

**MINUTES of the Asset Management Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at 1, Swift Way, Bowerhill, Melksham at 7.45 p.m.**

**Present:** Cllrs. Richard Wood (Council Chair), Alan Baines, Paul Taylor and Stuart Wood.

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk) and Marianne Rossi (Finance & Amenities Officer).

**Housekeeping & Announcements:** Cllr. Wood welcomed all to the meeting and explained the evacuation procedure in the event of a fire.

- 213/19 **Apologies:** Cllr John Glover (Committee Chair & Council Vice-Chair) was on holiday, Cllrs. Paul Carter and Terry Chivers were ill; these reasons for absence were accepted.
- 214/19 **Declarations of Interest:** None.
- 215/19 **Dispensation Requests for this Meeting:** None
- 216/19 **Public Participation:** There were no members of the public present
- 217/19 **Election of Vice-Chair of Asset Management Committee:** The election of the Committee Vice Chair was deferred to this meeting as Cllr. Carter had been the Vice-Chair for 2018/19, but was away at the previous meeting and had not indicated prior to that meeting if he wished to re-stand for the role. As both Cllrs. Glover and Carter were away, it was decided that Cllr. R. Wood would chair the meeting and the appointment of the committee Vice-Chair would be deferred to the next Asset Management Committee.  
**Resolved:** *The election of Vice-Chair of the Asset Management Committee to be deferred to a future meeting.*
- 218/19 **Minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019 Meeting:** The members reviewed the minutes of the last Asset Management Committee meeting with notations of action taken, in conjunction with a detailed spreadsheet which listed all of the assets that had recently been purchased and their installation details etc. The Clerk highlighted that there were a couple of items that were yet to be purchased, one was the bench inside of the bus shelter outside of Ludlow Hewitt sheltered housing accommodation. This was because there was still uncertainty over who owns the land as their management company did not believe that they did, and there was conflicting information as to whether the ex bus shelter was used for residents awaiting taxis, if it was still a bus stop for school buses and if it was suitable for relocating to Falcon Way as one had recently been requested.

The other item that had not been purchased was a new noticeboard for Redstocks that had been previously considered when a CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) was paid for a property in the Redstocks area. The Council had considered a noticeboard suitable for Redstocks as it's one of the few areas in the parish that does not receive the Melksham Independent News that the parish council publish a quarterly newsletter in. Informal consultation with the residents revealed that they

would prefer highway signs for the Hamlet of Redstocks which had been organised through CATG (Community Area Transport Group). The Clerk was therefore clarifying if there was still a desire for a noticeboard here, however this would have to be funded from the Community Asset Reserve as the Street Furniture budget had been spent this year.

**Recommendation:** *The Council do not purchase a noticeboard for Redstocks at present, due to the relatively small number of residents in the Hamlet and their preference for a village sign.*

The members reviewed the Street Furniture budget heading against spend to date, and also that of the Bowerhill Sports Field maintenance heading. It was noted that there was an overspend on both due to new projects unknown at budget setting, and that the surplus would be taken from the Community Asset Reserve. The new projects were the new goal posts required for the 4<sup>th</sup> pitch marked up at Bowerhill Sports Field and the replacement valve to replace the faulty one in the water tank at the Pavilion that was being replaced the following morning. The provision of 50% funding from the Area Board for the “Age Friendly” seating project was the overspend on the Street Furniture budget.

**Recommendation:** *Any overspend on the Street Furniture and Bowerhill Sports Field & Pavilion maintenance budget headings to be covered from the Community Asset Reserve (339) for the seating and from the Bowerhill Sportsfield Maintenance Reserve (325) for the valve and associated labour.*

## 219/19 **Play Areas, Playing Fields and Public Open Space:**

**a) To note ROSPA independent annual inspection reports:** The ROSPA annual inspections took place on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2019. Most of the issues that had been picked up were minor such as missing caps and cable ties that need cutting off and these were being addressed by the Caretaker as part of his ongoing maintenance visits. There were no items that were rated as a high risk, with the majority of items rated at the lowest risk rating possible for that item of equipment.

