



NUTHURST PARISH COUNCIL

You are hereby summoned to attend an Extra Ordinary Parish Council meeting of Nuthurst Parish Council that will take place on **Wednesday 31st January 2024**, at Mannings Heath Village Hall, commencing at **7.30pm**.

Cllrs: Cllr D Cotton (Chair) Cllr C Kenny (Vice Chair) Cllr V Court Cllr S Catterall	Cllr M Oswell-Penton Cllr K McGovern Cllr N Bryant Cllr W Bayley
--	---

26th January 2024

Locum Clerk to the Parish Council

AGENDA

1.	ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – to receive and approve apologies for absence from councillors.	Chair/Vice
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - to receive any declarations of interest as defined under the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Council Code of Conduct and consider any requests for dispensations as a result.	Chair/Vice
3.	CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME - To introduce the meeting and to set out the process of the meeting. Abusive or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated, any person displaying such behaviour will be removed.	Chair
4.	PUBLIC PARTICIPAION - The Public Forum will last for a period of up to 30mins during which members of the public (MOP) may ask questions relating to the business on the agenda. Each speaker is limited to 3 minutes. Business of the meeting will start immediately following the public forum.	Public 3 Mins per speaker
5.	PLAYGROUND – To discuss a permanent solution for the playground, notwithstanding a replacement playground at a point in the future. Statement of facts is listed below.	All
6.	DATE FOR NEXT MEETING - The next meeting of Nuthurst Full Council will be held on the 20 th March 2024 in the Mannings Heath Village Hall	

**NUTHURST PARISH COUNCIL
 CHILDRENS PLAYGROUND MANNINGS HEATH
 STATEMENT OF FACTS FOR THE EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING OF NUTHURST PARISH COUNCIL DUE TO BE HELD ON THE 31ST JANURAY 2024 AT 7.30PM**

1. The playground required refurbishment as it did not come up to modern safety standards and needed major maintenance.
2. The parish were surveyed in 2021 and the majority of the respondents wanted the playground updated.

3. The Parish council followed the procurement policy in choosing the playground and based on a predetermined set of criteria. 7 alternative quotes were received.
4. The Parish Council unanimously voted for the Wicksteed design.
5. The design was presented at a Public Consultation Meeting on 22nd July 2022.
6. No objections were raised by residents prior to the build.
7. The playground was installed with completion in January 2023 at a cost to the Parish of £53,047.00
8. The playground was funded by a grant from the National Lottery £9650.00 and £43,397.00 from the CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). CIL money is to support the development of the local council's area, or any part of that area, by funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation, or maintenance of infrastructure.
9. After installation the equipment was inspected by Wicksteed appointed independent inspector along with ROSPA at the annual inspection. No safety issues of concern were reported.
10. The playground required no planning consent. It falls under the Town and Country Planning order 2015 Schedule 2 Part 13. The only condition is that it should not exceed 4m in height which it does not. The Playground was visited by HDC after installation with confirmation the height was under 4m.
11. The equipment is standard Wicksteed units with no alterations to the fundamental design and structural integrity.
12. Complaints were received with regards to the new playground with the main reference to the Young Explorer Cook Unit, the central structure of the playground.
13. The main area of objection was to the height and obtrusive nature of the roof of the Cook unit along with the colour.
14. The Council looked at remedies available and the only viable options were to, A.) Leave it as it is or B.) Remove the roof of the Cook Unit.
15. Wicksteed have said the roof can be removed.
16. Wicksteed statement: We cannot give reasons for and against but can advise; The Posts to which the roofs are attached, will have to be reduced in height so they finish only 200mm higher than the barrier panels, and for all posts to accomplish this, the Firefighter Poles would need to be removed. This of course reduces the play value of the unit. The image previously provided showed the unit with the Firefighter Poles remaining, which is a choice of the customers. With the Firefighter Poles in place, an Inspector may give this unit a low-medium risk finding due to the possibility of a child having the skill & agility to climb onto a nearby barrier aided by the post.

Furthermore, an Inspector may also give a low-medium risk outcome for the barrier on the lower-level platform which is situated alongside the higher platform (the slide platform) due to the possibility of a child having the skill & agility to climb onto it from the higher platform. This may be overcome by adding a curved shaped barrier where the higher end is near to the higher platform. However, having consulted with a member of the RPII, the Play Inspection Company, they have confirmed; that should an Inspector of theirs perform a playground inspection on this unit without the roofs, they would not see any British Standards associated risks either medium or high. They added that on a design risk assessment basis undertaken by the customer, they understand the potential benefits of the suggested curved shaped barrier.

The wood is pressure treated for preservation so cutting through the uprights will make the wood more vulnerable to rot. If Wicksteed carried out the work, they would put treatment on and cap the wood, but it would require regular maintenance and they cannot guarantee it won't rot.

17. The roof cannot be lowered and there are no other alternatives other than removing the roof or the complete unit.
18. Wicksteed do not sell the unit without the roof, it's not an option and is an integral part of the design. Altering the design changes the intended experience for the children's play.
19. The quote for just removing the roof by Wicksteed is approx. £1250 + VAT.
20. ROSPA have stated if Wicksteed are happy with the removal of the roof and confirms that it will comply with EN 1176 and is safe then we are happy with it too. They would however require an inspection at a cost of £415.00 + VAT.
21. The insurance company state that if the alterations are cleared by ROSPA and comply to the regulations, where would be no increase in the premium.
22. The Lottery Grant provider has said that unless we are removing a substantial part of the equipment or require additional funding then they would not require reimbursement of part or all the grant given.
23. Correspondence received shows a significant number of Parishioners requesting the playground remains unaltered.
24. It is worth noting that any further costs to alter the playground will be meet by council funds, which in turn will reduce vital funds being allocated to other necessary areas within the parish and or raise the precept payments to accommodate the extra costs. This will have to be included in an annual maintenance cost to maintain the altered poles. This cost is unknown at present but would be need to be factored into the council's budget annually.