
MEETING	MICKLEGATE WARD COMMITTEE
DATE	23 JANUARY 2025
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS J BURTON, CRAWSHAW AND KILBANE
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS

1. DISCUSSION ABOUT SCARCROFT GREEN

1. MAIN MEETING – WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (19:00)

The meeting was chaired by Councillor Kilbane who welcomed everyone and set out the housekeeping rules followed by the agenda. He also reminded residents that the meeting was non-political.

2. Installation of the multi-use games panel on Scarcroft Green

Councillor Crawshaw provided background information in respect of the proposal.

Partnership work with the Neighbourhood Police Team, housing and Inspire Youth mobile youth club to address youth related anti-social behaviour is ongoing. The initial youth club sessions on the Green were funded by the ward. Currently they are funded by the York and North Yorkshire Office for Policing, Fire, Crime and Commissioning and conversations are taking place about longer term funding. The youth club plays a significant part in alleviating some of the ASB in the area. Some behaviours from young people can be very nasty and event include damage to property, however on the other hand there are young people who behave sensibly and engage with us in a positive way. Consistent feedback is being received about insufficient facilities to play football themed games on the Green, perennial issues with maintenance of worn-out goal mouths and the ball often flying off to the side as existing goals have no backing. Some young people choose to kick the ball against building walls, garage and shed doors instead of using facilities on the Green. The Ward is looking at a solution that will help to discourage ASB and encourage positive behaviours. Simultaneously work is undergoing to make areas on the nearby housing estate less attractive for ball games. Engagement with young people informs us about desire for a facility allowing to kick the ball against a wall. Feedback from the recent consultation tells us that existing goals are popular and we wouldn't want to disrupt both way football. We started investigating alternative locations for the multi-use games panel and the area within the blue fence, as shown on the attached diagram was identified. Tonight is an opportunity

for further consultation in respect of the multi-use games panel project which was born out to solve a specific problem.

Residents were then invited to make comments and ask questions.

A resident stated that installation of the multi-use games panel should be considered in a park that is lockable and that locating it on Scarcroft Green would encourage gatherings and noise. Rowntree Park would be better and already has similar facilities.

A resident asked if girls are involved in ASB, or only boys?

In response to the above comments Councillors explained that the project is seeking to address specific set of problems. The Ward supports Make Space for Girls project in Rowntree Park. We are aware that there are girls who engage in anti-social activities, but on the other hand we know few girls who attend the youth club and are on the York City Football team and are really positive young people. The panel will feature a basketball hoop, a piece of equipment that is not currently available on the Green.

A father of 7-year-old daughter who lives next to the Green stated that he would support installation of the multi-use games panel within the blue fence area. Locating it on Scarcroft Green is advantageous as it is close to schools and easy for young people to access. It would be too far for his daughter to go to Rowntree Park to use the equipment and Scarcroft Green is preferred.

A resident asked about the size of the panel and possibility of installing two lots of panels to encourage team play. The size of the multi-use games panel is in line with Planning guidance as to what can be built within the permitted development. Installation of two panels would increase costs considerably and make it not affordable, however the location considered for installation will leave sufficient opposite the panel to allow potential installation of a second panel in the future. Quotation for the proposed multi-use games panel with 8.2m x 4.5m Wespour Safety Surface £14,277.

A resident stated that he would support installation of the multi-use games panel within the blue fence area as it would help to deter dogs and indicate that this space is intended for young people to play.

A resident asked how many children could use the multi-use games panel at the same time and if a health and safety information notice would be installed. Users of the panel will have to negotiate who uses it. This is the case with any play equipment. In terms of basketball, it would allow a street basketball game of up to 3v3. The matter of the H&S notice will be discussed with the installer and CYC Parks and Open Spaces.

At this point Councillor Crawshaw explained options that have been considered with use of a map on PowerPoint presentation. A consensus seems to be not to disrupt existing goal posts, and we could look at how the surface could be improved. York Croquet Club, in their response to the consultation, stated a concern about locating the panel too close to their lawns and asked it if the equipment could be positioned so that the shooting target board is not in line with the croquet lawns. We are aware that part of the play area with the table tennis table is popular with older kids and that led us to position the multi-use games panel within the blue fence area and facing the Quest climbing wall and table tennis table as indicated on the attached diagram. The blue fence area has historically been used by Scarcroft School for PE and for that reason we are in conversation with the school about positioning of the panel.

