

MINUTES of the Asset Management Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 4th September 2023 at Melksham Without Parish Council Offices (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12 6ES at 8:05pm

Present: Councillors John Glover (Council Chair), David Pafford (Council Vice-Chair), Alan Baines and Shona Holt.

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

165/23 Apologies & Housekeeping:

Councillor Baines welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the evacuation procedure in the event of a fire and that the meeting was being recorded and will be published on YouTube.

Apologies were received from Councillor Chivers, who was in the hospital, and Councillor Russell, who had a work commitment; these reasons for apologies were accepted. It was noted that Councillor Hoyle was not present at the meeting.

It was noted that the meeting was quorate.

166/23 To receive Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Holt declared an interest in agenda item 10b as Chair of the Berryfield Village Hall Trust. The Clerk declared an interest in agenda item 6f, as her husband (Andy Strange Property & Garden Maintenance Ltd.) had provided a budget cost for the replacement of the water tank base at the Bowerhill Sports Pavilion, and she was a director of his company.

167/23 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 the consideration of the following items of business (Item **5b, 5c, 5d and 9b**) as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

The Clerk advised members that agenda items **(7d, 10a, 12 and 13)** were quotations and could be discussed as long as the contractors who had provided them were not named in the public domain. Members felt that these agenda items should also be held in closed session.

Resolved: Agenda items 5b, 5c, 5d and 9b to be held in closed session for reason 3d (c) legal. Agenda items 7d, 10a, 12 and 13 to be held in closed session for reason 3d (b) terms of tenders and proposals and counter proposals in negotiations for contracts.

The committee agreed to suspend standing orders for a period of public participation.

168/23 Public Participation:

There were four members of the public present at the meeting and one member of the public on Zoom. Three members of the public wished to speak on agenda item 5f regarding the proposal for a wildflower area to be created to the rear of Beverley Close in Bowerhill. Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder was also in attendance to speak on agenda item 5f. The other members in attendance wished to observe the meeting.

Resident A explained that the proposed wildflower area was adjacent to her garden and driveway between Beverley Close and Lincon Grove. The proposal was for the ends of the green to be left uncut so that a wildflower area could be created. She wished to object to this proposal as the area would look overgrown and untidy, and she did not feel that there was a need for it to be left wild. She also highlighted that there were already ongoing issues with the trees that had been planted on the green, which was between the two areas proposed to be a wildflower area. The resident also raised a concern about the fact that before the trees had been planted, children were able to use the area to play, which is now no longer possible for them to do.

Resident B explained that he had put in the request for the two ends of the green at Beverley Close to become a wildflower area on the basis that they would only be cut at the beginning and end of the year by Wiltshire Council contractors. He explained that, due to the current environmental issue, he felt that this way forward was a good idea. The resident advised that he does cut around the edges of the green where dwellings back onto the area so that there is a boundary of cut grass between the properties and the proposed wild area. He explained that the area in between the proposed wildflower areas where the trees are located is mown area.

Councillor Baines highlighted that the resident may not have permission to cut the area and queried with the resident where they disposed of the grass cuttings once the grass had been cut. The resident advised that they did have permission from Wiltshire Council to cut the grass in that area, and deposited the cuttings at the back of the land. Councillor Baines raised a concern about this, as he felt that the cuttings needed to be disposed of in an appropriate way. He suggested that it would be much better if the grass was allowed to fly when the grass was cut, which is what Wiltshire Council contractors do.

Resident C, who was on Zoom, explained that he was a resident of Lincoln Grove, and did not receive a consultation letter for this proposal. He wished to record his objections to the proposal at the meeting.

Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder explained that he had been in contact with resident B with regard to his proposal. While he understood what the resident was trying to achieve, he had written to him explaining the Wiltshire Council policy on the creation of wildflower areas. He explained that even if the parish council supported this request, it could only happen if there were no objections received from residents and if Wiltshire Council could identify another area within Bowerhill where the cutting regime could be amended so that the area was regularly cut. The consultation that

took place a few years ago explained that there would be a balance between cut areas and uncut areas, which was mapped and agreed upon. This proposal would require a process to go through if any changes were to be made. Councillor Holder also highlighted that it was not usual for Wiltshire Council to give residents permission to cut Wiltshire Council amenity land, as there was a contract in place with contractors to do this. He urged the resident not to cut the grass until a decision had been made on this request.

The committee reconvened and agreed to bring agenda item 5f forward for discussion.

169/23 Play Areas, MUGAs (Multi Use Games Area) & Public Open Spaces:

- a) To consider feedback following consultation letters sent out to residents regarding a wildflower area being created to the rear of Beverley Close, Bowerhill (following a resident request), and consider a way forward. (Arising from min. 45c/23)**

Councillor Baines explained to members that in order to create a wildflower area, the council would have to apply to Wiltshire Council. In order to do this, the parish council would have to consult with residents in the vicinity of the proposed area first. The residents would then have to agree to the new grass-cutting regime, with no residents objecting to the proposal. Councillor Baines highlighted that the parish council had received a number of objections to this proposal and is therefore unable to apply to Wiltshire Council for this area to become a wildflower area.

Councillor Pafford understood that this item was to discuss responses from residents regarding a wildflower area, but noted that one of the reasons for residents' objections was the fact that around 20 to 25 trees had been planted in the mown area of the green. This means that this area is not available for children to use without the trees being damaged. The proposed area of wildflowers would eliminate any possibility of children having anywhere to kick a ball around, for example. He wished to query who had planted the trees and what permission was given for them to do it. Councillor Baines advised that there were existing trees in the area, and in 2016, consent was given by Wiltshire Council for a resident to plant five trees in specific locations, in gaps between the existing trees. It was understood that any trees that have been planted in addition to what was permitted in 2016 did not have permission. Councillor Pafford felt that as the trees were already in the location, there was not any more room for a wildflower area to be created, as this would take away any mown amenity space for people to use.

