

MINUTES of the Highways & Streetscene Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 11 October 2021 at 1 Swift Way, Westinghouse Way, Bowerhill, Melksham, SN12 6QX at 7.45pm

DUE TO THE ON-GOING COVID 19 PUBLIC HEALTH RESTRICTIONS, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WERE WELCOME TO ATTEND THE FACE-TO-FACE MEETING, BUT WERE ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE VIA ZOOM, DUE TO LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE IN THE COUNCIL'S MEETING SPACE TO COMPLY WITH COVID RESTRICTIONS. THE MEETING WAS ALSO AVAILABLE VIA YOUTUBE

Present: Councillors Alan Baines (Committee Chair), David Pafford (Vice Chair of Council), Mark Harris & Robert Shea-Simonds

Present via Zoom: 1 Member of Public

Present in the Meeting Room: 2 Members of Public

Officers: Lorraine McRandle, Parish Officer & Marianne Rossi, Finance & Amenities Officer

273/21 Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping

Councillor Baines, as Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and pointed out the fire exits to the members of public.

274/21 To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Glover who was unwell, as was the Clerk.

Whilst Councillor Patacchiola had tendered his apologies for not being able to attend the meeting in person, due to work commitments, he hoped to join the meeting remotely in a non voting capacity, but unfortunately did not join the meeting.

Resolved: To note and accept the reasons for absence of Councillor Glover and Councillor Patacchiola.

Post Meeting: Councillor Chivers had informed the Clerk the previous week that he may not be present at the meeting as he was feeling unwell.

275/21 a) To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

b) To consider for approval any Dispensation Requests received by the Clerk and not previously considered.

None received.

276/21 Public Participation

A resident of Berryfield who had written to the council requesting an additional public Right of Way in Berryfield, explained that they had only been living in the area for 3 years. However, he had walked a particular route in Berryfield, from the end of Berryfield Lane around the edge of one field and across the next, to the river Avon on several occasions, as did several other people and had noted a bridge across Berryfield Brook in a poor state of repair. On contacting Wiltshire Council to ask that it be repaired he had been surprised to learn that the route in question was not actually a Right of Way and therefore wished to have this route added to the Definitive Rights of Way Map.

Councillor Baines sought clarification from the resident of the condition of Right of Way MELW7 which ran diagonally from one end of Berryfield Lane to near Holbrook Farm.

The resident explained he had not walked that route so could not Comment.

Councillor Baines explained that applying for a new Right of Way from the bridge to the river seemed a sensible request and the other part could be done as a diversion of the existing public right of way (MELW7).

A representative from Artway, Merlin Way, Bowerhill attended the meeting to voice his concerns that due to vehicles parking on the side of the road opposite his business on Merlin Way, it meant delivery vehicles were having difficulties negotiating Merlin Way and manoeuvring their vehicles to access his premises, as well as those of his neighbours – Office Evolution - who were also experiencing similar difficulties.

A representative from Office Evolution attended the meeting via Zoom and explained that they had moved from their previous site to Merlin Way some 2.5 years ago and supported the comments made by Artway and added on occasion that delivery drivers had aborted their deliveries once they had got to Merlin Way as they could see they would be unable to get past the parked vehicles and manoeuvre their vehicles to access both premises.

Councillor Baines asked if Members were happy to move these items further up the agenda for discussion, which Members agreed.

**277/21 To note Minutes of last Highways & Street Scene Committee
12 July 2021 and updates on actions taken**

As Chair, Councillor Baines went through the minutes and provided updates on the various recommendations made.

a) To note response from Mark Stansby, Senior Highway Engineer Re: signage to remind people not to idle their engines whilst stationary (Min 144(f)/21)

Following a suggestion to erect signs to remind people to turn off their engines, guidance had been sought from Mark Stansby, Senior Highway Engineer on whether such signs were available and could be erected.

Mark Stansby had responded quoting the Highway Code Rule 123 and noted it was illegal to leave a car engine idling and therefore the Police could undertake enforcement action against such offences. Unfortunately, it was unlikely to be a Police priority. Whilst Road Traffic Regulations allowed for local authorities to take on enforcement powers for such offences, this had previously been considered by Wiltshire Council, but was not seen as a priority as, in order to make an impact through enforcement, the Council would have to divert significant resources to this task.

