

MINUTES of the Highways & Streetscene Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 26 September 2022 at Melksham Without Office Space (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, Melksham, SN12 6ES at 8.10pm

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

Present via Zoom: 2 Members of Public for part of the meeting

Officers: Teresa Strange, Clerk & Lorraine McRandle, Parish Officer

171/22 Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping

Councillor Baines welcomed everyone to the meeting and pointed out the various fire escape routes for those present.

172/22 To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Glover who was away.

It was noted Councillor Chivers was not in attendance, but had been unwell and in hospital recently.

POST MEETING NOTE: Councillor Chivers tendered his apologies the following day.

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

173/22 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.

There were no dispensation requests.

174/22 Public Participation

A resident of Beanacre joined the meeting via Zoom to request safety signage as seen in other areas, on the A350 in Beanacre, to warn drivers of the presence of Beanacre play area.

The resident explained she lived opposite the play area and had witnessed several close calls with children running out of the gate

into the layby adjacent to the road and had a concern for their safety.

The resident explained that she had commuted along this stretch of the A350 for several years and had not realised the presence of a play area. Drivers often drove above the speed limit with a suggestion that if play area warning signage was erected, drivers would be more inclined to slow down.

Councillor Baines explained that whilst the parish council were aware of speeding issues on the A350, the Council's Speed Indicator Device was regularly installed near this location. The play area was separated from the road by a layby and two sets of gates. Wiltshire Council's policy was to minimize signage on the highway, as too much was confusing for drivers and detracted them from other signage, such as speed limits and directional signs.

Councillor Baines suggested the Parish Council could consider some form of signage within the play area itself reminding parents to keep their children safe when coming out of the play area or some form of barrier outside the play area gate to stop children running into the layby.

It was acknowledged there was an issue with the gate not locking correctly and this was on a list for action. However, there was another gate into the play area itself prior to the gate near the layby.

The meeting went back into closed session to discuss this matter, which are recorded at Min 177a/22.

175/22 To note Minutes of last Highways & Street Scene Committee meeting held on 18 July 2022 and updates on actions taken

Unfortunately, the annotated minutes of 18 July 2022 were not included in the agenda pack, however, Councillor Baines explained he had read through the minutes online and there were no outstanding actions, with the majority of actions being to refer requests to the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) for consideration, which had been done.

176/22 Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) (formerly Community Area Transport Group – CATG)

a) To note Minutes and action log of Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) meeting held on 4 August 2022.

Councillor Baines went through the Local Highway & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) minutes of 4 August 2022.

Active Travel Scheme: New Footpath - Westhill to Top Lane, Whitley.

At a recent site meeting it had been agreed any new footway would need to be constructed on the South side of the lane. Phase 1 of the project had been identified (a length of approximately 90m) and a ball park estimate to undertake this work, excluding any drainage considerations, would be in the region of £35,000.

Having previously discussed this project and the estimated cost of £100,000 (with the parish council having to contribute 50% towards the costs involved) it had been agreed this was not a priority of the council as no resident of Whitley had requested the footpath. Therefore, the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) would be making a recommendation to the Area Board that this issue is closed.

Issue 9-22-10 – Semington Road, Berryfield: Request to install 2 bus shelters.

It was noted that £20,662 was available in Section 106 funding to provide two shelters with seating, high access kerbs and a real time information facility. Therefore, there would be no cost to LHFIG.

This project would be advanced when staff resources become available.

Issue 9-22-12: Halifax Road, Bowerhill: Request for drop kerbs to link Brampton Court with Sunderland Close.

Following a site meeting, it was agreed the best solution would be to provide three sets of dropped kerbs, each side of Brampton Court and over Halifax Road. The estimate cost for this project was £3,500.

Issue 9-19-9: Request for Bus Shelter near Kingfisher Drive, Bowerhill

It was noted there was an issue regarding land ownership of the strip of land it was proposed to erect the bus shelter on and therefore a suggestion had been made to meet with the landowner to discuss a way forward.

The Clerk reminded Members the Parish Council were keen for Wiltshire Council to adopt all strips of land the full length of Falcon Way, which had previously not been adopted by them.

Issue 9-19-11: Request for Bowerhill name plate and white gates on Portal Road, Bowerhill

Councillor Baines stated that following a site visit with the Highway Engineer, both himself and the Clerk understood there was only a requirement for one gate on the outside of the bend between the Dick Lovett entrance and the first hangar building, however costs had been given for two gates, one either side of Portal Road.