Councillor Baines wished to remind members that in a recent assessment by the Planning Committee of a new housing development, it was the opinion of the council that too many wildflower areas restricted the ability for informal children's play. The parish council did object to a wildflower area being created in that development on the basis that there was nowhere for children to play. He felt that

the council needed to investigate the additional trees to establish under whose authority they were permitted to be planted.

Recommendation 1: Following objections received from residents; the parish council is unable to apply to Wiltshire Council to change their grass cutting regime to create a wildflower area at Beverley Close in Bowerhill.

Recommendation 2: Officers to investigate further with regard to what authority the additional trees planted on the green at Beverley Close were permitted.

Three members of the public left the meeting.

b) To receive report from officer asset visit (1st Sept) and consider any actions required.

The Clerk explained that the Finance & Amenities Officer and herself had walked around the play areas to get a feel for their condition. She was pleased to report that officers noted during their visit to the play areas that they were being very well used. The Clerk informed members that on the whole, all play areas appeared to be in a good state of repair, with only a few minor things noted, such as paint flaking off and signage needing to be cleaned. She had also noted that in the play areas that were under trees and shade, the safety surfaces had algae on them. It was confirmed that the council had already approved for all play area safety surfacing to be cleaned, which officers had instructed contractors to do. The Clerk queried whether members wished to ask the contractors to clean the play area signage while they were cleaning the safety surfacing, which was agreed.

The Clerk highlighted that the parish council was trialling the grass matting underneath the equipment installed outside of Shaw Play Area as there had been concerns about this surfacing. The Clerk confirmed that it looked fine, with the only wear being under the basket swing. She wanted to draw this to members' attention as this surfacing may be the type of surface the council wants to install at the Bowerhill Sports Field as part of the enhancement project.

The Clerk advised that one of the outstanding actions was for officers to put together a list of Beanacre Play Area equipment that they were most concerned about and obtain a quotation for its replacement. The Clerk reported that one piece of wooden equipment does have a split; however, RoSPA was due to inspect the play areas shortly, so she would wait for the report. She did not feel that any piece of equipment at Beanacre Play Area required immediate attention.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder left the meeting.

Recommendation: Officer to ask the contractors to clean the play area signage while they are undertaking the safety surfacing clean.

c) To review and recommend for approval the Legal Transfer documents for the Davey Play Area at Pathfinder Place, Bowerhill.

Held in closed session.

21.57pm Councillor Glover left the room for a short time.

The Clerk advised that the solicitor had prepared the legal transfer document for the Davey Play Area, which would need to go to Full Council. She had contacted the solicitor to query the vehicular access into the play area for maintenance and repairs to ensure that there was a way that contractors could access it. The Clerk advised members that when she undertook the asset visit at that play area, she had a look at where the access would be, and there wasn't any designated vehicular access. The only way to access the play area was to drive to the end of Babington Close and then over the footpath and across the grass to get into the play area.

Members felt that they needed to have confirmation from the solicitors to ensure that the council was able to have vehicular access into the play area.

21.59pm Councillor Glover returned to the meeting.

22.00pm Councillor Baines left the meeting briefly.

Recommendation: The Clerk to ask for confirmation from the solicitors that the council was able to have vehicular access to the play area for maintenance over the grass and footpath starting from the end of Babington Close.

22.03pm Councillor Baines returned to the meeting

d) To note correspondence received from St Barnabas Church regarding access to Beanacre play area for maintenance and consider way forward.

Held in closed session.

The Clerk explained that when she had contacted the Church to inform them out of courtesy that the council had instructed contractors to undertake necessary tree work at Beanacre Play Area, they had come back to remind her that the access was only legally for grass cutting. The Clerk wondered whether the memorandum needed to be updated to reflect the fact that the council requires vehicular access to the play area for maintenance, not just grass cutting. The Clerk reminded members that the council leased the play area land from the Salisbury Diocese. Members expressed frustration that this issue kept coming up and felt that the agreement may need to be changed to ensure that the council had a legal right of access into the play area for maintenance and repairs.

Councillor Glover queried whether the parish council had to remove the play equipment at the end of the lease. The Clerk advised that this was something that she would need to investigate further. Members felt that the only other option was that if the council was unable to access the play area to undertake necessary works, they may have to close it and leave it to the responsibility of the church.

After a detailed discussion members felt that the Clerk should speak to the Church about this issue in the first instance, before any formal action is taken.

Recommendation 1: The Clerk to investigate whether the council have to remove the play area equipment at the end of the Beanacre Play Area lease.

Recommendation 2: The Clerk to speak to St Barnabas Church regarding the issue with access to Beanacre Play Area for maintenance.

e) To review and recommend for approval the Kestrel Court and Berryfield Play Area freehold legal documentation and red line plans

Held in closed session.

The Clerk advised that the council had previously resolved to go ahead with the freehold option for both Kestrel Court and Berryfield Play Area as the current leases held with Wiltshire Council were due to expire in October 2023. It was noted that each site needed a public open space notice, which would be merged into one, with the parish council bearing the cost. The Clerk had gone back to Wiltshire Council to confirm that the council would like to take up the freehold option, but in order for the open space notices to be drafted they require confirmation of the extent of land to be included. It was confirmed that for Berryfield Play Area, the land would be the extent of the current lease, but with Kestrel Court, there was the option of extending the land to include the public open space at the end of Beverley Close. The Clerk queried members about whether they wished to take this additional land, and all members agreed that they only wished to take Kestrel Court Play Area.