Mark Stansby had also noted signs to be displayed on the Highway are controlled by Government regulations, with regulations not prescribing for signs relating to engine idling to be erected and suggested if the Parish Council's focus was on activities outside of schools, to approach the Headteachers to enable it to be brought to parents' attention, which could be a worthwhile campaign for the pupils to become involved with.

Councillor Baines noted at a previous meeting it had already been agreed to send a letter to Headteachers of the various schools within the parish regarding this issue and the impact on health, particularly of children, and that letters would be sent out in due course. .

b) To note response from Dr Mark McClelland, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene & Flooding Re Wiltshire Council's Policy on Permanent Installation of Speed Indicator Devices (SID) (Mins 144a(ii)/21 and 148(b)/21)

Correspondence had been received from Dr Mark McClelland clarifying Wiltshire Council's policy on the permanent installation of speed indicator devices with a copy of Wiltshire

Council's SID Deployment Criteria.

Dr McClelland also pointed out that Wiltshire Police had employed an Enforcement Technician to support Local Community Speed Watch teams and they were in the process of finalising a contract for new mobile cameras and a processing system.

Members noted within the criteria, as previously understood, devices could only be deployed on a temporary basis and are normally in place at a site for between 2 to 8 weeks and to maintain their effectiveness, they should not be redeployed until a minimum of 4 weeks has elapsed.

Councillor Baines stated there was an opportunity to leave the Council's SID erected for longer than the current two week period on main routes, which qualified for a SID if there was a particular need.

c) To note response from Project Co-ordinator, Wiltshire Community Payback Re Painting of Street Signage in Bowerhill (Min 144(i)(iv)/21)

The Parish Council had previously agreed to ascertain if Community Payback would be interested in assisting with painting faded street signs in the parish.

Whilst it was noted that Community Payback would be interested in assisting with this activity, the Council would be responsible for providing insurance cover for their activities and as this work would be working on the highway Councillor Baines raised a concern.

i) To gauge interest in potential Area Board project for replacing faded street naming signs

At a previous meeting, Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford had suggested a potential Area Board project for replacing faded street naming signs and asked whether the Council would be interested.

Recommendation: To support Councillor Alford in his endeavours in an Area Board project to replace faded street naming signs and if successful in his bid to provide him with a list of those signs in the Parish which need replacing.

Unfortunately, to decline the assistance of Community Payback in repainting street naming signs on the highway.

278/21 Speeding Issues within the Parish. To note correspondence from the Police & Crime Commissioner candidates for August election (Min 143d(i)/21)

Various former Police & Crime Commissioner candidates had responded to correspondence from the Parish Council concerned at the level of speeding issues in the Parish and what could be done to deter those speeding.

Members were encouraged by the response from the recently elected Police & Crime Commissioner, Philip Wilkinson who had stated he hoped to deploy more Police to work alongside Community Speed Watch Teams and to increase prosecutions both as a punishment and a deterrent and also hoped to meet the Chair of Wiltshire Community Speed Watch Group as soon as possible.

279/21 To consider residents' requests for support by the Parish Council including requests for CATG (Community Area Transport Group next meeting 25 November 2021):

To note none received.

280/21 Traffic Survey Requests

a) Update from Wiltshire Council regarding back-log of requests

Correspondence had been received from Wiltshire Council stating that due to the backlog of traffic survey requests for various reasons, they had taken the decision to clear the backlog as soon as possible using their previous contractor, rather than wait for the appointment of the new one.

281/21 Highway Improvement Requests

a) Implementation of waiting restrictions on Merlin Way, Bowerhill

Members recognised that vehicles would be displaced elsewhere on the Bowerhill Industrial Estate, however they felt it was important to support those businesses who were having their daily operations disrupted due to delivery issues because of vehicles parked on the side of the road in Merlin Way.

Councillor Baines explained the process would take between 18 months to 2 years and required public consultation also.

Standing orders were suspended to allow the member of public to speak to this item, who asked if there was anything which could be done in the interim.