Councillor Kilbane added that it quickly became apparent during the conversations on site that the blue fence area is used more frequently by dog walkers than children. Installation of play equipment will show that the area is intended for children. Grass cutting within the blue fence area was an issue, but that is being addressed and more frequent cuts are expected this year. Ward Committee intention is to improve the area for the younger generation, and we need to use resources available to us to make this happen. We previously contributed funds towards installation of play equipment in Rowntree Park as part of Make Space for Girls campaign and are now looking at installing a facility on Scarcroft Green that will be popular with young people and families.

A resident asked what would be the purpose of the cricket wicket element of the panel? It could be used with tennis balls. We are only able to afford funding one multi-use games panel from the current budget.

A resident wanted to know if the school has any intentions to use the blue fence area? We are in conversation with the school about the proposal and use of the space.

Teaching staff present in the meeting commented that due to safeguarding issues they are not able to use the space as often as they would like. The issue with grass cutting seems to be resolved, which is good, however dog fouling remains as a concern. Both teachers felt that installation of the multi-use games panel would improve the blue fence area and make it less attractive for dogs.

At this point Councillors Burton and Crawshaw commented on previous efforts to use ward funding to restore the 'no dog fouling' signage at entrances to the blue fence area, however they have been quickly vandalized after each attempt. We are also aware that some offenders do not pay any attention to signs. As a result, the ward decided not to invest

further in repairing of the signs, but to explore alternative solutions. It is an open question how we deter dog owners from exercising their dogs within the blue fence area?

A resident made a comment that they litter pick on the Green, but often find bins overflowing. Their belief is that some people will not want to get their hands dirty by trying to dispose of litter into an overflowing bin and just drop it on the floor. Can frequency of emptying, or additional bins be considered? This is something for us to look at.

A suggestion was made that perhaps York City Football Club could be approached for financial support towards funding of the play equipment.

A comment was made that if goal posts are located within the blue fence area it would benefit the school. School staff present stated that they are in support of installation of the multi-use games panel.

At this point Councillor Kilbane read out the summary of the onsite and letter consultation.

Number of responses received: 29

Objections: 7

Supportive: 12

Supportive with comments: 8

Neither support nor object: 2

Councillor Kilbane thanked everyone for their contributions and stated that the Ward Committee will be progressing with the project to install the multi-use games panel within the blue fence area as indicated on the diagram.

A resident asked what mitigations will be put in place to address potential increase of ASB and what will happen if the new equipment is misused? Councillor Kilbane responded that ongoing work with youth workers and the Neighbourhood Police team is taking place. Early intervention work is successful, and we do not want to criminalize our young people. If we don't do things that we believe will benefit the community, we risk a situation where the ASB wins. An example of seats on the Knavesmire was referred to, where there was an intention to remove them to stop ASB, however they were kept as they are important for people to sit on and relax while they are out on their walks. Some noise is inevitable, as this is an open public space, however the panel features rubber noise dampeners and reinforced lower parts designed for the purpose of kicking the ball against it. There has always been somewhere where people gathered, and this has been moving from one area to

another. We work with the Police, engage with young people who behave positively and also those who cause ASB. We will never be able to stop ASB entirely, but we keep working to alleviate it. Specifically on syringes, the Allotments Association stipulated to have the hedges cut at certain height to remove hiding places. Those type of changes and seeking advice from the Police helps to alleviate issues. If you see that something is wrong, please contact the Police, they will put additional resources to the area only when the need is backed by reports. If you find a discarded syringe please ring the council on 551550 and it will be removed within 2 hours.

A resident asked if the panel could be installed without the cricket wicket? Yes, we can look at that.

A comment was made about light along the path and gatherings around the table tennis table. The meeting was encouraged to report any instances of wrongdoing to the Police.

Councillor Kilbane thanked everyone for their contribution to the topic of the multi-use games panel and introduced the topic of volunteering on the Green.

3. Volunteering on the Green

There was a Friends of Group in the past and Councillors are aware of few people who would like to start a new group. We are very grateful to volunteers who are already involved with picking litter and looking after the orchard. We can assist you with formalizing the group if that was desired. Having a formal group would enable you to apply for funding towards projects on the Green i.e. ward or Lottery funding. There is support available from the council in terms of gardening tools, health and safety training and insurance.

One of the existing volunteers spoke about his involvement and satisfaction that he gains from seeing impact of his efforts. There was an action day some time ago when paths were edged and suckers trimmed off tree trunks. It would be great to keep on top of it now and if a group could get together on a monthly basis that would be sufficient.

A question was asked if children could be involved with tidying up and gardening on the Green? The group could investigate that.

The Friends of Rowntree Park have been referred to as an example of an established group with a portfolio of projects.