- i. **Bench at Berryfield Play Area:** Cllr. S Wood highlighted that one of the issues on the ROSPA report was bird fouling on the bench at Berryfield play area and had enquired about what had previously been tried to deter the birds away. The Clerk explained that cable ties on the seat back had been tried which worked on other items of play equipment and initially worked in the short term. More conventional bird spikes were not advisable for use in a play area for health and safety reasons. The bird fouling was thick and corrosive, and cleaned weekly by the Caretaker which was labour intensive. One option was to move the bench, the other to lop back the trees above the bench where the pigeons are roosting. The Clerk had sought a quote for the tree works, but noted that Wiltshire Council would have to approve any tree work to be undertaken as under their ownership still. Members felt the bird fouling would still be an issue in the play area even if the bench was relocated. **Recommendation:** *The trees above the bench at Berryfield Play Area to be lopped to prevent pigeons roosting (bench on boundary with temporary village hall), with the permission of the Wiltshire Council Tree Officer.*
- ii. **Shrinkage of Ground around Safety and Hard Surfacing:** The Clerk explained that one of the issues that had come up at all play areas is that at the edge of safety surfacing a gap appears which is a trip hazard, the council

have tried filling it with sand, hardcore, soil and grass seed and this initially works until a change in temperature and weather which causes expansion and contraction, and washes away the filling. The Clerk and Caretaker had discussed with the groundwork contractor the possibility of filling/smoothing trip hazard expansion gaps when they are on site already to concrete in new assets such as benches and bins etc. This also included the small trip hazard at the entrance gate at Shurnhold Fields and at Bowerhill Sports Field where a desire line has been formed by residents coming from the wooden bridge across the shrub areas onto the car park. **Recommendation:** *The contractors to fill expansion gaps with cement as part of the scheme of works to install assets over the coming weeks.*

- iii. **Slide at Beanacre play area:** One of the items that had been identified in the ROSPA report as a medium risk was a surface split at the bottom of the slide at Beanacre Play Area and the Clerk reported that the caretaker had repaired this immediately on his return from annual leave.
- iv. **Overhead climber at Beanacre play area:** The timber on the top bar of the climber had decayed and has been identified in the ROSPA report as a medium risk, 10. The Clerk explained that the Finance & Amenities Officer had contacted Playforce, the original equipment supplier, on several occasions by 'phone and email to seek a quote to replace the equipment but had not received any response. The Clerk had also tried to phone them this afternoon but unfortunately was unable to speak to anyone and left a message requesting someone to call her back. Unfortunately, no response had been received by Playforce before tonight's meeting. Officers had tried one of their other play area contacts to get a quote, but as this piece of equipment had be manufactured and installed by Playforce they would not allow anyone else to purchase it. **Recommendation:** *The Clerk to write a letter to Playforce to say that as the council have done everything possible to obtain a quote from them, the council hold them responsible if an accident should happen on this piece of equipment.*
- v. **Safety surfacing at Kestrel Court Play Area:** The Clerk reported that the over skim on the safety surfacing at Kestrel Court play area had worn away underneath the junior swings, it was noted that the safety surfacing was over skimmed in late 2016. The Clerk had contacted the contractors as in the original quotation it stated that the over skim would be 40mm think but was actually more like 10mm thick and was waiting for a response from Vita Play. It was noted that the risk score in the ROSPA report was as low as possible, due to the existing wet pour under the over skim. **Recommendation:** *The Clerk to carry on pursuing Vita Play and await their response.*
- vi. **Bridge and chain link fence at Shurnhold Fields:** It was identified in the ROSPA report that the timber had decayed on the kissing gate at the bridge over the brook and this has been reported to the Rights of Way Officer at Wiltshire Council. The chain link boundary fence was identified as needing minor repairs and the Parish Caretaker has been asked to investigate and repair if feasible, if not the council's groundwork contractors would be contacted. It was noted that the boundary fence being kept in good repair was a condition of the covenant on the legal deeds for the land.
- vii. **Shaw Play Area gates:** The Clerk highlighted that Shaw play area only has one pedestrian gate, and it was good practice to have two gates so that a child has an alternative route of escape. The play area does however have a set of maintenance gates that could be altered. At Hornchurch Road play

area there is a pedestrian gate and maintenance gate next to each other which has a padlocked drop bollard that the contractors can use to open both the gates as a maintenance gate. The Clerk enquired whether members wished to do the same for Shaw Play Area and it was considered that this could be taken into account when the playing field improvements were made.