Recommendation 1: The council only take over the freehold of Kestrel Court Play Area and not the public open space at Beverley Close.

Recommendation 2: The council approve the draft freehold documentation and red line plan for Kestrel Court and Berryfield Play Areas.

f) To receive feedback following letter sent to residents regarding installing additional benches at Kestrel Court Play Area (arising from min.140c/22) and agree way forward

Councillor Baines reminded members that the parish council had received a request from a resident for additional benches to be installed inside of Kestrel Court Play Area. The council felt at the time of the request that, as there were houses close by, residents should be consulted first before any decision was made with regard to whether any additional benches were installed. Officers had sent consultation letters out to residents with a map marked out with a proposal of where the bench could be located and had received a few responses back. It was reported that officers had generally received positive responses from residents, with a few coming back to suggest that this may attract unsocial behaviour at the play area. The Clerk confirmed that she had never been made aware of any anti-social behaviour at the play area.

The proposed area for a new bench was in the shaded area underneath the trees inside the play area. Councillor Baines felt that members needed to think carefully about any new bench location, particularly if it's under trees, as the council has had problems previously with birds roosting in the trees at Berryfield Play Area. It was noted that currently, the play area only had one bench by the entrance gate, and the reason why the resident had made the request for more benches was because it was a large area. The Clerk advised that smaller play areas around the parish had more benches inside them. Officers had obtained a quotation of £987.08 + VAT for a new bench and its installation onto a concrete plinth, should members agree to purchase an additional bench.

Members suspended standing orders to allow a resident to speak on this item. The resident wished to advise that recently a limb had fallen out of one of the trees inside the play area, so the council may wish to bear this in mind when making a decision on any new bench location.

The committee reconvened and noted the comment. It was confirmed to the resident that the trees were regularly inspected.

After a detailed discussion, members agreed that a new picnic bench should be installed inside the play area. It was felt that the new picnic bench should be located in the area closest to the Dowding Court car park and the toddler swings and installed in the landscape position. It was felt that the base of the bench should be installed level with the fence so that no grass needed to be cut between the fence and the bench.

Recommendation: The council install an additional picnic bench inside of Kestrel Court Play Area, to be located in the area between the car park and toddler swing.

170/23 QEII Diamond Jubilee Sports Field & Pavilion (known informally as Bowerhill Sports Field):

a) To receive update on current bookings

The Finance & Amenities Officer had put together a report of the current football bookings at the Bowerhill Sports Field. It was noted that the current bookings were as follows:

Trowbridge & District League- Saturday Afternoons:

- Staverton Rangers
- FC Devizes United

Chippenham & Bath league- Sunday Mornings:

- Bath Road Wanderers

Youth football: Weekend blanket booking of all youth pitches

- Future of Football- Training sessions

- Future of Football FC- Matches

Unfortunately, Westbury Rovers, whom the council had approved to be one of the home teams this season, had accepted a place at another venue. Officers had also been informed that, unfortunately, AFC Melksham had to withdraw from the league after 20 years. This was due to them being unable to recruit enough players to field a team for the new football season. The Clerk confirmed that officers had contacted Mike Rogers to thank him for all of his support, especially when the council took over the pavilion and sports field. It was noted that the council had also sent in some comments to the Melksham News.

It was queried whether officers had received any other requests from teams to use the sports field this season, the Finance & Amenities Officer confirmed that as the season had already started, teams would have already found venues.

b) To note the grant application to the Football Foundation for new goal posts was successful and goals ordered and awaiting installation.

Councillor Baines was pleased to report that the grant application submitted to the Football Foundation for new movable goal posts had been successful. It was noted that the council had been awarded 49% of the total project cost, with the rest of the cost being funded by the parish council. The Clerk confirmed that the grant had been received in the bank and that the goal posts had been delivered to the contractors. It is hoped that the new goal posts will be available for use by teams in the next couple of weeks.

Councillor Glover queried where the existing goal posts would go once the new posts were up and running. The Clerk suggested that they could either be left and placed at the side of the field, or the council could ask their contractors to store them. Members felt that the posts could get weathered or damaged if they were left outside; therefore, the council should ask their contractors to store them for future use.

Members wished to thank the Finance & Amenity Officer for the work put into obtaining the grant from the Football Foundation.

Recommendation: The council ask JH Jones to store the standalone goal posts at their yard in case of future use.

c) To review results from the Bowerhill Sports Field outdoor equipment consultation and update on grant funding available for the project (NB consultation deadline extended)

Councillor Baines reported that officers had put together a survey for the Bowerhill Sports Field enhancement project to obtain a representative sample of preferences on what type of equipment the local population would like to be installed at the sports field. The survey went live on the 3rd August, and the closing date has been extended until the 14th September to allow for its

publication in the Melksham News and so that everyone has an opportunity to participate.

People were asked to rank the following categories of equipment in order of preference from 1-4 with: (1) being the type of equipment they would most like and (4) being the type of equipment they would least like.

- Climbing and balancing
- Gym and physical development
- Calisthenic equipment/ strength
- Teen shelter and seating

The Finance & Amenities Officer reported that there had been 64 responses received so far, with gym and physical development equipment being the most popular choice of equipment. In second place currently was the calisthenic equipment/ strength equipment. It was noted that the majority of responses so far were from people aged between 26-44 years.

