

MINUTES of the Highways & Streetscene Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 25 September 2023 at Melksham Without Office Space (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, Melksham, SN12 6ES at 7.00pm

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

In attendance: Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (Bowerhill) and 1 Member of public

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

193/23 Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping

Councillor Baines welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting the member of public had been shown the evacuation procedures for the building and understood that the meeting was being recorded and would be published.

194/23 To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given

It was noted Councillor Chivers was not present and had not tendered his apologies, however, he had recently been in and out of hospital and therefore may have been admitted again.

Resolved: To accept the reasons for absence of Councillor Chivers.

195/23 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.

196/23 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, where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

There were no items to be discussed in confidential session.

197/23 Public Participation

Standing Orders were suspended to allow Members of the public and Wiltshire Council representatives to speak.

A representative of Redstocks Livery attended the meeting requesting warning signage alerting drivers of horses crossing the A365 over to Bollands Hill from Redstocks, as well as horses in the area on Bollands Hill, Seend, following the recent accident near to the livery, resulting in the death of a horse rider. A request was also made for the signage warning drivers of a 'slow bend' needed to be visible at all times, which was not the case on the day of the accident, as well as a reduction in the speed limit and inclusion of rumble strips just before the double bend on Bollands Hill.

Councillor Baines explained that whilst Redstocks and the A365 over to Bollards Hill was in the Parish, Bollands Hill itself was in Seend and therefore any requests should be directed to Seend Parish Council and the Devizes LHFIFG. This Council could consider a request to the Melksham Local Highway & Footway Improvement Group (LHFIFG) for some form of warning signage on the A365, once the inquest had taken place and the Coroner had issued their report.

The Clerk explained she had already contacted Seend Parish Council who had been advised not to comment until there had been an inquest and the Coroner had issued their report. Wiltshire Councillors for the area were also aware of the request and advice submitted to Seend Parish Council.

Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder whilst sympathising with the concerns, stated until the outcome of the inquest and Coroner's report had been issued Wiltshire Council could not undertake any improvements.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder provided background to the request for warning signage of children at play on Magister Road green area, which children now play on following a change in the grass cutting regime.

A request had also been received from a resident for safety barriers on the footpath between Kittyhawk Close and Magister Road, Bowerhill in order to slow cyclists down.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder explained he was aware of concerns of a bin lorry parked opposite Tesco on Falcon Way, Bowerhill near to the recent footpath which had been repaired following a heavy vehicle parking on it. As Cabinet Member for Environment at Wiltshire Council he'd had a robust conversation with Waste

Management who had advised their waste contractors not to park there and have been advised if they damage the footpath, they will be liable for costs of repairs.

Standing Orders reinstated.

198/23 To note Minutes of last Highways & Street Scene Committee meeting held on 5 June 2023 and updates on actions taken

Members noted the minutes of 5 June and various actions taken.

a) To note correspondence from Principal Engineer Manager re provision of Real Time Information (RTI) in new Bus Shelters, Semington Road (Min 40(a)/23 – LHFIG Issue 9-22-10 and consider way forward.

Following a request to Highways if the bus shelters to be installed could be provided with Real Time Information (RTI), Highways had responded that there was currently no funding available to install RTI and unfortunately, there were difficulties in arranging an electrical supply in order to provide ducting in readiness for RTI at a future date.

Councillor Glover queried why solar panels could not be used instead to power RTI and the lights, as this would not require the road being re-dug up in order to install any electric supply.

It was also noted if solar could be installed the provision of battery storage would be useful.

Recommendation: To suggest to Wiltshire Council the provision of solar panels be explored, in order to power future RTI and lights, negating the need for digging up the road again.

b) To note correspondence from Highways Area Engineer in response to query from a business on Lysander Road, Bowerhill to concerns of a damaged verge outside their premises and request to take ownership (Min 41(b)/23) and consider any future action.

Members noted the correspondence between the Highway Area Engineer and business owner on Bowerhill Industrial Estate regarding a request to take ownership of the verge outside their premises and felt this was an issue between the two parties to resolve.

199/23 Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG)

a) To note Minutes and action log of Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) meeting held on 3 August 2023.

Councillor Baines explained an update on the Beanacre Gateway at the northern end of the village had been provided by the Highway Engineer at the recent Road Safety Working Group meeting.

Proposals not only included the gateway feature but also centre hatch markings and countdown markers to the gateway on the carriageway and hoped once installed would slow vehicles down.

It was hoped that a 'goodwill gesture' from Wessex Water, who were currently installing mains drainage in Westlands Lane would cover some or all of the costs. They were yet to confirm if this was something that they would be funding but it was on their shortlist.

The Clerk explained at the meeting it was suggested visual cues were useful in some areas to remind drivers they were in a village and therefore slow down and noted the Council had been looking to replace the wooden bus shelter near Westlands Lane and whether the installation of a more prominent style bus shelter, which was more conspicuous would give visual cues to drivers they were in a village and therefore slow down, which Members agreed.