The Clerk explained she had confirmed with the Highway Engineer only one was required between Dick Lovett and the first hangar on Portal Road.

Issue 9-20-3: A350 Western Way – Pedestrian Safety at Signal Control Crossing on dual carriageway

Councillor Baines noted this issue had been discussed earlier in the Planning meeting. Section 106 funding was available from the 144 houses proposed on Semington Road to make improvements to the crossing. However, these improvements had already been completed and paid for by the Government as part of the Active Travel Scheme. Therefore, the Planning Committee had made a recommendation to request this money be spent elsewhere in the vicinity of the development.

Issue 9-22-9: Request for Nameplates Dowding Way and Duxford Close, Bowerhill

The sign for Duxford Close has been ordered at no cost to the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG). However, the sign(s) for Dowding Way required consultation with the property owners and had unfortunately missed the order for this year. However, it had been agreed a request would be made for new signage in the order for the following year.

Issue 9-22-11: A350 Beanacre. Request for measures to control entry speed at North end of village

The Highway Engineer had investigated the possibility of a gateway at the North end of the village, costing between £8,000 and £10,000. It was noted the cost were quite considerable given the amount of traffic management required.

Councillor Patacchiola had provided a picture of a sign in Bath & North East Somerset (BANES) of the type of signage the parish council had originally requested, which gave drivers advance warning of a 30mph speed limit. It was understood this sign had been in place for some time and had been quite

effective.

It was suggested this information be passed on to the Police & Crime Commissioner and to ask if this type of signage would cause the Police a problem, if something similar was installed in Beanacre, as there is a problem with drivers driving at 60mph to suddenly be confronted with a 30mph sign on a sweeping bend, on a falling gradient and no realisation they are entering a village.

Councillor Patacchiola had noted the gradient of the road in BANES was similar to the gradient on the A350 in Beanacre.

Councillor Baines noted there was currently a temporary 30mph speed limit on the roadworks between Lackham roundabout and the A4, adjacent to a 40mph speed limit either side. Therefore, consideration had been given to slowing traffic down and if this could be done here, he questioned why it could not be done elsewhere in the County. It was also noted the roadworks had signage indicating speed enforcement was in operation too.

The Clerk reminded Members there were some pockets of funding available, such as Solar farm monies or from Wessex Water, from the Beanacre area.

The Clerk explained that on the site visit it was noted the 30mph speed sign was obscured by vegetation with the Highway Engineer suggesting this be included on the Parish Steward list to keep an eye on, on a regular basis, and cut back if necessary.

Councillor Patacchiola noted several of the speed signs between Melksham and Shaw were obscured by vegetation and asked if these could also be added to the Parish Steward list as well.

Recommendation: To write to the Police & Crime Commissioner to ask if this type of signage would cause the Police a problem, if something similar was installed in Beanacre.

Issue 9-22-13: Request for dropped kerbs between DeHavilland Close and Dowding Way.

At a site visit the Highway Engineer had explained there were various issues at Dowding Way and DeHavilland Close is too close to the bend in Halifax Road. Therefore, an alternative crossing point had been identified to give access to the industrial estate from Pegasus Way over to Cheshire Close.

The work required would include one set of dropped kerbs, a possible short extension of footway (to line up the crossing point) and removal of two concrete bollards. An estimate for the work had been given of £2,500.

It was noted this request had been made by Bowerhill Residents Action Group (BRAG) and a resident who was partially sighted.

Issue 9-22-16 – Melksham Without (various roads) – request for Parking Control

Councillor Baines stated at the Local Highways & Footways Improvement Group (LHFIG) meeting it had been suggested, in order to save legal costs, that the Traffic Order includes all sites within the Area Board area. Unfortunately, because no one was present from the Town Council this item had been deferred until the next meeting with a hope someone from the Town Council would be present.

Councillor Baines expressed frustration, particularly as some of parking restriction requests had been submitted by the Parish Council over two years ago and would still take 12-18 months to process, even if agreed.

Current requests are:

- Semington Canal Bridge,
- Lancaster Road, Bowerhill
- Avro Way, Bowerhill
- Merlin Way, Bowerhill
- Mitchell Drive, Bowerhill

The Clerk stated that having met with the Highway Engineer he had explained that the Parish Council did not have to prioritise the requests in Bowerhill, as these would be advertised in one Traffic Order advert.

