

**MINUTES of a Meeting of the Bowerhill Sports Field Working Party of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 11th June, 2012 at Crown Chambers, Melksham at 7.50 p.m.**

**Present:** Cllr. Mike Mills (Chairman); Cllrs. Alan Baines; Rolf Brindle; Paul Clark and Richard Wood

**Apologies:** Cllrs John Glover and Mike Sankey

58/12 **Declarations of Interest:** There were no Declarations of Interest.

59/12 **New Sports Field Working Party Member:** The Chairman asked Cllr. Clark if he would be willing to join the Sports Field Working Party. Cllr. Clark agreed to serve  
**Recommended:** *Cllr. Clark join the Sports Field Working Party.*

60/12 **Handover of Sports Field:** It was with great pleasure that the Chairman reported that the ownership of Bowerhill Sports Field had been transferred from Wiltshire Council to Melksham Without Parish Council at 5.10pm on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012 when the legal documents were signed.

**a) Formal Handover Ceremony – Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> June:** A more formal ceremony was arranged for 3pm on Tuesday 12th June at the Pavilion, with the local press in attendance. Cllr Baines provided the Chairman with a shiny £1 coin to be handed to Mark Hunnybun at the Ceremony.

**b) Wiltshire Council announcements:** The transfer of the Sports Field was just one part of a package of announcements being made by Wiltshire Council, some of which had been announced at the Area Board meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> June.

*i) Running Track Land:* The running track land was close to being sold, and so this brought forward plans to build the link road, and thus the replacement Pavilion. The Pavilion would now be built much earlier than the Parish Council envisaged and could be ready for occupation early in 2013.

Wiltshire Council had announced that a national, well known company was moving to the area and occupying the running track land bringing “significant employment” and was hoped to be a catalyst for other employers to move to the Bowerhill Industrial Estate and Melksham. Wiltshire Council were yet to release the name of the company.

*ii) Rugby Pitch:* The rugby pitch was to be replaced with a new pitch at Dunch Lane.

*iii) Christie Miller:* When the Campus is opened in 2014, Wiltshire Council will build a new Highways centre for the area on the Christie Miller site. The Trowbridge site and Semington Salt depot will close and all be relocated to the new Highways centre.

*iv) Brookside Care Home:* This too will close with the opening of the Campus and will be replaced at either the Canberra Youth Services site or the Library site. Whichever of those two sites that will not be occupied by the Care Home will be sold.

v) **Melksham Town Football Club:** The Football Club will relocate to land north of Melksham Oak Community School at Woolmore Farm, and access will be gained via a separate entrance from the new housing development and not through the School.

vi) **Land behind the Spa:** Wiltshire Council no longer required fields they owned behind the Spa and were interested in offering the land to the Parish Council. This prompted discussion on the current use of the land which was leased to farmers, and possible future uses of the land including the possibility of a nature reserve and/or Jubilee Wood.

c) **Maintenance Cash Settlement:** The Financial Officer reported that a cheque for £11,000 had been received from JCP Solicitors representing the monies paid by Wiltshire Council on completion, in respect of future maintenance costs for the Sports Field.

61/12 **Fields in Trust:** The Working Party reviewed the final draft of the Fields in Trust “Deed of Dedication” documentation that would protect the Sports Field in perpetuity as a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Field in Trust by dedicating the field to Fields in Trust.

**Recommendation:** *The final draft be amended as follows subject to advice from the Solicitor:*

i) *Clause 6, Line 3 Amend “Melksham and thereabouts” to “Bowerhill and the Melksham Community Area”*

ii) *Site name: Amend “the Queen Elizabeth II Field, Bowerhill Sports Field” to “Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Sports Field at Bowerhill”*

62/12 **Formal Opening of Sports Field:** The Chairman reported that a provisional date of Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June had been arranged for a formal public opening of the Sports Field as a Field in Trust; from 12 to 2pm. The Bowerhill Primary School Headteacher and members of the School Council were able to be in attendance then, and their presence was welcomed as the children had taken such an interest in the Sports Field, particularly in the Survey that was conducted in 2010.

Cllr Brindle suggested that a tree be planted at the event to commemorate the Jubilee and to give a focus for the ceremony as the children could plant the tree. The Chair suggested that the school also provide some of their Jubilee artwork for the event.

It was agreed that the representatives of the Sports Field users should also be invited to include Melksham United (youth) football club, AFC Melksham (Sunday footballers), Bowerhill Youth Group and Bowerhill Scout Group.

It was noted that this was a tight deadline to work too but it would be better for the event to take place in June as this was the Jubilee month. The Working Party had only requested a minor amendment to the Deed of Dedication and it was hoped that it could all be agreed by the 30<sup>th</sup> June. The Clerk confirmed that she would check that the date was acceptable with John Chapman at Fields in Trust.

The Chairman confirmed that BBC Wiltshire Radio and Jack FM (Wiltshire Community Radio) would be invited to attend on the day. It was agreed that Heather Skull should be invited, along with the local press.