Councillor Baines advised that once the survey had closed, and the council had the full results, the next stage would be to obtain grant funding for the project. The Clerk reminded members that at the last asset management meeting they had received a budget costing of around £30,000 for new equipment, which would aid any grant application process. She advised that in terms of available grants, there was some funding available from the SUEZ Communities Fund, as it supports community and environmental improvement projects through the Landfill Communities Fund, and funding is distributed to not-for-profit organisations. It was noted that to be eligible for the fund, sites have to be within a 2-mile radius of the recycling centre in Bowerhill, which the Bowerhill Sports Field qualifies for.

d) To note that the pavilion CCTV system currently has audio recording activated and consider whether this is necessary and appropriate

Councillor Baines advised members that the new pavilion CCTV system currently has audio activated. The Finance & Amenities Officer had recently attended some CCTV training where this use was discussed and questioned whether this was an intrusion into people's private lives. The Clerk explained that the CCTV was in place to protect the building, and as such, the cameras were positioned on the building and not the sports field. She highlighted that on the veranda area, there were some picnic tables, so the CCTV may pick up conversations from people who are sitting there.

The Clerk had contacted Councillor Patacchiola due to his professional knowledge of CCTV systems, and he confirmed that audio recording was considered more intrusive to privacy, especially if it was enabled 24/7. It was noted that the council had installed signage on the pavilion building to inform people that CCTV was in operation, but it did not specify that audio was also being recorded. The Clerk confirmed that the council hasn't always had audio activated on the CCTV system; this was only on the new system, which was installed around a year ago. It was noted that the CCTV cameras provided

a good quality image, and although audio may enhance the system, it was a balance between whether it was actually necessary to have it in place given that if an incident occurred, the council would have the images to forward to the police.

Members felt that, given the privacy concerns, and the fact that the use of audio cannot be justified, it should be disabled.

Recommendation: The council disable the audio on the Bowerhill Sports Pavilion CCTV.

e) To receive update on new commercial bin emptying schedule

Councillor Baines explained that at the last Asset Management meeting, members were informed that there had been a few issues with waste collections at the sports field. The waste contractor had come up with the solution of providing smaller bins with the same equivalent capacity and weight as the big bin, so that they could easily lift the bins to empty them. The Clerk reported that this seems to be working, as officers have not received any complaints about the bins overflowing, so they do appear to be being emptied on a regular basis.

The Finance & Amenities Officer highlighted to members that one of the actions from the last Asset Management meeting was to set up a meeting with the sales representative to discuss the issues. She queried whether this was now necessary, bearing in mind that the solution seems to be working. Members felt that as this seemed to have been resolved, there was no need for a meeting to be arranged.

Recommendation: The council do not set up a meeting with the waste emptying contractors as the issues with waste collections seem to have been resolved.

f) To receive update on progress with replacing Pavilion water tank base under delegated powers

The Clerk reminded members that the council had already received a cost estimate of around £2,000 + VAT from a specialist contractor to replace the water tank base. They had suggested that the best course of action would involve RSJs to make a custom-built steel base for the water tank to sit on. This cost also included the disconnection and removal of the tank, the installation of the new base, and then reconnecting the tank. Officers had been looking at the most cost-effective way of replacing the base, and it had been suggested by the council's legionella contractor that a base could be created by using breeze blocks and concrete to make a solid base as an alternative option.

Officers had received a budget cost from Andy Strange Property & Garden Maintenance Ltd of around £440 to erect the base out of concrete; however, a plumber would also be required to disconnect and move the tank and connect it back up again once the base had been installed. Unfortunately, officers were having difficulty finding a plumber who would be willing to undertake this work.

The Clerk advised that for the works to be undertaken, the water supply would need to be turned off, so the council would also need to bear in mind that the football season has now restarted and it is a requirement for showers to be used. This means that it may make it difficult to have separate contractors undertaking different parts of the work, especially if the plumber is unable to come back and connect the tank back up on the same day, for example.

Councillor Glover felt that if the council had two different contractors, no one would have responsibility for the work if there was an issue. He felt that it made more sense to have one contractor come in to undertake the full work required, which would mean that if a problem did arise after it was completed, the council would be able to go back to that one contractor. For some time now, the council has also been keeping an eye on the water tank, as during the early part of the year officers noticed water on the floor of the pump room. It is thought to be the rainwater coming through the louvre doors, but this was something that was going to be checked out when the tank was emptied and chlorinated. If a specialist company comes in to undertake the work, they will also be able to check whether there is a crack in the tank. Members agreed that the council should proceed with the specialist contractor who is able to undertake the full work required.

Members felt that as the cost estimate received from the specialist base contractor was some months ago, costs may have increased, so the Clerk should be given some delegated powers to go ahead with the works if this is the case.

Recommendation: The council proceed with the specialist contractor who can undertake the full works required on the water tank base. The Clerk to be given delegated powers to go ahead with the works if the cost has increased due to the fact that the cost estimate was obtained some months ago.

171/23 Allotments

a) To receive report on waiting list

The Finance & Amenities Officer had put together a report on the current allotment waiting list. It was noted that there were currently two vacant plots; one on Berryfield and one on Briansfield. There are 14 people on the waiting list, and the Allotment Warden is currently in the process of showing the next few people around the vacant plots.

Members noted that the rent renewals for the new allotment year starting 1st October 2023, had recently been sent out, which also sought the views of tenants on whether they would be interested in setting up an association. Included with the letter was a leaflet with some information on what an allotment association was, so that plot holders understood what setting up an allotment association involved.

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

The Clerk has approved one greenhouse request on Plot 7 at Briansfield under her delegated powers since the last meeting.

c) To receive report from officer asset visit (1st Sept) and consider any actions required.