- viii. **Berryfield Play Area fence:** Members agreed that the approach to just repair the existing chain link fence at Berryfield was the right course of action (rather than replacement) as there was still an outstanding planning application for the Wilts & Berks Canal Melksham Link right through the middle of the play area, and the land was planned to be a Community Asset Transfer to the Canal Trust and not the parish council in the future.
- b) Signage at Play Areas and Community buildings to support the NHS Breastfeeding Friendly campaign:** The Clerk explained that Cllr. Holder had previously enquired whether the Council wished to participate in a new Breastfeeding Friendly campaign and wonder whether the council would like to display the stickers/signs in the play areas. This campaign has been put into place by the NHS to support breastfeeding mums to feel confident when they are out and about. It was enquired where the stickers would go if the council were to participate as there is not any spare space on the existing standard play area signs but noted that a bench had been installed in the shade in Shaw play area following the request of a breastfeeding mother.  
*Recommended: Clerk to investigate feasibility of displaying these stickers.*
- c) Purchase of additional bin at Hornchurch Road Play Area:** The Clerk reported that at the recent site visit with the contractor and councillors, the contractor had fed back that the current one was always full and suggested that another one would be useful, outside the other pedestrian gate. The total cost for an additional bin at Hornchurch Road Play Area would be £345 excluding VAT, it was noted that the council were already over their street furniture budget for this year but the reserve for assets could be used and that the groundwork contractors already visit to empty the other bin.  
*Recommended: The Council purchase an additional bin for Hornchurch Road Play Area at a cost of £345 excluding VAT and this to come out of the Community Asset Reserve (339)*

220/19 **QEII Diamond Jubilee Sports Field & Pavilion:**

- a) Professional advice received on golf practice on sports field:** The Clerk reported that she had requested guidance from Wiltshire Council, ROSPA, and the council's insurance company, this was due to a previous complaint made by a user of the sports field who considered the use of golf as being dangerous (*Min 121/19*). The Clerk advised that she had seen a few members from a local company play golf at the sports field every lunch time and had previously spoken to them to make them aware that there had been a complaint and ask them to be considerate to other people using the field. The guidance from the council's insurance company was that it would not be the responsibility of the parish council unless it was an event that the council had organised therefore the user of the land would be responsible should their activities result in someone getting injured. Advice had also been sought from Wiltshire Council to see if they had ever come across this problem and had a policy but they did not. The advice from ROSPA Play Safety was that golf is at least a medium risk issue in public spaces, and it was noted that balls can go anywhere dependent on the golfer expertise; and they would therefore recommend

erecting signage to deter this activity, or this could be discussed with the workers and management of the local company. There was a discussion as to whether the council should put up signs to warn users of their responsibility when playing golf but it was felt by members that the council would then need to put up signs for all sports, as the Clerk had already spoken to the individuals playing golf it was felt that no more action was needed other than to mention it to the local company informally.