Councillors Baines noted the particular shelter was in the middle of the village and not at the beginning and therefore not where people would be slowing down.

Councillor Patacchiola queried when the proposed consultation on Dunch Lane was due to take place by Melksham Town Council, as it was understood this was due to take place earlier in the year.

Councillor Baines understood this consultation had not taken place as yet.

Recommendation: For the Clerk to forward a copy of the Beanacre gateway proposal to Wessex Water with a reminder of their offer of a 'good will gesture' for some funding.

200/23 To consider residents' requests for support by the Parish Council including requests for the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) next meeting on 2 November 2023:

a) To consider a request from Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder for the installation of 'children at play' signage on Magister Road

Members considered the request received from Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder who had been approached by a resident seeking the installation of 'children at play' signage on Magister Road green in order to slow vehicles down on approach to the green.

Recommendation: To submit a request for 'children at play' signage to the Local Highways & Improvement Group (LHFIG) for consideration.

b) To consider a request for the installation of safety/staggered barrier to slow bikes entering Kittyhawk Close from Magister Road, Bowerhill

Members considered a request for the installation of safety/staggered barriers to slow cyclists down coming out onto Kittyhawk Close from Magister Road, Bowerhill.

Having discussed the request at some length it was suggested not to progress this request, as a barrier would be ineffective in deterring cyclists, given barriers would have to be so far apart in order to accommodate wheelchairs and buggies, they would also restrict access for bin emptying and maintenance of the play area.

Recommendation: Not to progress this request.

c) To note concerns at vehicles parking on footpath on Falcon Way (opposite Tesco Express) and actions taken

Members noted the actions taken and discussions with the waste management company to remind their drivers not to park on the pavement.

d) To consider request from Councillor Harris for the installation of 'Access Protection Road Marking (Bar Marking)' on Halifax Road near dropped kerb leading to Sunderland Close

Councillor Harris explained that since the dropped kerb had been installed, he had often noticed vehicles parked across it

and therefore blocking people in wheelchairs etc from being able to cross the road at this point.

The Clerk noted a similar request had been received for Tedder Gardens, however, as Pathfinder Place was yet to be adopted Taylor Wimpey had been asked to install access protection markings prior to hand over to Wiltshire Council.

Recommendation: To submit a request to the Local Highway & Improvement Group (LHFIG) for access protection markings at the above location for consideration.

201/23 Proposed A350 Bypass (Standing Item): To note any updates since the last meeting.

a) National Highways.

Members noted the M4 to Dorset Coast Strategy Study was now complete with the findings due to be made available in Autumn 2023.

202/23 Footpaths

a) Footpath 107 Melksham & Melksham Without Path No 151 Rights of Way Modification Order. To note the decision of the Planning Inspectorate to approve modification of the Definitive Map

Members noted with regret the Planning Inspectorate had approved the modification of the Definitive Map to include two new rights of way.

b) Chapel Lane Bridleway (No: MELW99). To note update from Rights of Way regarding signage of the bridleway

Members noted the request to Rights of Way for improved signage for MELW99 bridleway, following a concern from a resident at the inadequate signage.

203/23 Road Safety/Speed enforcement

a) To receive feedback from road safety working party meeting held on 19 September and consider next steps

Some members felt it was a useful meeting, with Members feeding back on what was discussed at the meeting, such as the procedure to review speed limits and rules regarding the installation of warning/speed signage.

It was noted in order to undertake a review of a speed limit this would cost £2,900 and could result in a recommendation to not change the speed limit.

Councillor Baines noted with regard to the most recent traffic survey undertaken on Bath Road, Shaw it had indicated that the majority of traffic was below 40mph, which was the actual speed limit. However, another traffic survey could be undertaken, if Members requested one.

It was noted gateway signage similar to that being installed at Beanacre could be installed approaching Shaw, Shaw Hill and Corsham Road in order to slow traffic down, however, this would have to be considered at a future meeting, as it was not included on the agenda for consideration.

The meeting was reminded currently there was a request for 30mph roundels on Shaw Hill and Corsham Road with the Local Highway & Improvement Group (LHFIG) for consideration. Therefore, it was suggested the Parish Council wait and see how effective these were and to investigate other options, if they proved ineffective. A crossing was due to be installed on Corsham Road as part of the allocation at Middle Farm in the Neighbourhood Plan and hopefully, this would slow traffic down on Corsham Road.

The Clerk explained Councillor Richardson had provided notes of the meeting, and asked if Members were happy to approve the list of actions coming out of the meeting, with Councillor Shea-Simonds asking to record the committee's thanks for these notes.

Members discussed the list of suggested actions/approaches and a way forward, noting whilst logging incidents would be a good database when considering requests in future that unless these were reported to the Police or Local Authority there would be no official record to refer to, in order to support a request.