The Clerk advised that the officer visit to the allotments had not yet been undertaken as planned, as officers had to attend the Berryfield Village Hall end-of-defect meeting before this evening's meeting. The Clerk explained that officers were still planning on attending the allotments to exercise the council's right to access their own land.

It was noted that members had attended the allotments on a site visit before the last asset management meeting to view their general condition.

d) To receive cost estimate for purchase and installation of two new water troughs at Briansfield Allotments and consider way forward (arising from min.107cii/23).

At the last Asset Management meeting, members tasked officers with obtaining some quotations for new water troughs at Briansfield allotments. This was following a request from some tenants at Briansfield allotments who felt that there were not adequate water provisions at the site. Since the last meeting, officers have undertaken some investigations into this and have received one cost estimate for the work. It was noted that another contractor was approached to provide a quotation; however, they came back to say that they were unable to do so until February 2024, at the earliest, due to their work load. Councillor Baines explained that the cost estimate received was based on two water troughs being installed on the right-hand side of the allotments at the end of the first and third tracks. He had been in discussion with one allotment holder, and it was felt that one of the troughs should be moved to the left-hand end of the first track, which would make it possible to connect into the existing supply pipe to the current tanks. This would offer a better distribution of access to the water troughs for all tenants and may reduce the cost estimate slightly. The cost estimate received was around £2,000 + VAT, and it was noted that the reason why the contractor hasn't provided a detailed quote for these works is because they only provided quotations for works estimated to be over £3,000 + VAT.

Councillor Baines advised that members needed to consider how any new water troughs would be funded if the council were minded to go ahead with the works. It was noted that this was something requested by allotment holders themselves, and the council had recently consulted with tenants on whether they would be interested in setting up an association. It was considered that if an allotment association was formed, they would have much better access to obtaining grant funding for this project. Members felt that this information should be passed onto the allotment holders at Briansfield to inform them of the cost of new troughs and advise that if an association is formed, grant funding may be available. Councillor Baines advised that the alternative if tenants did not wish to form an association

was that the Briansfield allotment tenants would have to contribute through their allotment rent to fund the project.

Recommendation: Officers to inform the Briansfield allotment tenants that the cost for two additional water troughs was up to £3,000 + VAT, and advise them that they may be able to obtain grant funding if they were to form an allotment association. If this was not something they were interested in doing, their rent would have to be increased to fund the new troughs if the council were to go ahead with the project.

172/23 Grass cutting and bin emptying

a) To consider way forward with contract options from 1st April 2024

The Clerk advised that the council's 3-year grass cutting and bin emptying contract had come to an end on the 31st March 2023. Due to the economic climate at the time, the council agreed to roll the contract over for another year (until March 2024) with a 10% increase and re-evaluate the situation before March next year. The Clerk explained that although this is only September and there are still six months left to run, it is something the council needs to think about, especially if they wish to go out to tender. The Clerk confirmed that if the council did wish to obtain costs from other contractors, they would have to go out to tender rather than obtain quotations due to the contract value. The Clerk advised that the council has previously looked at whether it's in the interest of the public for officers to spend their time showing contractors around all of the different areas in the parish if they are happy with their current contractors and the costs are in the same ballpark as before. It was felt that it was unfair to potential contractors to undertake a lot of work preparing a tender response.

Members felt that officers should obtain a quotation from their current contractor for a new contract based on the current grass cutting and bin emptying specifications. If it's at an acceptable cost, the council could continue with them, as they provided the council with a good level of service.

Recommendation: Officers to obtain a quotation for the grass cutting and bin emptying contract from the current contractor based on the specification currently in place. This to be brought back to a future meeting so that the council can consider a way forward.

b) To note update on s96 licence for Roundabout Sponsorship and consider any further action if required.

The Clerk advised that the parish council has been maintaining the Western Way roundabout (known as ex Carson Tyre roundabout) for some time now. It now appears that Wiltshire Council issued two section 96 licences for the same roundabout, one to the parish council and the other to the town council. As the parish council's licence ran out in 2021, it has now been confirmed by the Wiltshire Council officer that it's no longer the responsibility of the parish. This means that the parish council is no longer required to maintain and remove the

planting, as this is now the responsibility of Melksham Town Council. The Clerk confirmed to members that she will instruct the parish council contractors to stop maintaining the roundabout with immediate effect.

Members noted the update.

Recommendation: The Clerk to instruct the parish council contractors to stop maintaining the Western Way roundabout as it's no longer the responsibility of the parish council.

173/23 Assets:

a) To approve specification for new asset management database and approve estimated cost from IT contractor to produce

It was explained that at the last IT Working Party meeting, members agreed that the council should create a database for allotment plots so that a history of things such as plot inspections and conditions could be held in a central place. Officers had put together a specification and sent it to the IT contractor to get it costed up. Based on the specification provided, it is estimated to cost between £200- £300 to produce. Councillor Glover queried whether allotment tenants' addresses and contact details would be included in the database, as it would be much better to have it all in one place. The Clerk advised that this was something that could be added. It was noted that the database would be a work in progress, and things could be added or taken off as it evolved.

The specification was as follows:

- Plot number and site
- History of plot inspections
- Record when a plot holder has been written to and the reason.
- Able to record whether a plot holder has been given extra time to tend to their plot
- Include photos of plot
- Information on whether a plot has a shed, greenhouse, or chickens
- Option to archive the history of the plot once the plot holder has relinquished the plot, so that a fresh record can be started for the new plot holder.
- History of whether plot holders have left sheds or greenhouse on their plots when they have vacated
- The ability to filter e.g., chickens and any structures on the plot
- Contact details of plot holders
- Rent information

Members were happy with the specification presented to them and felt that the council should go ahead with creating the database on this basis.

