

MINUTES of the Asset Management Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 24th September 2018 at St. Barnabas Church, Beanacre at 8.10 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Paul Carter (Vice Chair of Committee), Alan Baines and Paul Taylor.

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk) and Jo Eccleston (Parish Officer).

Housekeeping & Announcements: In the absence of Cllr. Glover, Cllr. Carter, as Committee Vice-Chair, welcomed all to the meeting and explained the evacuation procedure in the event of a fire.

259/18 **Apologies:** Cllr. John Glover (Committee Chair) was on holiday, Richard Wood (Council Chair) was now going on holiday following the earlier Planning Committee meeting and Mary Pile had a social engagement which she had arranged before the rescheduling of this Asset Management Committee meeting; these were accepted. Terry Chivers had given apologies, but with no reason; this was not accepted.

It was noted that the meeting was quorate.

260/18 **Declarations of Interest:** None

261/18 **Public Participation:** There were no members of the public present.

262/18 **Asset Register:** The members noted the formal paperwork confirming that the phone boxes in Top Lane, Whitley and on Corsham Road, Shaw had now been decommissioned by BT and adopted by the Parish Council. CAWS (Community Action Whitley Shaw) will be looking after and maintaining them, and they will be added to the Parish Caretaker's schedule of quarterly written inspections.

The Clerk informed that the door of the phone box in Beanacre, by the wooden bus shelter on the A350, was hanging off and she had reported this to BT. They had responded to say that they would be sending someone to fix it.

263/18 **Play Areas, Playing Fields and Public Open Space:**

a) Caretaker Quarterly Written Inspection Report for Play Areas: The members noted the written inspection report for August and that nothing had been highlighted as a medium or high risk.

b) Independent ROSPA Annual Inspection Reports for Play Areas and Playing Fields: The ROSPA annual inspection took place on 6th September, 2018, and the ROSPA Inspector had picked up on a couple of minor issues since the Caretaker's written inspection in August. However, the majority of items were a low risk with only 3 being a medium risk, there were no issues which were a high risk and this was considered to be a direct result of the Parish Council ensuring that all of its play areas are well maintained. It was noted that the ROSPA reports had a new format, which identified the minimum risk rating for the equipment/area identified, as due to the nature of play areas, no element will be risk free.

- (i) **Roundabouts at Hornchurch Road and Kestrel Court Play Areas:** It was noted that the roundabout in the Hornchurch Road play area had been fenced off as it was damaged. It had been resolved under Min.243/18c)iv) (Full Council 17th September) to accept a quote from the equipment manufacturer, HAGS SMP, for its repair with replacement of the bearings. The ROSPA report for the same design of roundabout at Kestrel Court had stated that components may need to be replaced, as there was some excessive movement. The members felt that the bearings on this roundabout may also need replacing and that there could be a cost saving if this was done at the same time as the roundabout in Hornchurch Road. **Recommended:** *The Parish Council ask HAGS SMP for a quote for the bearings on both roundabouts to be done at the same time.*
- (ii) **Bins:** The ROSPA report had identified that some bins needed emptying and some were broken and needed repairing. The Clerk reported that new bins had already been delivered to contractor J H Jones and were due for installation. There were 4no for the Bowerhill Sports Field, 1no. for Hornchurch Road and 1no. for Beanacre, which correlated to the bins identified in the report. There was already a bin in the Hornchurch Play area which had been repainted so the new bin will be placed on the opposite side of the play area, by the other entrance gate. Wiltshire Council had agreed that this new bin could be placed outside of the play area, by the gate, so that the new safety surfacing was not dug into. When the bins at the Bowerhill Sports Field are replaced with the new larger ones there will be some spare bins, which can be relocated elsewhere in the parish if required.
- (iii) **Replacement of Caps, Covers and Fixings:** It was noted that the report identified some missing caps and covers from some equipment, and fixings from some fencing. The Parish Caretaker carried some spares with him, but some consumables would need to be ordered to ensure they were the correct size/fit. The report for Beanacre Play Area had highlighted a medium risk on the slide as the edging at the slide run out had a split. The Clerk reported that she had sent the Caretaker to look at this straight away so that he could identify what he required to repair it. **Recommended:** *The Parish Council order caps, covers and any other consumables required for replacement by the Parish Caretaker.*
- (iv) **Shrinkage of Ground around Safety and Hard Surfacing:** It was noted that the unprecedented hot and dry weather over the summer months had caused ground shrinkage around the edges of play area safety surfacing and hard surfacing such as pavements and tarmac. This had been noted in the reports of all the play areas as being a potential trip hazard. Members felt that rain and winter weather would put moisture back into the ground and address the problems of shrinkage, however, they discussed short term potential resolutions, noting that the parish Council has a large bag of gravel and some top soil stored in the car park at the Pavilion. The Clerk, who is ROSPA Operational Inspector qualified, explained that the Parish Council had ensured that when it had safety surfacing installed in its play area that it had always installed this in a wider radius around equipment than