- b) Complaint received about dog fouling:** The Clerk reported that she had received a complaint from one of the home football teams about the amount of dog fouling on the pitches and from a member of the public using the field who had challenged a number of dog owners that had dogs off their leads and/or were not picking up after their dogs. The Clerk explained that one evening when she was at the Pavilion, she seen dogs being exercised in the dark, and presumably dog owners could not see where their dogs were fouling. Cllr. S Wood queried whether the council had infrared cameras and if the were positioned on the sports field. The Clerk advised that the cameras were only positioned on the building and were not infrared but at night if someone walked in the path of the Pavilion the lights would come on giving a clear camera picture. It was highlighted that the Clerk and Parish Officer had previously undertaken an exercise on the sports field, where they had sprayed every bit of dog poo around the sports field in red biodegradable paint to raise awareness, and counted 98 pieces but seemed to be from only three to four different dogs. Cllr. Baines also highlighted that after the new Hornchurch Road footpath was put in, there was several amounts of dog poo the next day. The Clerk advised that this is an ongoing issue and there are signs all around the sports field, it had been raised periodically on social media and the Wiltshire Times have published a recent article to highlight this issue. The members felt that the council should carry on raising awareness of this issue and erect the proposed "Keep Britain Tidy" anti-dog fouling signs on the field access points too.
- c) Maintenance work to Pavilion doors:** The Clerk had received a quote from JH Jones of £656.25+ VAT. This was to rub down, and apply primer, undercoat and two coats of metal/exterior paint all 7 of the Pavilion metal doors.  
*Recommendation: The Council accept JH Jones quote of £656.25+ VAT to prepare and paint the pavilion metal doors (Quotation 356 refers).*
- d) Football booking report 2019/20:** The members noted the report about the current sports field football bookings. The Clerk reported that one of the adult teams had pulled out of the Trowbridge & District League earlier in the day and the council therefore had 5 adult teams and 1 youth team with seasonal bookings. The council had not yet received the changing room keys back or any payment from their two matches that were played. The 4<sup>th</sup> pitch had now been marked up and new goal posts installed, so that the adult teams could rotate between the pitches to limit wear and tear; and a new 9 vs 9 pitch marked up for junior players. With teams now playing on a Saturday and Sunday, the current situation with the contract cleaner coming in on a Saturday late afternoon/evening and then again later in the week is working well.  
*Recommendation: The Council to keep the team's £50 deposit in lieu of payment and request the pavilion keys back.*
- e) Fields in Trust response on suitability of new equipment and boules within legal agreement:** There had previously been a query as to whether there were any rules with regards to percentage of land that can be developed at the Bowerhill Sports Field. Officers had received a response from Fields in

Trust to say that as the equipment that had been proposed was outdoor and recreational then there were no rules restricting this; the mix of sport and recreation on the field is up to the parish council as owners.

- f) **Scope of consultation for future facilities and equipment:** The Clerk queried whether the members felt that they could have a similar questionnaire as the one for the Shaw Playing Field new recreational facilities consultation. It was advised that Shaw sent out hard copies, put it on Survey Monkey and social media so that it gave everyone a way of participating in the questionnaire. Members felt that the Shaw questionnaire was a good example and a similar one could be put together for the Bowerhill Sports Field consultation. The committee agreed that the categories on the survey should be climbing and balancing, gym and physical development, teen shelter and seating. **Recommended:** *The categories on the survey for future equipment to enhance the Bowerhill Sports Field to be climbing and balancing, gym and physical development, teen shelter and seating.*
- g) **Legionella Report:** The Clerk had provided the last set of monthly reports from the routine testing as examples of the work carried out and reported that there was no legionella detected in the latest test (or any of the tests to date). It was noted that the TVCC (Total Viable Colony Count), which is the bacterial count, was higher than desirable but there is no maximum limit on this and is therefore compared to other similar sites. The annual chlorination of the tank is normally done in August but was due to be done on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October as a new valve for the tank is being fitted at the same time.

221/19 **Allotment Report:** The committee noted the allotment report. There was currently one vacant plot and one person on the waiting list who had been shown the current plot but did not wish to take that plot on and wished to be kept on the waiting list should another plot become available. It was highlighted that some tenants have erected sheds and greenhouses that exceed the permitted size limit. The Allotment Warden advised that most of the sheds and greenhouses that have been put up that exceed the minimum size had been erected for a while.