It was noted that the council was also looking to have an asset management system, which was to be discussed under the next agenda item, but members felt

that the suggestion of creating the allotment database first and using some of the coding for the new asset management database was a good idea.

Recommendation: The council approve the specification provided for a new allotment database, and proceed with the creation of the database from Avon IT Systems at an estimated cost of between £200- £300 to produce.

b) To approve specification for new allotment database and approve estimated cost from IT contractor to produce (arising from min.418f/21).

The Clerk explained that for some time now, the council has been looking for an asset management package to hold the asset register, which is currently held on a spreadsheet. As the council has so many assets, the spreadsheet is becoming too big; therefore, it is felt that a database would be much better. Officers have investigated several systems over the past few years, but none of them appeared to do everything that was required. As part of the asset register spreadsheet, there is a section for insurance, which officers use to ensure that the council has the correct level of cover in place for all of their assets. When officers have had a look at bespoke systems, they don't seem to have the ability to index link the insurance value of each item without officers having to manually go into each asset and update individually.

While officers were speaking to the IT contractor about creating an allotment database, discussion moved onto whether an asset register could be created in the same way. The IT contractor confirmed that it was something that could be created; therefore, officers have put together a specification of what was required. It was noted that as some of the coding from the allotment database could be used, the cost to create this database would be slightly reduced to between £150- £200 to produce. There may be an additional cost if the council needs to create a mobile phone app to log things such as onsite asset inspections, etc. The Clerk confirmed that the new database would have the ability to map the location of each asset, either by Google Street View or What3Words.

The specification was as follows:

- Asset number
- Item
- Supplier
- Location
- Purchase price
- Date purchased
- Whether it has asbestos
- Disposals and acquisitions (To include a comment section so that the meeting where the asset was approved to be disposed of can be referenced)
- Value of all assets at year end, ensuring that there's a history of the asset figure for the previous financial year.
- Facility to enable photos of asset
- Able to map location of each asset
- Able to include insurance value for each item

Members agreed with the specification and feel that the cost estimate provided by Avon IT Systems should be approved on this basis.

Recommendation: The council approve the specification provided for the asset register database, and proceed with the creation of the database from Avon IT Systems at an estimated cost of between £150- £200 to produce.

c) To consider making policy guidelines on what assets to include in new housing developments and who to supply (E.g., Community Access defibrillators? Noticeboards? Lifebuoys for attenuation ponds?)

The Clerk wondered whether members wished to consider whether they wanted to make a policy decision on what assets should be requested for developers to provide in new housing developments. The Clerk explained that if the council wished for assets to be included as part of the development, they needed to request them early on before the management company and contract had been agreed upon. One of her concerns was that it would be too late in the process if the council asked for things such as defibrillators, lifebuoys, and noticeboards after the contract had been agreed.

Councillor Glover explained that while the parish council can ask developers to provide lifebuoys for attenuation ponds, it is not a legal requirement for them to do so. It was clarified that any lifebuoys provided by the developers at any future housing developments would be the responsibility of the management company and not the parish council. It was acknowledged that this was a wish list of items for the council to ask for when making comments on planning developments so that these requests could be incorporated into the planning conditions.

Councillor Glover expressed concerns with regard to the defibrillators, as he felt there needed to be a priority for where they are required in the parish. It was noted that this was due to be discussed under item 11c. Councillor Glover felt that if the council was putting in a list of requested assets, it needed to be specified who would take on the responsibility of maintaining them. This would alleviate any confusion caused with regard to who is looking after the asset. Members felt that the policy should clearly state that defibrillators and lifebuoys should be maintained by the management company, unless the council decides on a case-by-case basis that they should manage the asset.

Recommendation: The council includes lifebuoys, noticeboards, and defibrillators on the list of items to be requested to be provided by developers in new housing developments. The list clearly defines that the maintenance of these items should be undertaken by the management company unless the council decides that they would like to take on the asset.

d) To consider the way forward with purchase of VE Day planters, bearing in mind the maintenance commitment (arising from min. 470c/19)

The Clerk explained that the council had resolved to purchase VE Day planters just before covid; however, they had never been ordered due to the lockdown and the action not being picked back up. She queried with members whether they still wished for them to be purchased, bearing in mind the maintenance liabilities of the planters. As background information, it was agreed that the planters would be located at the entrance to Berryfield Park and adjacent to Dick Lovett in Bowerhill, which had been authorised by Wiltshire Council highways.

Councillor Pafford felt that as some time had passed, members should consider whether they had missed the boat on purchasing these planters now. It was noted that no one had complained that the planters hadn't been installed, and given the maintenance responsibilities that these planters would pose, it was felt that the council should not purchase them. It was considered that the money that was going to be spent on the planters could be spent on something else within the parish.

Recommendation: The parish council do not purchase the VE Day Planters.

e) To note correspondence received regarding location of old ex Wiltshire Council Speed Indicator Device and approve disposing of the item on the asset register

Councillor Baines explained that the old ex Wiltshire Council speed indicator device was broken beyond repair some years ago. This was a device that was shared between the parish and town councils. Its last known location was with the town council, and for a few years now, the Clerk has been chasing up where the device was. This was because the parish council was unable to dispose of it on the asset register until there was confirmation that it had been disposed of. Officers had contacted the Amenities Manager at the town council, who advised that they did not have it in storage. The Clerk advised that to enable this item to be disposed of on the asset register, the parish council needed to approve its disposal. Members agreed that the speed indicator device could now be disposed of on the asset register.

Recommendation: The council dispose of the old ex Wiltshire Council Speed Indicator Device on the asset register.

174/23 Village Halls:

a) To approve quotation for Shaw Village Hall condition survey

Held in closed session.

