

MINUTES of the Asset Management Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday, 20TH September 2021 at 7.35pm.

(DUE TO THE LIFTING OF COVID RESTRICTIONS, THIS MEETING WAS HELD FACE TO FACE. HOWEVER, DUE TO THE LIMITED NUMBER OF PEOPLE ABLE TO BE ACCOMMODATED IN THE MEETING SPACE FOLLOWING A RISK ASSESSMENT, MEMBERS OF PUBLIC WERE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THE MEETING VIA ZOOM. THE MEETING WAS ALSO STREAMED VIA YOUTUBE

Present: Councillors John Glover (Chair of Council and Committee), David Pafford (Vice Chair of Council and Committee) Alan Baines, Shona Holt, Andy Russell and Rob Hoyle.

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

Housekeeping & Announcements:

Councillor Glover welcomed all to the meeting.

229/21 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillor Chivers who was unwell; this reason for absence was accepted.

230/21 To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

231/21 To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during consideration of business (5c, 6c, 8a, 9, 10), where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Resolved: Items 5c, 6c, 8a, 9, 10 to be discussed in closed session for the following reasons:

5c, 6c, 9 & 10 Reason B- Terms of tenders
8a Reason C- Legal

232/21 Public Participation

Wiltshire Councillor Alford wished to speak and update members following a meeting he had attended regarding CCTV in the Campus. He explained

that he was investigating whether the CCTV going into the campus was suitable for the project that Melksham Town Council wished to do.

Unfortunately, due to the design of the CCTV system that was planned to be installed into the Campus, it would not be suitable for the Town project as it was more of a static system. This means that it would just record what was going on and if an incident occurred the police could go and access the footage and have a look back at it, but was unsuitable for what the Town Council had envisaged it to do.

Councillor Alford explained that it was his understanding that the parish council may be interested in joining up with the Campus CCTV system to cover some facilities in the parish, namely the play areas, however he wished to inform members that this system would not be suitable to accomplish this.

He also explained that he was looking into the possibility of putting forward a new councillor initiative to focus on tidying up and replacing the street name plates. He wished to ascertain the feeling from members as to whether this was something that may be a benefit to the parish.

Councillor Baines explained that this would be something that the parish may be interested in as this had previously been discussed by the council notably for some of the name plates in Bowerhill. The council did previously discuss the possibility of using the Community Payback Scheme to clean the name plates.

Councillor Alford explained that he didn't think that the replacement of a name plate would be very expensive to do. The Clerk explained that when the council investigated the possibility of installing a name plate at Swift Way it was quite expensive. Councillor Alford queried whether this was due to the installation costs, the Clerk advised that installation may have been included in the overall costs.

Councillor Alford explained that there had been similar initiatives in other areas of Wiltshire and advised that this may be something that would need to go through CATG (Community Area Transport Group) for some highway resources. He explained that he would need to speak to members of the Area Board to see whether a proposal could be put together and whether this could be done through something such as match funding.

Councillor Glover explained that this item would need to be put onto an agenda for members to discuss at a future Highways meeting.

233/21C Play Areas & Public Open Spaces

a) To consider Quarterly inspection reports and any action required

Members reviewed the latest play area quarterly inspection report. Officers had added their own comments onto the report to suggest what items needed monitoring and what needed actioning and by whom. The Clerk raised concerns that when she reviewed the report the date ranged from July to September so it made it much more difficult to track what actually needed actioning as some of these actions may have already been attended to, so wasn't a true record. The Clerk felt that there needed to be an exact date clarified as to when each play area was inspected, so that officers could have a more accurate record on what needed actioning.

It was also highlighted that some of the equipment where issues had been highlighted were identified back in 2015, this was when the play area was under the control of Wiltshire Council and was looked after by the same contractors, so this looked to be an overhang from then.

The Clerk advised that officers found the reporting method itself much better as it provided photos which were very useful, especially when trying to obtain quotations for works required on the equipment. She felt that the reporting needed to be more accurate so that the council had a true record of the condition of each play area.