At this point a sign in list was created for anyone interested to put their contact details on for further information.

Councillors Kilbane then introduced the topic of wooden fence.

4. Wooden fence on the Green

The wooden fence bordering the Green with Scarcroft Road is falling apart and the Ward Councillors were asked by council officers to sound local opinion on what should be done.

Residents were invited to make comments.

A resident stated that they would be happy for the fence to be removed unless it is upgraded with bollards. The existing fence does not seem to have any safety purpose.

A comment was made that the fence was put in to stop vehicles driving onto the Green.

Another comment was made in support of replacing the fence, but not with bollards. There is an issue with parking at school pick up time and it could be tempting for some drivers to drive onto and park on the Green.

One of the volunteers involved on the Green counted and reported that there were 55 fence posts, quite a lot has rotted and was recently removed, and 13 posts are loose currently.

A comment was made that the fence serves as a barrier preventing children from running onto the road and that some of type of barrier is required. Perhaps a hedge could be planted?

Councillor Crawshaw commented that if hedge was planted it would need to be low growing not to create a hiding place. He further commented how his children played within the blue fence area when they were younger and wouldn't think that there is a risk of children running onto the road. A potential cheaper alternative could be placing some large tree trunks to create aesthetic barrier that would also provide habitat for insects. The meeting supported the idea to explore placing tree trunks in place of the fence to demarcate between the Green and Scarcroft Road.

Councillor Kilbane then asked residents if they had any questions or comments in relation to other local issues.

5. Any other business

A resident asked if a named Police Officer could be allocated to a case? This follows on an incident witnessed when a young girl was beaten up by another girl and the 999-call resulted in 2 hours wait and rude and dismissive manner from the responder. Councillors were not aware of that incident and feel that the Police response as described was not acceptable. There would be a way to file a complaint. Luke Hutchinson is the new PCSO for the area and Councillors are building a rapport with him. 999 responders are not part of the Neighbourhood Police Team. They are dispatched to incidents across the city and want to solve issues as soon as possible. The Neighbourhood Police team would have time to investigate, they can access the calls log and pick up the case. If you could email us the details after the meeting, we will pick it up with Luke.

Councillor Crawshaw added that you are legally allowed to take photographs of offenders in public space but warned to be careful and not put yourself in danger by doing so. Councillors have taken photographs on previous occasions to then liaise with schools to identify culprits. Sometimes this approach can help, and the issue addressed with young people by their school.

A discussion ensued about issues with parking and the following comments were made.

On Moss Street there is a problem with people without a permit parking forcing permit holders to park on double yellows.

A resident complained to the council's parking services about alleged parking permits sale via website to tourists. The council response was that the parking permit zone could be removed, however that would penalize everyone on the street. This was on Park Street and may well apply to Moss Street and other roads that are close to the city centre. Councillor Kilbane asked for details to be emailed to him so he could investigate with parking services.

A comment was made about Scarcroft School grounds being used as parking over the weekend, vehicles idling and loud music. There are dance classes at school on Saturdays and that generates more vehicles parking within the school.

A resident complained about ongoing building works on East Mount Road and large number of contractor vehicles taking up parking space on the street. Is there a limit on a number of contractor vehicles allowed per building project? Councillor Crawshaw responded that a license is required for placing a skip, or building materials on public highway and that residents parking permit shouldn't be used for

commercial parking. Councillor Crawshaw was happy to pick it up and check with the council if building license was in place. Councillor Crawshaw further added about no upper limit on number of parking permits that can be issued per household and that when parking permit is issued there is no guarantee of a parking space. We do have several small parking zones in the area and wouldn't want to merge them into a one big zone, as this could result in residents from further in the zone parking closer to the city centre. Transport Strategy is being written for the city and focuses on discouraging car use in favour of other simpler solutions.

A comment was made that properties with a dedicated driveway should not have the ability to obtain a parking permit. Parking permits are being abused and people make money on renting their parking permit spaces to visitors.

Another comment was made about designated disabled parking bay on Park Street. It is believed that the user also has space on their driveway sufficient to accommodate three cars. It was felt that they take away parking spaces from other residents.

A comment was made about Moss Street and promised action at school drop-off and pick up times.

It was suggested that a dedicated ward meeting about parking issues is held in the future, however different areas within the ward will have been facing different issues.

Councillor Kilbane stated that the parking system needs looking at and asked for details of cases to be emailed to him, so they can be investigated.

Councillors thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting at 20:30.

, Chair

[The meeting started at Time Not Specified and finished at Time Not Specified].