The Clerk reminded members that one of the actions that came out of the meeting held with members of the Shaw Hall Management Committee was to

undertake a condition survey of the building. As the new lease was for 125 years, the Shaw Management Committee requested that this be done at the parish councils' expense to ensure that any issues highlighted in the survey could be discussed before the lease was signed. Officers had obtained two quotations for the survey. The Clerk advised that a third contractor was approached to provide a quotation; however, had they not responded.

The following quotations had been received:

Quotation A £ 895.00 + VAT
Quotation B £2,350.00 + VAT

Members noted the large difference in quotations received, and agreed that subject to due diligence checks being undertaken quotation A should be approved.

Recommendation: The Council approve quotation A to undertake the conditions survey on Shaw Village Hall subject to due diligence checks being undertaken by officers.

b) To consider any actions following Berryfield Village Hall end of period defect meeting

The Clerk advised members that the end-of-period defects meeting was held this afternoon at Berryfield Village Hall. It was attended by officers, along with Councillor Holt as Chair of the Village Hall Trust, Councillor Wood, Councillor Harris, Jon Price from Rigg, and David Sharp from BTA Architects. It was noted that on the 5th September it will be a year since the village hall was handed over to the parish council.

The Clerk reported the following defects that would need actioning:

- There are around 30-40 bricks where the lime has been blown off of the brickwork this had already been noted by the brick contractor and they are scheduled to undertake the remedial works on 6th September.
- The threshold strip between the foyer and Hall double doors needs to be replaced and refixed with stronger adhesive.
- Some door closers require adjustment
- The hot water temperature is very hot so there needs to be an adjustment made to the water heaters.
- The cistern in the male toilet isn't flushing as it should be, so requires an adjustment to be made.
- Echo is a problem with day-to-day use of the Hall, so options are to be investigated to dampen this down.
- There is a "rattle" of the servery shutter when doors open, so options are being investigated to see whether this can be dampened down.
- There are problems with ambient temperatures in the building, especially during the summer months. The Clerk advised that this was a consequence of

the building being so well insulated, and the planning condition put into place with regard to no openable windows. The Clerk explained that this may not be a defect; however, the architect was seeking advice from the Services Consultant to see whether there were any options to make the temperature more comfortable.

- Clarification is required in respect of solar panels/battery as there's no information on how much the panels have generated. There is also no information screen in the foyer so this needs to be investigated to see whether there should be.
- There are a few settlement cracks that need to be actioned.
- There are two external sockets for the sound system which needs to be protected from getting hit by chairs etc.
- There is a flooring ridge that needs actioning.

The Clerk explained that the general feeling of everyone who attended the meeting was that there weren't any major defects, so this was good news. She advised that once all of the defects had been addressed, Rigg would be invoicing the council for the retention amount due. A report would be produced and sent to Full Council before any retention is paid.

175/23

Defibrillators:

a) To receive an update on progress with the Pathfinder Way defibrillator.

The Clerk explained that the defibrillator cabinet had been collected by the contractor, who is currently in the process of arranging for a metal bracket to be made so that the cabinet can be installed on the existing post. The Clerk reported that the donor was due to leave the country shortly and suggested that an arrangement could be made for her to come in and see the defibrillator. A photograph could also be arranged with the Melksham News of the donor handing over the defibrillator to the parish council. Members agreed that this would be a good idea.

b) To consider update on costs associated with refurbishing the Telephone Kiosk at Berryfield Park and re-locating the defibrillator on the side of the New Inn pub to the kiosk.

The Clerk reminded the committee that at their last Asset Management meeting, they had asked officers to ascertain a cost for refurbishing the kiosk. Unfortunately, officers had been unable to obtain a cost associated with refurbishing the phone box from Community Heartbeat Trust before the meeting. It was confirmed that this kiosk had not yet been adopted by the parish council.

Councillor Glover queried whether it was necessary for the defibrillator to be located from the New Inn pub into the kiosk at this stage and wondered whether the council should wait until the defibrillator needed to be replaced. It was noted that the kiosk at Berryfield Park was not in a good state of repair and would need to be refurbished if the council was to take it on. Councillor

Holt queried whether BASRAG (Berryfield and Semington Road Action Group) had an option to purchase the kiosk. The Clerk confirmed that BT would only let parish councils adopt the phone box and not community groups. This had happened previously with the phone box in Top Lane, Whitley, where the parish council adopted the kiosk legally and had an agreement with CAWS (Community Action Whitley and Shaw) that they refurbish and maintain it.

Members felt that as the New Inn pub was fully operational, it was a good location for the defibrillator, as it was a place that was well known by the local community. After careful consideration, members did not feel that it was necessary to adopt the kiosk to relocate the defibrillator.

Councillor Holt requested that BASRAG be informed that the parish council has decided not to adopt the kiosk for the purpose of installing a defibrillator, and enquire whether they need support in taking it on themselves. Members agreed that they should be informed, and if BASRAG confirms that they do wish to refurbish the kiosk, the parish council could look at adopting it as long as they continue to maintain it.

Recommendation 1: The council do not adopt the telephone kiosk at Berryfield Park for the purpose of relocating the defibrillator from the New Inn.

Recommendation 2: Officers to inform BASRAG that the council will not be taking the kiosk on and ask them whether they require support in taking it on themselves.

c) To review map of parish defibrillator locations and consider any gaps in provision

At the last Full Council meeting, the council asked officers to put together a map of where the current parish defibrillators were so that they could identify whether there were any gaps in provision. Officers had mapped where the current parish defibrillators were located and noted that there were gaps at Redstocks, Woodrow, and Sandridge. It was noted that there used to be a phone box on Woodrow Road; however, this is no longer there. Councillor Baines confirmed that the nearest defibrillator around this location was the convenience store on Forest Road.