Unfortunately, the request for the Canal Bridge at Semington was a frustration, as despite the parish council informing Semington Parish Council two years ago a request had been submitted to Wiltshire Council, they had only just realised this. Therefore, they were putting in their own request the other side of the bridge. This had implications in causing a delay, as this request would be advertised in the local press separately, as Semington is in a different area, as far as advertising Traffic Orders is concerned, even though Semington comes under the Melksham Area Board.

The Clerk sought a steer from Members to see if they were

happy that she contacted Melksham Town Council to express frustration the parish council's requests were being held up as they had not attended the last Local Highways & Footpaths Improvement Group (LHFIG) meeting and if they could come up with any requests for the next meeting, in order to progress these, as some of the parish council requests have been waiting over two years.

It was noted the legal costs to advertise the Traffic Orders was in the region of £3,000.

Recommendation: For the Clerk to contact the Town Council to ask they consider any requests for double yellow lines for consideration at the next LHFIG meeting.

Issue 9-22-18: Bowerhill Lane. Request to replace staggered barriers with bollards to allow access to shared use path using a pony and trap.

The Parish Council needed to consider whether they would prefer the installation of bollards or barriers.

It was noted at the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) meeting that the current barriers had been placed to deter children running into the carriageway at each end and possibly to prevent motor vehicles from using the link path.

Councillor Pafford noted from the LHFIG minutes that no one from the Town Council was in attendance at the last meeting which had caused a delay in progressing projects they had put forward and reminded the meeting of a need to provide a substitute for Councillor Baines, if necessary, who attended these meetings.

b) To approve the Council's 50% contribution towards recent requests submitted to LHFIG for consideration; now indicative costs have been provided

The Clerk reminded Members the Council were now expected to approve and contribute 50% of the costs of any requests submitted to the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG), instead of a third as previously agreed, and make a recommendation to Full Council.

The Clerk also explained that the Highways Officer had acknowledged there was a staffing resource problem within the Highways department and had suggested that the Parish Council put their requests in priority order for consideration by the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG):

ISSUE & ISSUE NO	COST	Melksham Without's 50% contribution	PRIORITY
Bus Shelters – Bowood View Issue 9-22-10	Section 106 funding available		High
Berryfield Village Hall Signs Issue No: 9-2-16	(Costs to come via Area Board as under £500)		High
Falcon Way, Bus Shelter Issue No: 9-19-9	Deferred to enable discussions with land owner.		Not a priority until land ownership issues resolved.
Pony and Trap Barrier, Bowerhill Lane Issue No. 9-22-18		0	Not to proceed with this request as barriers need to be in place for safety reasons.
Halifax Road East, Bowerhill dropped kerbs Issue No. 9-22-12	£3,500	£1,750	Medium
Portal Road, Bowerhill Village Gates (one gate	£4,500-£5,000 For 2.	£1,500	Medium

between Dick Lovetts and first hangar) Issue No: 9-19-11	Following site meeting agreed only 1 was required, therefore, costs £2,250-£2,500		
Cheshire Close, Bowerhill dropped kerb Issue No; 9-22-13	£2,500	£1,250	Medium
Parking Restriction Request Fees Issue No. 9-22-16	£3,000	£750 estimated share	Low. Need other councils to agree their priorities, in order costs of advertising the legal orders can be split between the various councils in the Melksham Area Board area.
TOTAL		£5,250	

It was suggested the dropped kerbs in Bowerhill could be done at the same time, as there would be a cost saving.

Recommendation: That Full Council agree the 50% share of the costs from the £5,500 in the Budget for CATG/LHFIG contributions funded from Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), as well as the priorities of the various projects above, in order to submit to the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group for actioning.

c) To consider priority of current requests with LHFIG

As listed above under Min 176(b).

d) Following the LHFIG Meeting.

- **To confirm if request 9-19-11 Portal Road white gates is for both sides of the road or just the “hangars” side.**

As discussed earlier in the meeting, it was confirmed only one white gate is required at Portal Road, Bowerhill.

- **To confirm on request 9-22-18 Bowerhill Lane if preference is for bollards or barriers**

Councillor Baines stated the path in question was not a right of way, but a shared path and therefore a public highway, the right of way had not been diverted.

Whilst being sympathetic to the request, Members were concerned at the safety of children, particularly as Bowerhill Lane was subject to a national speed limit and visibility was poor in places.