**Recommendation:** *The Formal Opening of the Sport Field and Dedication to Fields in Trust take place on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June 12pm to 2pm, pending confirmation of the date by Fields in Trust.*

- 63/12 **End of English Landscapes contract:** It was noted that the English Landscapes contract ended on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2012, not at the end of October.
- 64/12 **Constitution of new Sports Field Management Committee:** It was agreed that a new Sports Field Management Committee was needed to be formed to run the Sports Field and Pavilion. It was hoped that the Committee would be formed by members of the users of the field to include Melksham United, AFC Melksham, Bowerhill Scouts and the Bowerhill Youth Group. Wiltshire Council had suggested that they provide a representative for the Committee to aid the planning for the new Pavilion and this was welcomed. The Chairman asked Cllr Paul Clark if he would consider being a Parish Council representative on the new Committee. Cllr Clark agreed he would be happy to help with the finances. It was hoped that representatives from the local community and businesses near the Sports Field would join this committee, such as Knorr Bremse.  
**Recommendation:** *The Bowerhill Users Joint Sports Forum be convened and a new Management Committee be formed from there.*
- 65/12 **Date for next Joint Bowerhill Sports Users Forum:** A meeting to be convened for Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm. It was imperative that the different users ensure that they have a representative present at the meeting.  
**Recommendation:** *The date of the next Bowerhill Sports Users Joint Forum be Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm at Crown Chambers.*
- 66/12 **New Dog Signs:** The wording for the new dog signs was agreed to be “Please keep dogs on a lead at all times and clean up after them” The signs would include the words “By order of Melksham Without Parish” and Council contact details.

Three signs were required for 1) Pedestrian gate 2) Double gates near Pavilion 3) Path near Cereal Partners.

Another sign was required for Westinghouse Way stating that keys were available from Security 2000 if the gates needed to be opened for emergency access. The Chairman reported that Mark Honeybun had suggested that the Security hut should be relocated to another site on the Industrial Estate, nearer Westinghouse Way, to keep an eye on the proposed building works due to take place.

**Recommendation:** *The Council obtain quotations for the signs as detailed above.*

- 67/12 **Fence Maintenance Works:**
- a) **Pedestrian access handrail:** The Chairman requested that the Parish Caretaker re-paint the faded red paint on the fence/handrail on the other side of the Pedestrian area on Westinghouse Way/ This was agreed.  
**Recommendation:** *The Parish Caretaker be asked to re-paint the faded red paint on the fence/handrail at the pedestrian area on Westinghouse Way.*
- b) **Green fence at Knorr Bremse:** The Chairman suggested that the green fencing be finished off where the gap in the hedgerow had been made by Wiltshire Council to complete flood drainage works. This would finish off the fence in this area and give added security to the boulder that had just been relocated. This would still leave pedestrian access to the Sports field from Knorr Bremse via the narrow bridge that they had installed. Cllr Baines suggested that Knorr Bremse could be contacted to see if they would fund the additional 3 pieces of fencing.  
**Recommendation:** *The Council investigate the cost of finishing off the green fencing for the gap in the hedgerow at Knorr Bremse.*

68/12 **Sports Field Keyholders:** It was agreed that the Council needed to compile a list of those who held keys for the Sports Field so that a decision could be made on who should hold keys in the future. Some would need to be handed back to the Parish Council  
**Recommendation:** *The Council find out who held keys for Bowerhill Sports Field.*

69/12 **Budget costings:**The Chairman invited Cllr Paul Clark to comment. Cllr Clark expressed concern that the Council had not budgeted enough funds for the future maintenance of the Sports Field. He quoted figures from a \* Sports England Guidance paper for budgeting for a Sports Field which were significantly higher than those in the Council's budget with £12,700 per year per pitch and £10,200 per year for a junior pitch.

It was noted that the condition of the Bowerhill Sports Field was adequate for the use it had and this was based on the limited work that English Landscapes actually did, as opposed to the specification that they had been set. The budget costings for the future maintenance (reviewed at the Finance Committee on 28<sup>th</sup> May) had been calculated at £15,000 a year; well in excess of the estimate derived from the following figures: a) Figures from West Wiltshire District Council in 2002 increased by the rate of inflation to give £11,897 b) Wiltshire Council's cash settlement based on English Landscapes revised specification at £11,000 and c) the Clerk's estimate based on a local grasscutting contractor's indicative costs given February 2012 at £10,912. It was noted that the Sports Field did not have to be up to a professional national footballing standard.

\* This paper also states that the costs shown were typical budget costs to support applications to the Protect Playing Fields Programme and should not be used for other purposes. The actual cost would only be known after a full site appraisal, the production of a detailed specification, bill of quantities, drawings and receipt of tender bids

The Chairman thanked Cllr Clark for his input.

70/12 **Addition to the Insurance Policy:** Cllr Clark asked if the Council's liability cover covered the Sports Field. The Financial Officer confirmed that the Sports Field would be covered automatically by the Council's insurance for Public Liability as it was blanket cover encompassing all that the Council owns. The fences, gates and goalposts to be added for "All Risk" cover with immediate effect.

71/12 **Independent adjudicator for link road land dispute:** The Clerk reported that Mark Lovell Design Engineers were happy to be proposed as the Council's independent adjudicator if there was a future dispute with Wiltshire Council over any additional land requirements for the link road construction.

Meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.

Chairman, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2012