Members felt that officers needed to go through the report with ID Verde to discuss with them the issues that need resolving with their reporting. The Clerk informed members that the ROSPA annual inspection reports were due imminently, therefore these could be compared together.

Recommendation: The Clerk to have a meeting with ID Verde to discuss their play area inspection reporting, this to be done after the receipt of the ROSPA independent inspection reports so that they can both be compared together.

b) To note officers attended Hornchurch Road MUGA (multi use games area) x 4 in 2021 following reports of broken glass and consider who should attend future reports when Caretaker is not working (works 17 hours per week)

The Clerk reported that officers had attended Hornchurch Road MUGA on 4 separate occasions this year following reports of broken glass. She queried with members who should be attending these reports when the Caretaker was not working. It was noted that the Caretaker worked on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday each week.

Councillor Pafford wished for clarification on the nature of the attendance, for example was it to check out the validity of the report received or to make a decision on what needed doing. The Clerk confirmed that it was for a bit of both, as the play area would need to be made safe for users. The Clerk explained that officers do not go out to play areas when there have been reports of rubbish, as that was not classed as an emergency, only for instances where there were safety concerns.

Councillor Pafford advised that he would be happy to be called upon should there be a safety concern at one of the play areas in Bowerhill. Councillor Hoyle also advised that he would be happy to visit Hornchurch Road play area as he lived near the play area. The Clerk explained to members that it wasn't just for Hornchurch Road, but also the other play areas located around the parish. Councillor Pafford felt that this could be split between members so that all areas would be covered on an interim basis.

Councillor Pafford sought clarification on what members should do if they attended an issue at a play area and felt that it wasn't safe to keep open. He explained that sometimes with things such as broken glass there may be small shards that can be difficult to clear up and if it was felt that the play area shouldn't be kept open councillors would have no equipment to close it. He queried what councillors should do in this instance. The Clerk advised that members should call the out of hours emergency number which is always diverted to a council officer.

Councillor Glover queried whether members would be covered by insurance if they were to get injured when undertaking these tasks on behalf of the council. The Clerk confirmed that members would be insured under the council's insurance as they would be acting as an agent on behalf of the council.

Councillor Glover felt that a more permanent solution was needed as members maybe on holiday or unavailable at the time of an incident. After a detailed discussion it was felt that quotations should be sought from suitable contractors for them to be called upon when a safety issue at a play area arises, so that an indication of the costs involved could be determined. It was noted that an expected response time would need to be set out when obtaining these quotations.

Recommendation: Officers to obtain quotations from suitable contractors for them to be called upon if an issue such as broken glass or damaged equipment should arise at a play area or MUGA managed by the parish council when the Caretaker is not working.

c) To approve quotation for play area safety surfacing clean (to get ready for winter usage)

This item was discussed in closed session.

Members reviewed the quotations received from contractors to clean the play area safety surfacing to get ready for the winter usage. It was noted that this was not to clean the safety surfacing at the MUGAs, as this had already been done in spring and was best practice to clean the play area surfacing twice per year. The Clerk explained to new members of the committee that this was done to ensure that the surfacing remained porous to prevent ice cracking the surface and the algae was cleared so that the surfacing wasn't slippery.

The Clerk advised that the council had £5,820 left in the budget for safety surfacing cleaning, but it was anticipated that there may be another clean in spring, before year end, to get ready for high usage in the summer.

Members discussed the various quotations received. Councillor Baines highlighted those two quotations included detergent, whereas the quotation from one didn't. He was concerned that the quotation was just to jet wash the surfacing, therefore the quotation was not comparable with the others.

It was queried what the contractors were originally asked to quote for. The Finance and Amenities Officer confirmed that they were all asked to quote for a safety surfacing clean on all of the parish council play areas, but it had not been specified in the request that detergent was required.