Councillor Baines explained that unfortunately there wasn't anything the Council could do, however, if a vehicle was causing an obstruction, the Police could be contacted, however, this would not be a priority.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

Recommendation: To submit a request to Wiltshire Council to extend the current waiting restrictions on Merlin Way on the Eastern side and to enquire when the next review of waiting improvements in Melksham would be taking place.

b) Implementation of waiting restrictions on Mitchell Drive, Bowerhill

Correspondence had been received from a member of the public concerned at the number of vehicles parking on Mitchell Drive, Bowerhill, making visibility for drivers difficult, particularly for those coming out of Barnes Wallis Close.

Members empathised with the concerns raised and the potential dangers and noted vehicles were often on the wrong side of the road when going towards Halifax Road and it was often difficult to see oncoming vehicles whilst approaching this junction.

It was noted some of the vehicles often parked with headlights facing oncoming traffic, which made it difficult for drivers, especially at night, and was an offence.

Recommendation: To submit a request to Wiltshire Council for the implementation of waiting restrictions on Mitchell Drive for its whole length on one side and to ask that the local PCSO keep an eye on parking issues in this area.

282/21 Community Area Transport Group (CATG)

a) To note Minutes and action log of last CATG (Community Area Transport Group) meetings held on 9 September 2021

Councillor Baines went through the various issues raised at the CATG meeting on 9 September and explained he had been chastised at the meeting for the Council raising the following issues before speaking to Bowerhill Residents Action Group (BRAG) who had raised the issue and sought a steer from Members on how to proceed, given current changes to the group, as CATG were looking to close these issues:

Issue 9-21-6 – Bowerhill – request for drop kerbs and tactile

pavings on footpaths of off Halifax Road leading to Pegasus Way, Avro Way and Hercules Way

Issue 9-21-7 – Bowerhill – request for new sections of footway at De Havilland Place and Dowding Way to connect to Halifax Road

Councillor Harris explained that whilst he was still a member of BRAG this matter had been brought to their attention by a resident of Bowerhill who was partially sighted and had undertaken a site visit of DeHavilland Place and Dowding Way and could appreciate their concerns.

Councillor Harris explained the dropped kerb issue was brought to his attention by another residents of Bowerhill who now had to use a mobility scooter.

Recommendation: To go back to CATG once a site visit on the various issues raised by BRAG had been arranged and suggestions on solutions to the issues agreed.

a) To consider any actions following CATG meeting

i) To note if Wiltshire Council prepared to take land transfer from Heron Homes of land for bus shelter on Falcon Way, and if not, to consider land transfer to parish council

Councillor Baines sought clarification if there had been any update from Heron Homes on the land transfer.

The Parish Officer clarified it had been hoped this issue would have been raised at the CATG meeting to ascertain if Wiltshire Council would be prepared to take on the land transfer from Heron Homes themselves.

Councillor Baines felt the Parish Council had not officially made this request yet. However, at the meeting, it was noted if Wiltshire Council took on the land the bus shelter would not require planning permission, however, if the Parish Council did then planning permission would be required.

Councillor Baines noted there had been issues with the condition of the wall behind where the bus shelter will be located and suggested prior to any bus shelter being erected, that photographs be taken of the wall.

Recommendation: To approach Wiltshire Council to ask that the land be transferred to them from Heron Homes in

order to erect a bus shelter.

ii) To arrange a site meeting with Bowerhill Community Group Re: dropped kerbs.

Recommendation: To arrange a site meeting with Members of Bowerhill Residents Action Group (BRAG) after their AGM on 26 October.

283/21 VE Day Commemoration Planters. To arrange site visit (coinciding with above) and to agree who will maintain them

Correspondence had been received from Andy Cadwallader, Highway Engineer regarding the installation of VE Day Commemoration planters at the entrance to Berryfield Park and Portal Way, Bowerhill suggesting a site visit to clarify exact locations.

It was noted the location of the planter on Portal Way was suggested adjacent to the proposed Bowerhill nameplate and white gates near Dick Lovetts on Portal Way and as discussions were still ongoing with them about this, a site visit would have to be put on hold.

Recommendation: To arrange a site visit as soon as possible regarding the Berryfield location.

284/21 Requests outside of scope of CATG

None to note.

285/21 Community Speed Watch

a) To note minutes of Community Action for Whitley & Shaw (CAWS) meeting held on 14 September which include a Community Speed Watch update

Members noted at the CAWS meeting held on 14 September an update had been provided by the local Community Speed Watch Co-ordinator who had reported that a uniformed police officer had accompanied the Community Speed Watch team on Shaw Hill and interestingly no speeding offences had been recorded on that occasion.