222/19 **Shaw Village Hall and Playing Fields:**

- a) **Update on consultation for new recreation facilities:** The Clerk reported that there had been 78 responses to the questionnaire so far but this was only the online responses. The deadline for the consultation is the 31<sup>st</sup> October so the hard copies are yet to be counted.
- b) **Correspondence regarding trees on the playing field boundary:** The Clerk reported that she had received a request that had been passed on to her by the Shaw Village Hall committee from a resident who wished for some trees to be cut back on Parish Council owned land and had asked for more clarification from the resident as to why they wished to have the trees cut back. She had not yet received a response back from the resident.

223/19 **Shurnhold Fields:** Members noted the draft Minutes of the Shurnhold Fields Working Party held on 18<sup>th</sup> September. The Clerk reported that Officers were in the process of conducting a pre-planning enquiry to establish if a 10-space car park was considered small and modest and therefore would be classed as permitted development for local authorities; if not a planning application will be made. Items that are due to be discussed at the next working party meeting were noted by the members but any steer for the parish council representatives was deferred to the

next Full Council meeting, when all the representatives will be in attendance. The AGM for the Friends of Shurnhold Fields is on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October at the Town Hall at 7pm for 7.30pm and the next Working Party meeting on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November at 6pm, also at the Town Hall. It was noted that some picnic benches and seats were being ordered as capital items and funded 50% each by Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council, with a total cost of £1,654.24 excluding VAT.

224/19 **Grasscutting:**

**a) Mown and fallow areas of grass at Hornchurch Road Public Open space:**

The Clerk reported on the Site Meeting that had recently been held where members had walked around the public open space with JH Jones to seek advice and agree what areas should be mown and where should be left fallow. The members on site then marked these areas on a plan, with a space for improved grass that would have some aeration to take place, and other areas with mown paths through grass left fallow. The members also looked at the pond area in the tree area next to the public open space and agreed that it would be good to cut these back to let more light into the pond area for better wildlife habitat. The Clerk advised that the plan had been sent to Wiltshire Council for their consideration, as landowners, and any tree work would need the permission of their Tree Officer who would need to undertake a site visit. There was quite a lot of litter in a dell area of the trees and Cllrs Carter and Pafford returned a couple of days later and collected all the rubbish and removed it.

**Recommendation:** *The parish council take on the grass cutting of the public open space at Hornchurch Road from Wiltshire Council with an area of improved, aerated grass cut regularly and the rest to be left fallow apart from an annual cut, with mown paths*

**b) Grass Cutting specification for new contract commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 for 3 years:**

The committee noted the current grass cutting contract and reviewed the specification before seeking a quotation for the new contract period. The grass cutting inside Hornchurch Road play area should be removed as there is no longer any grass there, but should include the additional bin to be purchased, for emptying. The Hornchurch Road public open space grass cutting plan, and annual pond clearing will need to be added to the contract, as will shrub maintenance at the Kestrel Court play area. It will also require the annual cut at Shurnhold Fields to be added to the contract, but that will be funded from the open space maintenance contribution. At the Bowerhill Sports Field there is now a 4<sup>th</sup> adult pitch to be line marked as well as a 9 vs 9 pitch. It was agreed that the bins would continue to be emptied every fortnight in play areas, but weekly during the school holidays and at Bowerhill Sports Field. **Recommendation:** *The grasscutting specification to be as before with the following amendments:*

- *Remove grasscutting inside Hornchurch Road play area*
- *Add grasscutting and aeration for the public open space at Hornchurch Road*
- *Add regular shrub maintenance at Kestrel Court play area*
- *Add annual cut at Shurnhold Fields*
- *Add additional line marking and goal post maintenance at Bowerhill Sports Field*