Members also noted that in one quotation it stated that they would collect water from the Bowerhill Sports Pavilion, but there was no mention of this in either of the other quotations. The Finance and Amenities Officer advised that the contractor who did the previous safety surfacing clean in spring had provided their own water.

The Committee felt that clarification needed to be sought as to whether all quotations included the use of detergent, anti-fungal inhibitor, whether they would provide their own water and if the cleaning of play equipment was included. If they did not include these aspects, they should be asked to amend their quotations to include these additions.

Recommendation: Officers to seek clarification as to whether quotations include the use of detergent, anti-fungal inhibitor, cleaning of equipment and use of their own water. If the quotation does not include these to be asked to revise their quotations to include and all quotations to be brought back to the full council meeting on 18th October.

QEII Diamond Jubilee Sports Field & Pavilion (known informally as Bowerhill Sports Field):

- a) To consider request by Future of Football to install advertising hoarding around the sports field (on low wooden fence) and note advice on Planning permission and from Fields in Trust with regards to this request**

The Clerk explained that she still had an action to check out the planning permission for this request. She explained that Future of Football originally wanted to put advertising on the railings around the sports field to obtain sponsorship income and put some of this income back into the sports field. They are now however concerned that due to the trees that had been planted on the Portal Road side of the field, the advertising would be covered, therefore wished for a low wooden fence to be installed similar to the one at Oakfields (home of Melksham Town FC).

The Clerk explained that due to this being a grey area with planning, she may have to put a planning enquiry in to the planning department at Wiltshire Council, as there doesn't seem to be a definitive answer.

The Clerk asked members whether they were happy with this request in principle before officers went ahead and put in a planning enquiry and asked for permission from Fields in Trust. Councillor Glover queried who would pay for the wooden fence, the Clerk confirmed that it would be Future of Football and she understood this would be through sponsorship.

Councillor Hoyle queried whether there had been any designs provided by Future of Football, in terms of proposed height and weight of the proposed fence. The Clerk confirmed that she hadn't received any additional information apart from them wishing for the fence to be similar to the one at Oakfields. Councillor Glover explained that at Oakfields there was a barrier around the field with advertising on the side.

Councillor Pafford wished for clarification on how much of the perimeter of the sports field was being proposed to be used, he felt that if it was around the whole sports field this would not be a viable option. He felt that if it was going to be location on the Portal Road side of the field it would be a much better option. It was also queried whether the advertising would be facing out towards the road or in towards the sports field. The Clerk confirmed that it would be facing in towards the field as vegetation would obstruct the view if it was facing the other way.

Members felt that it was paramount that any position of the fence would need to ensure that the parish council's contractors were able to have full access to the sports field to cut the grass.

Recommendation: The Clerk to seek clarification from Future of Football as to where they wish to locate the fence and also to clarify the proposed height. The Clerk to put a planning enquiry into Wiltshire Council's planning department to determine whether this request would be subject to planning and to also seek permission from Fields in Trust.

b) To consider fire risk assessment report for the pavilion and any action required

The Committee reviewed the fire risk assessment recently undertaken by Radcliffe Fire Protection; Councillor Glover explained that there were only a few actions that needed to be taken. The Clerk explained that the Pavilion fire alarm system was specified by Herman Miller when the building was built and was now over 5 years old. Unfortunately, one of the devices in the system was showing as having a fault in the external toilet. Unfortunately, due to the alarm being a Gent system the part can only be replaced by a Gent engineer. The Clerk advised that the current contractors were not Gent engineers, therefore were unable to replace the faulty part as the current alarm system was a closed system. The officers had asked for a price indication from a Gent engineer to replace the faulty part, but it was around £200 just for the call out fee, for them to have a look at the issue, any replacement parts plus time to fit them would be on top of this fee. There had also been concerns that if this part needed replacing there may be other parts in the future that will need replacing which could become costly, therefore quotations had been sought for a replacement fire alarm system

The Clerk explained that there had previously been a query as to whether the fire alarm was over specified for the building, following conversations with engineers, it was confirmed that in terms of what was in the rooms was correct, but the fire alarm panel was one of the elite systems. This panel was more suitable for a warehouse type building or hospital.

c) To approve quotations for new fire alarm system for the pavilion

This item was discussed in closed session.