An additional speed watch site had been requested between Shaw Hill and Atworth, as this seemed to be a particularly bad area for speeding and was awaiting the outcome of this request. The committee had also discussed the possibility of securing additional double white lines on this road but agreed that the guidance on such matters was set nationally.

b) To note article from Police Website: Supporting Woodrow Road Community Speed Watch (CSW) Group

Members noted the new Community Speed Watch Enforcement Officer was now in post and supporting local Community Speed Watch teams. Members were pleased to see the article which showed the Chief Constable Kier Pritchard also in attendance supporting the new Woodrow Road CSW team.

c) To note verbal update on Berryfield Community Speed Watch

The meeting was informed Community Speed Watch had been undertaken in Berryfield recently and the Clerk had spoken to its Members. Unfortunately, as the Clerk was not at the meeting they were unable to provide an update.

286/21 Speed Indicator Device (SID). To note update on when the new device will be delivered and operational

Members noted the new unit had been made and would be delivered shortly once an issue noted on its final check had been rectified.

Idverde have already been made aware the SID installation would resume as soon as the device had been delivered

287/21 Traffic Orders, Wiltshire Council (To note):

a) The County of Wiltshire (B3107 Bradford Road and C212 Melksham Lane, Broughton Gifford, Melksham and Melksham Without) (50mph Speed Limit) Order 2021. The County of Wiltshire (C211 East Lane and B3107 Melksham Road, Holt) (50mph Speed Limit) Order 2021 (Previously advertised as 2020)

Members noted the above orders had been made.

b) Update on closure of Forest Road and Woodrow Road relating to flood alleviation scheme in area.

Members noted correspondence from Wessex Water dated 12 August, informing the Council the flood alleviation works had been abandoned following the discovery of a gas pipe, which had not shown up on the original site investigations, however, residents had been informed works would begin again from 23 August for 11 weeks.

288/21 Footpaths & Rights of Way:

a) To consider a request from a resident of Berryfield that a submission be made to Wiltshire Council to for new Public Rights of Way in Berryfield

Councillor Baines explained the condition of Right of Way MELW7 which went diagonally across one of the fields in question could be investigated by the Rights of Way Team and establish whether there was an appropriate bridge for that brook which was safe to use.

Councillor Baines felt the proposal seemed reasonable as it followed the field boundary and brook and would be a useful additional to the public Right of Way network. However, there would be a need to establish if Wiltshire Council would consider a diversion order for MELW7, such that it did not dissect the land and a diversion of that route would form part of the proposed route put forward.

With regard to the landowners of the field in question in order to get their permission, Councillor Baines explained enquiries could be made on who the landowners were and explained this would be for Wiltshire Council Rights of Way to liaise with the landowners and see what their views were on diverting the existing right of way.

Councillor Shea-Simonds asked if the Council would be making the request to divert the rights of way.

Councillors Baines clarified this would be for the resident advocating the additional rights of way, in the same way residents of Forest did for new rights of way which were subsequently granted and explained this would take some time to come to fruition and suggested the resident apply to Wiltshire Council and if this request was submitted suggested the Parish Council would support it which Members agreed.

Standing Orders were suspended to enable the resident to speak to this item.

The resident explained on contacting Wiltshire Council they had explained that he would have to get as many witnesses as possible to support the application and that the parish council might be able to bear the costs involved.

Councillor Baines explained these costs would have to be borne by the resident, similar to when residents in Woodrow had applied for a new public Right of Way, but felt what was being proposed seemed a sensible addition to the public Rights of Way network, but the resident would need to come up with witnesses to say they have walked that route on several occasions and not been challenged.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

Recommendation: To make enquiries of the Public Rights of Way Team at Wiltshire Council at the condition of MELW7 and ask if a Diversion Order can be made around the route proposed by the resident, as an alternative to the official Rights of Way.

289/21 Gulley Cleansing. To note update from Wiltshire Council Highways Officer

Members noted an updated from a Wiltshire Council Highways Technician following a request for various locations which required cleansing.

The Parish Officer noted a further update had been received earlier to say the various locations raised had been cleansed and no issues noted.