It was suggested if the Road Safety Working Group were to meet again, the aims and objectives needed to be separated out from the actions.

Recommendation: For the Road Safety Working Group to go through the list of actions and bring recommendations to a future meeting for consideration.

b) Speed Indicator Devices (SID)/ANPR Cameras

i) To approve costs associated with retrieving the data from the Evolvis Device

The Clerk explained unfortunately this information had not yet been received from the Council's contractor and understood the devices had not been installed since being collected from the offices, several weeks ago, due to staff shortages.

Members noted with disappointment the devices had not been installed and highlighted the device's battery life should now last longer, since being recalibrated and therefore could be installed for longer periods, if necessary, if the contractor was having staffing issues and could not stick to the 2-week rota.

Recommendation: To negotiate with the contractor to at least deploy the devices.

ii) To consider correspondence from Semington Parish Council regarding installation of ANPR camera at Semington Road Bus Gate

Councillor Baines informed the meeting this issue was with the Local Highway & Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG) and was an issue which affected Semington village, however, the gate was located in parish and therefore both councils were working on this together. It was highlighted Councillor Jonathon Seed was the Wiltshire Councillor Melksham Without West & Rural, which covered this area and he had requested the gate be replaced, as it was broken and could not be closed properly. It was noted once this had been replaced enforcement action could take place.

The Clerk informed the meeting she had heard anecdotally that a local business was using Semington Road via the bus gate to test drive their vehicles and whether this Council wished a letter to be sent reminding them this was illegal. Members expressed caution on taking this course of action without further evidence.

iii) To consider traffic survey results for Pathfinder Way (if received) – to be undertaken in September

Whilst it was understood the survey had taken place, the results were yet to be forwarded to the Parish Council.

c) Hilperton to Melksham Active Travel Route – Stage 4 Audit

i) To consider response to comments submitted to audit and consider submitting concerns of cyclists on wrong side of the road to LHFIG, as raised in safety audit

It was noted the Parish Council had submitted comments to the Hilperton to Melksham Active Travel Route – Stage 4 audit, including concerns at cyclists crossing to the wrong side of the road when they reached the southernmost entrance to the mobile home park.

Clarification had been sought whether this issue was being dealt with via the audit or needed to be raised with the Local

Highway & Improvement Group (LHFIG) for consideration and therefore approved by this committee, with confirmation received earlier in the day from Highways that this matter would be picked up by the Stage 4 audit.

- ii) To note correspondence to Michelle Donelan MP from Councillor Caroline Thomas, Cabinet Member – Highways, Transport, Street Scene & Flooding in response to concerns of a resident at speeding on Semington Road and the negative impact on cycling and pedestrian road safety**

Members noted the correspondence between Michelle Donelan MP and Councillor Caroline Thomas regarding road safety on Semington Road and the various actions undertaken by Wiltshire Council to address concerns and the various road safety initiatives available.

- d) To consider concerns of the safe passage of horses and riders from Redstocks, following recent fatality on Bollands Hill, Seend**

Whilst noting the concerns raised, it was highlighted the accident had taken place in Seend and not the Parish, however the Livery was in the parish and horses and riders crossed the A365 which was in the parish. The Parish Council would have to wait until the outcome of the inquest and Coroner's report had been issued, in order to consider the request for safety signage in conjunction with Seend Parish Council.

204/23 Trucks/Trailers Parking on the side of the road at Bowerhill

- a) To consider submitting additional comments to the planning application PL/2023/01008 as vehicles parking on the roadside**

The Clerk explained vehicles from Milestone (Wiltshire Council's Highway Contractor) had been noted parked outside their premises on Lancaster Road, Bowerhill and therefore had placed this item on the agenda in case Members wished to submit additional comments on the planning application, which had yet to be approved. The Clerk had recently had an informal discussion with the Head of Wiltshire Council Highways and it had appeared vehicles were no longer parking on the side of the road, which was confirmed by Councillor Harris.

b) Following agreement of Wiltshire Council Cabinet to invest an extra £10m into road surfacing, to agree list of suggested areas for improvements

This item had been placed on the agenda, in order to draw up a list of suggestions for consideration by Wiltshire Council, with the A365 Devizes between the Turnpike Garage and Redstocks having previously been put forward as a suggestion for improvements.

However, it was noted the programme would begin with Wiltshire Council identifying the roads due to be resurfaced and Area Boards given the opportunity to comment, before the work programme begins in April 2024.

Therefore, it was suggested the Council await information from Wiltshire Council.

c) To note Wiltshire Council's next Area Board meeting on 6 December will have a Highways focus

It was noted the Area Board meeting on 6 December 2023 would have a highway focus and therefore hopefully the list of suggested improvements would be available at the meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.53pm

Signed:.....
Chair, Full Council 9 October 2023