As per the advice in fire risk assessment report, quotations were sought for a conventional fire alarm system compliant to the appropriate British standard BS 5839-1:2017 category L4.

The Clerk explained that there had also been quotations provided for the ongoing maintenance of a new system which were quite similar to each other.

Members considered the potential future costs of replacing more of the parts against the benefit of installing a new system. It was also discussed whether just the control panel could be replaced rather than replacing the whole system. Councillor Baines highlighted that this would depend on whether the other parts in the system would be compatible with another control panel, members felt that this could prove tricky and may be difficult for the warranty of any new panel.

After a robust discussion, members felt that the fire alarm system should be replaced with a new one.

Recommendation: The Parish Council accept the quotation of £2,414.64 from Radcliffe Fire Protection to replace the fire alarm system at the pavilion with a fully compliant conventional two wire automatic fire alarm and detection system.

d) To consider options for bigger bins at the sports field

The Clerk explained that the bins were always overflowing on the Pavilion veranda, she had previously enquired with the council's bin emptying contractors how much additional it would cost to empty extra bins. She explained that there would be no additional cost for emptying as the contractors would already be at the field emptying the other bins and the waste would then be emptied into the council's own big commercial waste bins in the car park. The additional cost would come into play if the contractors had to come back and empty the bins for an additional time.

Members considered the three bigger bin options available. After a detailed discussion it was felt that the Glasdon Jubilee 240 Wheelie bin housing was the most suitable bin, it was noted that there was an option to either have a standard 240 litre wheelie bin or up to 300 litre sacks. Members discussed which one would be the best option, taking into consideration the lift weight of the sacks. It was queried how many people currently empty the bins; the Clerk explained that she had seen two people emptying them. It was felt that the council should ask the contractors which size they would prefer.

Recommendation: The Council order a Glasdon Jubilee 240 wheelie bin housing at a cost of £695.14 from Glasdon.

e) To note report on water samples recently taken at the pavilion

The Clerk was pleased to report that the water samples that were recently taken at the pavilion were all clear, and the members noted the detailed report.

Allotments:**a) To receive report on waiting list**

It was noted that there were currently 4 vacant plots available and 12 people on the waiting list. The Allotment Warden was currently in the process of showing the next four people on the waiting list around the plots. It was also reported that following a recent plot inspection eight tenants had been written to with five tenants contacting the council. It was noted that four of the tenants had mitigating circumstances, but had been asked to trim back the weeds in the meantime so that they didn't blow over onto other plots, one of the tenants wished to give up their plot. One tenant's tenancy agreement had been terminated due to the fact that the plot holder had made no attempt to begin cultivation of their plot despite already receiving two letters.

The next part of the discussion was discussed in closed session.

The Clerk explained that officers were having difficulty with one tenant at the allotments. She explained that there had recently been concerns regarding the welfare of their chicken, their plot was also in a poor condition. Officers had written to the tenant who had come back to say that they had cut back the weeds moderately consistently. The Allotment Warden had provided officers with images of the current condition of the plot which had also been provided to members at the meeting. The Clerk wished for a steer from members as to how to approach this issue as the circumstances around terminating other tenants was due to the fact that officers had not heard from them and they had not attempted to begin cultivation.

It was explained that the tenancy rules stated that two thirds of the plot had to be in cultivation. Members felt that due to the fact that the plot is not in cultivation, it is exceptionally overgrown with weeds which may affect other plot holders, that this plot holder should be written to again to be asked to begin cultivation and clear weeds otherwise the termination process will begin.