Councillor Baines noted the parish council had previously received complaints of drivers speeding down Bowerhill Lane to access the canal.

Recommendation: Not to progress this request as the barriers are in place for safety reasons.

e) To consider response to query on use of s106 funding vs government Active Travel funding for recent improvements to A350 Western Way crossing – Issue 9-20-3 (if received)

As discussed earlier in the Planning meeting, a recommendation had been made to request the £200,000 Section 106 highway improvement funding for the 144 dwellings on Semington Road be handed to Wiltshire Council to spend on highway improvements in the vicinity of the development.

f) To consider response on query on shuttering on new traffic lights outside Shaw School (if received)

The Clerk explained she had raised a query on why there was no shuttering on the new traffic lights outside Shaw School in order to slow traffic down, but was still waiting for a response.

Councillor Baines explained the reasoning for the shuttering had originally been to slow traffic down due to the pedestrian crossing, this had not changed as part of the recent improvements, despite the inclusion of a couple of directional arrows.

Councillor Patacchiola explained that since the introduction of the two arrows he had observed people going the wrong side of the

small traffic island, as it was not very clear which side vehicles should use compared to the previous road layout.

177/22 To consider residents' requests for support by the Parish Council including requests for the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) next meeting on 4 August 2022):

a) Request for play area warning signs on A350, Beanacre

The Clerk explained she had spoken to the Highway Engineer regarding this request and the response had been this would not have been considered by the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG).

Recommendation: Not to progress this request to the Local Highways & Footways Improvement Group (LHFIG) for consideration.

b) Request to change configuration/remove safety bars on Corsham Road, Whitley

A request had been received via Councillor Chivers for the removal/reconfiguration of the safety bars on Corsham Road in order for someone in a mobility scooter to negotiate more easily.

It was noted, as discussed earlier in the meeting following a similar request, the barriers were there to stop children, in particular, and cyclists coming out on to a main road without slowing down.

It was noted Eden Grove had several bungalows, some adapted for those with disabilities.

Recommendation: To ask Highways to suggest a suitable solution to enable a scooter to negotiate the barriers, bearing in mind the safety of others.

c) Request for 20mph zone and appropriate signing for Pathfinder Place development

The Clerk explained a resident of Pathfinder Place had contacted the office to request it be a 20mph zone. The Clerk had explained the development had been built so it had a self-enforcing 20mph speed limit. The resident had informed the Clerk there was no signage or markings installed that indicated it was a 20mph zone.

It was understood if a development was built so it was self-enforcing, there was no need for signage.

Concern was raised new signage had been installed by Taylor Wimpey adjacent to Pathfinder Place advertising a development in

Chippenham. The Clerk agreed to contact Planning Enforcement on this issue.

Recommendation 1: To contact Taylor Wimpey to ask that some form of signage and roundel be installed at Pathfinder Place on both sides, indicating a 20mph zone and to also contact the officer/s responsible for highway adoption at Wiltshire Council for their views.

Recommendation 2: To contact Planning Enforcement regarding the signs on Pathfinder Place advertising a development in Chippenham.

178/22 Speed Enforcement

- a) **To note new Speed Indicator Device schedule is underway and the device appears to be working effectively.**

Councillor Baines informed the meeting that the new speed indicator device schedule was underway and the new device was currently deployed outside Melksham Oak School.

- b) **To note old SID is currently with manufacturer for repair**

The Clerk explained it had been noted some of the pixels on the display were not working on the old Speed Indicator Device and therefore, as the device was still under its year warranty, it had been sent back to the manufacturer for repair which had changed the schedule slightly.

- c) **To consider feedback from meeting with Community Action Whitley & Shaw (CAWS) regarding requests for traffic calming methods.**

Community Action Whitley & Shaw (CAWS) had raised a few concerns regarding speeding in both villages and had met both the Clerk and Councillor Baines to discuss these, as listed below:

- **Installation of 30mph repeater signage:** These cannot be installed in a 30mph limit, as street lights indicate the speed, unless signage indicates otherwise.
- **Traffic Light Shutters on the new lights outside Shaw School:** Discussed above.
- **20mph limits in the village lanes:** These are unlikely to be considered for funding as a key criterion is that the average existing speed is less than 24mph. In order to get an evaluation, the costs are approximately £2,000 and may not

meet the relevant criteria.

