a very hurried bid with little detail at the last minute. Lack of participation may have been a contributory factor to the refusal, but as no reason was given we cannot be sure.

Members discussed alternative ways of developing the area as the Grow Wild funding was not to be forthcoming.

One idea suggested was to approach Foxburgh Farm in Melton who may be able to help.

Another possible idea suggested was to move the larger play equipment (ie not the toddler area which was already fenced off) into the old tennis court area, as it had already been identified as a problem that the play equipment was not fenced off, allowing dogs into that space causing problems for young children who may be afraid of them. This matter has been discussed at our meetings several times, and no solution has yet been found.

As the fence was already in situ, this would not involve any additional cost for fencing. Advice would have to be sought as to whether this was a feasible option. It may be possible to halve the area into play equipment and wildlife areas, or put the new exercise equipment in part of that area.

Another possibility was the Ipswich Wildlife Network, and the Chair agreed that this may be the best way forward, as this would retain the original intention of using the area to promote wildlife.

The Chair agreed to contact Cllr Sarah Barber to see if there was any chance of moving the development of the area forward with funding from the SE Area Committee, or if she could suggest anything else.

Chair

5. Any Other Business

Members were pleased to see the new football goals and the new courts very much in use, although as previously stated, there was still the problem of litter being left in them.

A man has been noticed acting suspiciously around the toilets – this may be due to drug dealing.

6. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 4th April 2019, 7pm.