Members noted that the mapping exercise had been done to aid any future decision making on defibrillator provision.

d) To note all defibrillators serviced and inspected 23rd August

It was noted that all parish council owned defibrillators had their annual service on the 23rd August, and they are all in good working order.

Photocopier: To receive quotations for replacement photocopier and consider options for either purchasing or leasing.

The Clerk explained that officers had met with the council's existing photocopier supplier to discuss options for a new machine. She advised that she had spoken to the supplier about the purchasing and leasing options for the new machine. It was noted that the existing photocopier had been purchased by the parish council.

The photocopier supplier had explained to officers that with regard to a lease option, even if the council took on a 5-year lease, if they wished to upgrade the machine after 3 years, they would still have to pay back the rest of the lease before taking out another lease for a new machine. It was explained that if the council leased the machine for five years, it would cost the council a lot more than if they purchased it and kept it for the same duration due to the interest that would have to be paid back. The supplier had explained that the refurbished machines were lasting much longer than five years now, and it's only due to the fact that the parts for the current machine are no longer being made that it need to be replaced now. Officers had obtained quotations for both purchase and lease options from three separate suppliers, and these were as follows:

Quotation A (Existing supplier):

Machine: Canon imageRUNNER ADVANCE C3530i Refurbished

Cost per page: Black & White copy £0.0045

Colour copy: £0.045

Purchase £1,952.00 + VAT

5-year lease £127.23 monthly cost £8,233.80 + VAT

Quotation B:

Machine: TASKalfa 3554ci SRA3 colour multifunction

Cost per page: Black & White copy £0.206p

Colour copy: £2.06p

Purchase £2,218.45 + VAT

5-year lease £43.66 monthly cost £2,619.60 + VAT

Quotation C:

Machine: Develop Ineo+360i

Cost per page: Black & White copy 0.35p

Colour copy: 3.5p

5-year lease £103.83 monthly cost £6,229.80 + VAT

No purchase price was quoted

The Clerk advised that following the proposal sent through by the existing supplier, officers had asked the two other suppliers to provide a quotation based on the same model photocopier. Unfortunately, they had sent back costs for different model photocopiers; however, it was understood that they were a similar model to the model that had been requested. The Clerk clarified that if the council were to purchase a new machine, they would still be

able to have a service contract, which would allow for toners to be ordered and engineers to be called out if there was an issue. She confirmed that officers had always been happy with the level of service that had been received by their current photocopier supplier.

The Clerk confirmed that the council had £1,200 in their photocopier replacement reserve but also had other reserves available that could be used for the rest of the expenditure if the council wished to purchase the machine. Members felt that as officers were the ones who used the machine, they should be the ones who decide on the most suitable model. It was also agreed that a new photocopier should be purchased, rather than leased.

Recommendation: The council to purchase a new photocopier, and officers to recommend the most suitable model to Full Council.

177/23

Bus shelters: To review budget indications for the replacement of the wooden bus shelter at Beanacre and approve bus shelter style to move forward with for quotations.

The Clerk explained that the wooden bus shelter on the left-hand side before the turning to Westlands Lane in Beanacre was coming to the end of its life. The council had asked officers to obtain a range of bus shelter models so that a suitable model could be chosen. She advised that she had gone to the location of the existing bus shelter and noted that there was a large fir tree behind the shelter and had concerns about where the roots might be; in addition, there was a lamp post just to the right of the shelter too. She also had concerns that any bus shelter purchased may not fit at the location due to what was around the location. Members felt that this should be deferred until more investigations can be undertaken to ascertain whether a new bus shelter can be installed at this location.

Recommendation: The council defer the replacement of the wooden bus shelter at Beanacre until more investigations can be undertaken to determine whether it would be feasible to install a new bus shelter at this location.

178/23

Bins:

- a) **To consider not including the parish council's logo and contact details when replacing damaged Wiltshire Council bins.**

The Clerk explained that currently, when new bins are ordered to replace damaged Wiltshire Council bins, they are ordered with the parish council's logo and contact details on them. This makes it difficult when members of the public phone the office to report the bins overflowing because it's not on the parish council's bin emptying schedule, so officers are unable to directly address the issue. Although, officers have no issue reporting overflowing bins to Wiltshire Council, it does cause some confusion with residents because they feel that the parish should be emptying them. The Clerk queried whether

the council should order a green bin without any logo or contact details on when replacing damaged Wiltshire Council bins to prevent any confusion over who is responsible for it. Members agreed with this way forward.

Recommendation: The council do not include the parish council logo or contact details when replacing damaged Wiltshire Council bins.

b) To note bins purchased to replace missing or damaged Wiltshire Council bins under the Clerk's delegated powers

The Clerk explained that this was a standing item on the Asset Management agenda, as she had delegated powers to replace missing or damaged bins. She reported that she had not replaced any bins since the last meeting.

Councillor Glover highlighted that opposite Tesco's in Bowerhill, there were two bins next to each other and wondered whether one of the bins in that location could be moved to another area in the parish that required a bin. The Clerk advised that she would investigate this as the council had worked with BRAG (Bowerhill Resident Action Group) on moving the Bowerhill bins some years ago. The Clerk explained that one of the bins in that location was sponsored by the hair salon, so this may be the reason why there are two.

Recommendation: The Clerk to investigate whether one of the bins located opposite Tesco in Bowerhill could be relocated to another area in the parish.

Meeting closed at 22:10 pm

Chairman, 11th September 2023