Recommendation: The council write to the plot holder to ask them to begin cultivation and clear weeds from their plot straight away. If this is not done the council to start the termination process.

b) To note delegated decisions made by Clerk relating to letting of plots and permissions given for greenhouses/sheds

It was noted that under her delegated powers the Clerk had approved the erection of a greenhouse on Briansfield plot 19.

c) To review the allotment rules around chickens and rabbits

The Clerk advised members that the council last looked at the rules around chickens and rabbits in 2016. She explained that there had recently been a concern for the welfare of one of the chickens at the allotments and officers didn't feel that some of the rules were tight enough. Members reviewed the current tenancy rules alongside the rules for keeping chickens from South Swindon Parish Council, as an alternative example.

Councillor Glover felt that only some slight amendments were needed to be made to the parish council policy. He felt that included in the rules should be a clause that states that all chickens and rabbits must be kept in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 or any subsequent legislation and if they are not kept in accordance with this act the council will report this to the RSPCA.

He also felt that point 5 of the rules should also include that mesh must be well maintained and capable of being covered to prevent avian flu.

Point 10 of the policy states that 'Chickens must be fed daily. Feeders must be rodent proof and no food should remain in the feeders after feeding, or be thrown on to the ground.' Members felt that there should be an addition added into this clause to say that food should not remain in the feeders after feeding unless they are self-closing.

Recommendation 1: The council include a clause in their rules for keeping chickens and rabbits to state that all chickens and rabbits must be kept in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 or any subsequent legislation, if animals are not kept in accordance to this the council will report this to the RSPCA.

Recommendation 2: To update point 5 of the rules to include that mesh should be capable of being covered to prevent avian flu.

Recommendation 3: To update point 10 of the rules to state that no food should remain in the feeders after feeding unless self-closing.

d) To consider adding weeds in Briansfield Allotment car park to the Spring weed spraying schedule

The Clerk explained that the car park at Briansfield allotments was overgrown with weeds and queried with members whether they wished to add this onto their weed spraying schedule for spring. She explained that the council had previously cleared the car park due to dumped rubbish and felt that if weeds were growing it was more likely that things such as compost would be dumped in the car park. She explained that the Bowerhill Sports Field car park was already on the weed spraying schedule.

The Clerk advised that she felt that the spring weed spraying would be the most appropriate time to spray the car park so that it doesn't blow over and ruin tenant's crops which could be a possibility, or perceived possibility if a spray in the autumn was undertaken. She explained to members that there would be an additional cost for this so she would need to get this re quoted.

Recommendation: The council add the Briansfield allotment car park to the spring weed spraying schedule.

236/21C Shaw Village Hall and Playing Fields:

a) To note update on structural works at Shaw Village Hall and consider any urgent actions

This item was discussed in closed session

The Clerk advised that at the parish council's Full Council meeting on 13th September members felt that the structural works required at Shaw Village Hall were the responsibility of the Shaw Village Hall management committee, but the parish council would be on hand to support the committee. The Clerk had therefore met the Chairman of the management committee on site.

Recommendation 1: The Council write to the Shaw Village Hall Management Committee and define their responsibilities and explain that following advice a structural engineer would be required to provide appropriate designs to instruct the scaffolding company on how they should support the building.

Recommendation 2: The Council refute the claim that the building was not built in accordance to the building regulations in place at the time of the village hall build in 1976.

Recommendation 3: The Council advise the Shaw Management Committee that in the first instance they should contact their insurance company as it is believed that as per their insurance schedule that the structural works required would come under material damage.

b) To note insurance provision confirmation has been received in line with lease and review if level of cover is sufficient

Members noted the insurance cover in place, The Clerk highlighted that the village hall was currently covered for up to £500,000 and queried with members whether they felt this was enough cover, bearing in mind that the new Berryfield Village Hall costs around £725,000 to build. Members highlighted that what is currently at Shaw Village Hall is a lot different to the specification for the new Berryfield Village Hall build.

c) To note due diligence, check on tree works identified in tree inspection report

The Clerk explained that following a tree inspection undertaken in September last year she checked with the management committee to see whether all of the works highlighted in the report had been done. She reported that they had left the ivy for the bees and insects and will undertake these works when the weather permits.