290/21 Stopping up of Highway adjacent to 168 Littleworth Lane, Whitley. To note order has been made.

Members noted the Order to stop up the highway on land adjacent to 168 Littleworth Lane, Whitley had been made.

291/21 To note update on Roundabout sponsorship

Following the Clerk seeking clarification from Highways on roundabout sponsorship particularly for the A350 'Milk Churn' and former A350/A365 roundabouts, correspondence had been received from the Area Highways Engineer, for West Wiltshire.

The Area Highways Engineer stated the Section 96 Licence for the A350/A365 had expired in April 2021. The council had no issues with the sponsorship of the roundabout and so there would be no objections to the renewal of the licence but it legally needed to be in place. They also clarified there would be no objection to changing the contractor for the maintenance work provided they were accredited to work on the highway.

With regard to the A350 Hampton Park West roundabout 'Milk Churn' confirmation had been received in late papers that the roundabout was now available to be licenced if the parish council wished to apply for a section 96 licence to maintain it.

Members noted the Clerk had been consulting with Dick Lovetts regarding roundabout sponsorship for the A350 roundabout in particular and that maybe they would be interested in taking on both roundabouts.

Recommendation: For the Clerk to continue consulting with Dick Lovetts regarding sponsorship of the A350 'Milk Churn' roundabout and to

ascertain if they would be interested in sponsoring the A350/A365 roundabout also, if not to find an alternative sponsor.

292/21 Weed Spraying. To consider level of weed spraying in the Parish following information received from Wiltshire Council.

The Parish Officer explained she had sought clarification from Wiltshire Highways on how often the weeds were sprayed in the parish after coming across a map on Wiltshire Council's website which seemed to suggest most areas of the parish were sprayed twice a year.

The Highways Officer had confirmed weed spraying was only carried out once a year due to budget constraints and that weed spraying this year was later than expected, preferring it to take place at the end of July, with weed spraying actually taking place in the parish at the end of September.

The Highways Officer explained that due to the size of Wiltshire and the complexities of the weed spraying program it was difficult to give an indication of when weed spraying would take place for each community. The Highways Officer also confirmed it was their understanding at present that there was no intention to change the Council's policy of weed spraying the urban highway network once a year.

It was noted the Parish Council's own contractor had undertaken weed spraying in the parish last week.

The Parish Officer explained that the Clerk was seeking a steer from Members on how often they wished the Parish Council's contractor to undertake weed spraying in the Parish, to inform the budget preparation for next year.

Recommendation: If Wiltshire Council are undertaking one week spray a year, the Parish Council to only undertake one additional weed spray a year.

293/21 Section 106 relating to Land at Semington Road (Planning Application 20/01938/OUT).

a) To note Highway Contribution of £200,000 towards upgrading of the double pelican crossing on the A350 to a double toucan crossing and measures to reduce the attractiveness to pedestrians of the pedestrian route on the Western side of the roundabout between Old Semington Road and Melksham.

Members noted as part of the Section 106 Legal Agreement for the above development, that the developers were being asked to contribute £200,000 towards the upgrading of the crossing on the A350 and measures to reduce the attractiveness to pedestrians of the pedestrian route on the Western side of the roundabout.

b) To note Highway Contribution of £4000 for the improvement of pedestrian signage between the development and the town centre and the development and the formal A350 crossings near Hampton West roundabout

Members also noted the developers were being asked to contribute £4000 towards the improvement of pedestrian signage between the development and the town centre and the development and the formal A350 crossings near Hampton West roundabout.

294/212 Cleveland Bridge, Bath. To note response from Michelle Donelan MP to concerns at the permanent closure of Cleveland Bridge to HGVs

Followings concerns by Members at the possible permanent closure of Cleveland bridge to HGVs, correspondence had been received from Michele Donelan MP stating that both herself and Dr Mark McClelland, Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene & Flooding at Wiltshire Council were aware of the impact such a closure would have on residents across West Wiltshire and were due to meet Wera Hobhouse MP for Bath and members of BANES Council at the beginning of October to advocate for Wiltshire and ask for a consensus on a more suitable alternative to closing Cleveland Bridge.

Members noted the meeting had taken place and that both councils had resolved to speak to each other on this issue.

Meeting finished at 9.20pm

Signed
Chairman, Full Council, 18 October 2021