225/19 **Water Refill Stations:**

- a) **Details of Watermark funding:** Officers had investigated what funding would be available for water refill stations and the Watermark scheme from Wessex Water will award up to £1,500 per project. The funding is a special fund for communities who need help in providing a refill point for water, in order to reduce the number of single-use plastic bottles, parish councils and action groups are eligible and the locations are in the Wessex Water water supply area. The proposed areas for the water refill stations will be Shaw Playing Field and the Bowerhill Sports Field as they both had an existing water supply; they were both on land owned by the parish council and both sites had a Legionella flushing regime and maintenance schedule. It was hoped that two applications could be made for £1,500 each, one for each site, by the differing organisations involved in the project.
- b) **Quotations for water refill stations:** The committee reviewed the quotes that had been obtained and felt that they should purchase a water fountain that can be mounted onto the wall and felt that the ELKAY LK4405BF model would be a suitable water refill station. A member queried what colour the fountain should be and was advised that items such as bins and noticeboards are usually provided in dark green as the parish council's "brand" colour. Members felt that the colour of the water fountain should be blue so that it stands out, and similar to the wall mounted example just installed at County Hall. There were two quotes for the same water fountain model which were quoted at the same price. It was noted that the MIW Water Cooler Experts that Bradford on Avon Town Council had purchased their water fountains from recently.

**Recommendation 1:** *The Council apply for the Watermark Funding grant from Wessex Water.*

**Recommendation 2:** *The Council purchase 1 ELKAY LK4405BF in blue from MIW Water Cooler Experts at a cost of £1895.00 + VAT for the Bowerhill Sports Field*

**Recommended 3:** *The Clerk to speak to CAWS about applying for their own grant from the Watermark Funding for their own drinking water fountain.*

- 226/19 **Keep Britain Tidy "Dog Fouling" campaign:** The Clerk explained that the proven 'We are watching you' dog fouling campaign is from the Keep Britain Tidy organisation. Their research has found that darker nights increase the incidents of dog fouling as under the cover of darkness dog owners are less likely to pick up their dog mess; the campaign uses glow in the dark technology and behaviour change theory to nudge dog owners into picking up their mess. They had a specific cost effective scheme for parish councils, and for this campaign included glow in the dark stickers and posters. The Clerk recommended that sign 3 would be the most appropriate sign to purchase as it had a positive reinforcement message and the cost of this would be £25 per sign and a minimum order of 10 would be required. The Council would then be able to purchase A4 bin stickers at £5 each. The members agreed 20 signs would be needed to erect at Bowerhill Sports Field, Shaw Playing Field, the fence at each play area that has adjacent grassed areas and at Shurnhold Fields. The A4 stickers that can also be purchased would be required for the Parish noticeboards and to give the community groups in the Parish to erect where there is a known area of dog fouling. On the purchase of the signs, images will also be provided for a media campaign to reinforce the "We are



watching you” signage. **Recommendation:** The council to purchase 20no. A3 glow in the dark corex signs and 50no. glow in the dark A4 stickers at a total cost of £750 excluding VAT to be funded from the Community Asset Reserve (329).

227/19 **Local business sponsorship:** The Clerk reported that Dick Lovett Jaguar Landrover were happy to take over the maintenance of the ex Carsons Tyres sponsored roundabout and therefore the members discussed whether to contact other local businesses that are adjacent to, or staff regularly visit, the Sports Field at Bowerhill to see if they were interested in sponsorship too. **Recommendation:** The council write to neighbouring large businesses to see if there was any interest in sponsoring or taking on the maintenance of the roundabout at the industrial estate end of Portal Road, to see if they were interested in contributing to the new equipment to be installed at the Sports Field and to make them aware that there have been complaints from members of the public about some local staff playing golf.

228/19 **Quotations for new SID (Speed Indicator Device):** The members reviewed the quotes however Cllr. Baines had identified some issues with the solar powered aspect of the SID. He explained that the solar powered aspect is only a means of charging the batteries inside, and not powering the SID. This means that it would only be adding additional equipment that would need to be relocated when the SID is moving to its next location, every 14 days. Another issue was that the solar panel is separate from the device and would need to be mounted above the SID which would not have room on the relocatable posts. There would be room on a lamp post but cabling would be needed between the device and the solar panel, and one of the suppliers suggest that holes are drilled in the lamp post for the connecting wires. It was felt by members that as the solar panel did not power the device this was not a viable option. **Recommendation:** The Full Council to consider specification for the SID so that Officers can obtain new quotes.

*Meeting Closed 9:48pm*

Chairman, 21st October, 2019