Councillor Baines highlighted that excess of ivy would eventually damage the tree if not tended to. Councillor Glover queried whether the ivy was affecting the tree in terms of making it unsafe. The Clerk explained that it was recommended on the tree inspector's report that it should be removed, but she would need to have a look at the report to see how it was rated as this would determine the time frame around when works would be required.

237/21 Street Furniture: To approve quotation for replacement benches at Beanacre Play area and Sandridge

The Clerk explained that the two benches at Beanacre play area were coming to the end of their life and needed replacing. She explained that these were the wooden ones with short legs, the same as the ones that had recently been replaced around Bowerhill as part of the BRAG (Bowerhill Residents Action Group) seating project. The bench at Sandridge Hill was also in a poor condition and was beyond repair.

Members reviewed the quotation of £1,187.19 excluding VAT to replace the three benches with the councils standardised bench. It was noted that there was still £2,931.00 in the street furniture budget for this year.

Recommendation: The Council purchase 2x Dale benches for Beanacre Play Area and 1x Dale bench for Sandridge Hill from TDP at a total cost of £1,187.19 excluding VAT.

238/21 Drinking water fountains: To consider quotations for installation of water fountains

The Clerk explained that she was still awaiting a quotation for the installation of the drinking water station at the Bowerhill Sports Field.

239/21 Defibrillators: To review report on defibrillator life expectancy and implications for budget setting

Members reviewed the report on the defibrillator life expectancy. It was noted that the defibrillators were coming up to 6 years old, following correspondence from the Community Heartbeat Trust, the life expectancy of the defibrillators was 10 years. It was also acknowledged that the manufacturer of the defibrillators offers an 8-year warranty with this extended further to 10 years by the Community Heartbeat Trust. The

current cost for a replacement defibrillator on its own was £995 and currently in the reserve for this was £10,850.

The Clerk advised members that at budget setting they would not need to put any additional money in the replacement defibrillator reserve as there was currently enough to cover the replacement of all defibrillators in the parish when they come to the end of their life.

Members noted that the parish council pay an annual fee of £126 per year which covers things such as replacement pads, batteries and an annual service for all defibrillators.

240/21 Office: To note report on photocopier

Members noted that following the repair of the photocopier, it now seems to be in good working order.

241/21 Shurnhold Fields: To receive update following Principal Drainage Engineer site visit and approve actions

This item was discussed in closed session

The Clerk explained that the environmental agency was not happy with the addition of raised bunds at Shurnhold Fields. She explained that bunds were added into the plan following the advice from the Principal Drainage Engineer at Wiltshire Council. Unfortunately, following talks between the land drainage engineer and the environment agency they were still unhappy with this. It was explained that if it was for a Town and Parish Council project then an FRA permit from the environmental agency would be required.

The Clerk explained that following her site visit with the Principal Drainage Engineer from Wiltshire Council it was discovered that there is no actual flood prevention at the site and the wildflower meadow with the bund around would trap the water against the houses. The Principal Drainage Engineer had advised that there would need to be a bund from the wildflower meadow around the back of the houses right to the end, to the rear of the Dunch Lane houses. The Clerk explained that was the Town Council parish so would be protecting the residents of the Town.

The Clerk explained that Wiltshire Council were applying to the Environment Agency for some funding for flood prevention works for the houses on Dunch Lane at Shurnhold Fields and wished to seek for permission from the parish council to do this.

The Clerk informed members that she had received some correspondence from Mark Stansby the Wiltshire Council Highways Engineer to say that there was a lack of detail as to how the new entrance

would be constructed to tie in with the existing, therefore are not at a stage where approval can be given for this to progress. She advised members that this may mean that the architect will need to draw up some additional drawings which will come at an additional fee.

Recommendation: The Council support Wiltshire Council undertaking some flood prevention works at Shurnhold Fields for the houses at Dunch Lane.

Meeting closed at 21:11pm

Signed.....
Chairman, 18th October 2021