- **Installation of permanent electronic speed signs:** Such devices cannot be installed permanently. Wiltshire Council's policy states in order to be effective, devices can only be installed for a period of 2-8 weeks.

Councillor Baines stated that he had contacted the Chair of Community Action Whitley & Shaw (CAWs) explaining the parish council had two speed indicator devices which are deployed every two weeks between 12 sites, with Shaw and Whitley having two eligible sites each. Therefore, each site has to wait 12 weeks before they see a device again.

In response to this correspondence a reply had been received that day from Community Action Whitley & Shaw (CAWS) indicating they were prepared to fund a new Speed Indicator Device, with the Clerk confirming this would be permissible. They had also requested a copy of the device schedule, with Councillor Baines suggesting the schedule could be forwarded to them, once the old device had been returned from the manufacturer and the schedule back up and running.

Councillor Baines noted if there was another device, it would mean each device could be installed for longer periods at each location and still be effective and within the parameters set by Wiltshire Council, however, on a busy road it could run out of battery life.

Recommendation: To accept Community Action Whitley & Shaw (CAWS) offer of purchasing an additional speed indicator device to be used in the whole parish and to forward the costs of the new device (Evolis Radar Speed Sign from Elan City: £2,200.00 +VAT) and explain as they were prepared to cover the capital costs of a new device, the Parish Council were prepared to cover the cost of installing the device at each eligible location.

- **Other Traffic Calming Measures, such as 20mph Zones:** Such measures can be unpopular for some residents and would need to be reviewed by emergency services.
- **Traffic Surveys:** There are no plans to commission additional surveys, with Community Action Whitley & Shaw (CAWS) understanding the reasons why.

179/22 Proposed A350 Bypass

a) To note information on when the M4 to Coast Study will be published.

The Clerk had contacted National Highways to seek an update on when the outcome of their M4 to Dorset Coast Study would be published, as it was anticipated a preferred route was to be identified in the Summer of 2022.

A response had been received stating 'several briefings and workshops with stakeholders throughout the region had been completed, providing context and outlining an approach to the study. The study included a shortlist of corridors and potential interventions, that further technical and modelling work would take place on, to highlight potential investment solutions.

The study is now due to be completed in late 2022 and the report published soon after completion. The initial evidence on existing and future route performance was not intended for public circulation and is what has helped inform discussion, agree the routes, options and interventions to be considered.'

It was noted the next newsletter was planned for distribution in October.

It was also noted in a document from Wiltshire Council that they had delayed submitting their outline business case for the proposed A350 bypass until March 2023.

180/22 Cycling & Walking Infrastructure

a) Wiltshire Council Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. To consider response to consultation (consultation ends on 26 September) <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/transport-town-cycle-networks>

The Clerk explained there were various questions which needed a response within the consultation. The final document would be useful in providing evidence to developers of a need for particular types of infrastructure and therefore it was important to make sure any local requests/projects were included within the document.

Q4: Are any key routes missing where there is likely to be high potential for walking to a railway station outside the market town.

On looking through the report it was noted it did not mention the following routes:

- The long-held ambition to install a cut through from Foundry Close to the Railway Station.
- Access to Melksham Oak School from the new development (Hunters Wood/The Acorns).

Q5: Are there any routes missing

The Clerk explained the canal tow path from Melksham to Lacock was not included despite the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust stating they planned to construct a pedestrian/cycleway route which had already been costed, prior to the canal being built.

The Clerk explained she had noted the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust were looking at improving the whole route along the Kennet & Avon Canal for cyclists and pedestrians. It was noted there were areas within the Melksham area, which were virtually impassable.

Given the deadline was today, it was:

Resolved: to respond to the consultation to highlight the following routes are missing from the consultation:

- A cut through from Foundry Close to the Railway Station.
- Access to Melksham Oak School from the new development (Hunters Wood/The Acorns).
- Wilts & Berks Canal tow path/pedestrian/cycleway from Melksham to Lacock.

And to welcome the improvements along the Kennet & Avon Canal.

b) To note latest government guidance for Cycling Infrastructure
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951074/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf

The Clerk explained this report had been compiled as areas were not conforming to the national standard and therefore infrastructure guidance had been published. It was a useful document the council can refer to when seeking improvements or additional cycleways.

Resolved: To note the report.

Meeting finished at 9.43pm

Signed
 Chair, Full Council, 24 October 2022