the legal requirement. Therefore, the risk from ground shrinkage around the edge of the surfacing was that someone might trip over onto the safety surfacing, rather than tripping onto play equipment.

Recommended: *The Parish Caretaker to use top soil to fill any shrinkage gaps between the ground and play safety surfacing, and gravel to fill any shrinkage gaps between the ground and hard paved surfaces, and any gravelled areas. The effectiveness of this approach to then be reviewed.*

- (v) **Additional Signage:** It was noted that the report identified that additional warning signs were required for the half MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) at Bowerhill Sports Field. The Clerk advised that there were various new signs required at the Pavilion now that this was the Parish Council office, and officers had wanted to be working from this venue for a month or so to assess how members of the public found accessing the office prior to ordering any signs. She stated that she would order all signage at the same time. Additionally, the Parish Caretaker had noted in his reports that the post code identifying where play areas were, was not on all play area signage. **Recommended:** *Any additional signage required for the play areas and equipment to be ordered at the same time as any new signage required for the Bowerhill Sports Pavilion.*
 - (vi) **Cracks on Sports Pitches at Bowerhill Sports Field: Arising from Min.243/18d)ii) (Full Council 17th September):** The Clerk advised that there was only one match taking place at the Sports Field this coming Sunday, so contractor J H Jones would be filling the cracks on the pitch closed to Portal Road prior to the match booked for the following Sunday. This will cost £152 plus VAT.
 - (vii) **Potential Items for the Budget:** The Clerk reported that money had been put into the budget for this year, 2018/19, for possible replacement of the safety surfacing under the cone climber in Beanacre Play Area, dependent upon the outcome of the ROSPA inspection. This area of safety surfacing had not been raised in the report as an issue for concern. **Recommended:** *Funds for future replacement for this area of safety surfacing to remain in the budget for when it is required.*
 - (viii) **Wooden Apparatus and Benches:** It was noted that the reports made mention of natural splits/shakes in the timbers of wooden apparatus and some splintered wood on a wooden bench. It was noted that all seating now purchased by the Parish Council was made from recycled material. **Recommended:** *The Parish Council take into consideration the longevity and maintenance requirements of wooden apparatus when considering new play areas and any new or replacement equipment.*
- c) **Quotation for Fence Repair/Replacement at Berryfield Play Area:** The members considered a quote from J H Jones to install 97m of chain link fence and concrete posts at a cost of £4,380.00 plus VAT, at the public open space by the brook near to Berryfield Play Area. This was not the fencing of the play area itself, but of the wider public open space. It was noted that Wiltshire Council tolerate the fact that the existing fencing is either broken or missing, allowing access to the brook, and also it was not

raised as an issue in the ROSPA inspection report. It was additionally noted that the Parish Council did not own this land and only have a lease for 7 years as this area is on the protected route of the Wilts and Berks canal link project. It was also noted that two new housing developments in the parish had attenuation ponds next to public areas and play areas, and that natural landscaping and stinging nettles were considered to be effective in discouraging anyone from getting too close. It was felt that due to the projected cost of this work, the fact that no one has reported that anyone has fallen into this brook, and the fact that neither ROSPA nor Wiltshire Council had raised it as an issue requiring addressing, this project would not be taken forward at this time.

d) Additional Measures to Secure against Unauthorised Encampments:

Following the recent unauthorised encampment on King George V Playing Field in the Town, Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford had sent correspondence to local councils asking if they had parks or areas of public open space which they considered to be vulnerable. He stated that he would support any requests to the Area Board for funding to assist with the securing of vulnerable areas. It was noted that there was an unauthorised encampment with one caravan next to the entrance to the Bowerhill Sports Pavilion. However, the Sports Field was fully enclosed and the Parish Council Staff were ensuring that the gates and/or bollards to the car park were kept locked at all times. It was noted that the Shaw Recreation Field was not fenced or enclosed, however, it was surrounded by houses which all looked over the Field. It was felt that should anyone try to set up an unauthorised camp here that this would be reported by residents extremely quickly and that legislation would apply which would allow the prompt removal of any encampment. A proposal was made that wooden posts were inserted into the ground around the open perimeter of Shaw Recreation Field, with a raiseable barrier to allow for grass cutting; similar to that at King George V Park. Due to the number of posts that would be required, this proposal was not supported. **Recommended:** *The Parish Council seek the advice of the Wiltshire Council Enforcement Officer, and highlight the possible risk to Shaw Village Hall and Recreation Ground Management Committee.*

e) Update on New Footpath at Hornchurch Road Public Open Space: The Clerk advised that construction of this new footpath had started this morning. The Parish Steward had cut back the overhanging trees on the route of the path on his last visit in preparation for the works. The Clerk reported that she was impressed by the contractor's professional approach to site safety, with robust heras fencing, clear signage and a portaloo. She had also put up a sign with the Parish Council's details so that it was clear who residents should contact if they had a query. There had already been some positive posts on social media from residents who are really pleased with this new footpath.

f) Melksham Oak Outdoor Education Student Volunteers: The Clerk explained that there were some students from Melksham Oak Community School who were on an outdoor education course, and their teacher was looking for volunteering opportunities so that they could undertake the Duke of Edinburgh Award. The Clerk stated that she had originally thought that they could hand cut the overgrown vegetation around the tree saplings on the perimeter of the Bowerhill Sports Field. However, ecological advice had

been received which highlighted that this was not good practice, as although some may perceive long grass as unsightly, it is actually an excellent habitat for insects, slow worms, dormice and other small mammals. Also, as the trees mature and create shade any long grass will eventually die back. She asked members if they had any other suggestions for work that these students could undertake; it was noted that they would be fully supervised by Melksham Oak staff. It was noted that community groups had also been asked and BRAG (Bowerhill Residents Action Group) had made a few suggestions. It was felt that volunteers from St. Barnabas Church may also like some help with maintenance of their wild flower meadow. **Recommended:** *The following tasks to be put forward as suggestions for the students:*

- *Prune and re-label the heritage fruit trees on the rear boundary of Briansfield Allotments.*
- *Clear the overgrown vegetation at the entrance to the Bowerhill Sports Pavilion car park and plant with wild flower seeds.*
- *Clear the brambles and undergrowth around the Heritage Turbine in Bowerhill.*

g) Alternative Option for Footballs Kicked Against Bowerhill Pavilion:

The Clerk explained that since the office staff had been working in the Pavilion they had noticed that balls were being kicked against the walls, and it was thought that the brightly coloured changing room doors were being used as targets. There had also been many light fittings on the veranda damaged. It was noted that there were inclusive games sports walls available which could be used as targets, and some had apps that could be downloaded so that children or adults could record their scores and compete against others. The members considered some of the wall options available and the viability of such an installation, including potential costs, and whether planning permission and permission from Fields in Trust would be required. **Recommended:** *The costs of installation and maintenance of a games wall and the viability and any permissions required to be investigated. These costs to be analysed against maintenance and repair costs of any damage at the pavilion caused from footballs.*

h) Shurnhold Fields Joint Project:

(i) **Grass Cutting:** The Clerk explained that an area of grass, approximately the size of 8 tennis courts, needed cutting before the WW1 centenary trees could be planted. This grass was too long for the Melksham Town Council grass cutters, so she had sought a quote from J H Jones. J H Jones had replied to say that as this grass needed cutting specifically for the WW1 remembrance event that they would do this for free. Also, a resident who keeps horses off Dunch Lane had also offered to cut this grass for free if they could then use the collected grass for feed for their horses. The Clerk had informed the Friends of Shurnhold fields group that the grass could not be cut until she had sought permission from Persimmon, as the land transfer documentation was in the hands of the relevant solicitors/legal departments, and the land did not yet belong to the Parish Council. **Recommended:** *The offer from the resident to cut the grass for free to be accepted as the cuttings will then be used to feed livestock.*

- (ii) **Public Liability Insurance for Friends of Shurnhold Fields Group:** The Clerk advised that both the Parish Council and the Town Council needed to be very clear under whose insurance the Friends of Shurnhold Fields would be working under. She explained that the Town Council have a special insurance policy specifically for the Tidy Town group and other voluntary groups, which would also be able to provide cover for the Friends of Shurnhold Fields group. She had clarified that the group would still be covered by this Town Council insurance policy even if they were working on land owned by the Parish Council. The Parish Council model has always been that any Community Group is assisted in setting up a constitution and funding and then they apply for their own insurance. **Recommended:** *The Parish Council request that the Friends of Shurnhold Fields are added to the Town Council's "Tidy Town" voluntary groups insurance policy.*

264/18 **Bowerhill Sports Pavilion:**

a) Risk Assessments following Occupation of the Pavilion Lounge as an Office:

- (i) **Legionella Risk Assessment:** The members reviewed the Legionella Risk Assessment carried out by Aquasafe on 12th September, 2018, and the recommendations made within it. One of the recommendations was that staff members overseeing Legionella compliance should have received Legionella awareness training. It was suggested that Aquasafe were asked whether they provided such training. Another recommendation was that signage stating "Not Drinking Water" was installed above the wash hand basins in all toilet locations; this signage could be included with the order for other signage required for the parish. Some of the other recommendations were queried as it was unclear as to whether they referred to best practice, or assisted in energy conservation, such as pipe lagging. The Pavilion boilers were due to be serviced so it was suggested that the engineer was asked for a second opinion on some of these issues. Aquasafe to be asked to run through their recommendations and give some clarity on the other issues. The Clerk informed that she had been advised that the Caretaker was not at risk when he was carrying out the weekly flushing of the showers. She also advised that since the office staff had been working at the pavilion the hot water had been set to come on Monday to Friday and on Sundays for the football teams. Aquasafe had advised that it would be more cost effective to have the hot water on everyday of the week rather than having it turned off for one day a week. **Recommendation:** *The Parish Council investigate and seek clarification regarding the requirement for the actions recommended in the Legionella Risk Assessment Report. Quotes are sought for any of the issues which need addressing.*
- (ii) **Fire Risk Assessment:** The members reviewed the Fire Risk Assessment carried out by Radcliffe Fire Protection on 18th September, 2018. The report recommended that a suitable electrical contractor was instructed to carry out P.A.T testing of all portable electrical appliances at the premises, stating that the last P.A.T test was carried out in September 2013. The Clerk advised that all equipment that had come

from Crown Chambers had been tested on 19th September 2017, and that some portable appliances at the Pavilion had come from the old Pavilion when it was used as a youth club; this too had all been P.A.T tested last year, with all the Pavilion equipment. P.A.T testing of all items at the Pavilion and the Caretaker's electrical tools and equipment was booked in with an electrical contractor for this October.

The Risk Assessor was happy that the petrol lawnmower was stored in the boiler room at the Pavilion until such time as the parish council has alternative storage arrangements at the Allotments. As the water tank in the boiler room has overflowed before, the Clerk suggested that some large heavy-duty hooks were attached to the wall, so that the petrol mower, and the petrol strimmer and leaf blower once purchased, can be hung up to prevent any potential water damage. It was noted that the Melksham Cricket Club had some really smart half storage containers, and it was suggested that the Parish Council investigate where these were purchased.

The Clerk advised that the next round of fire warden training was being held in November, when she was off work following her knee operation. She suggested therefore that the Parish Officer attends this training, as this then would mean that two members of staff had undertaken this training. **Recommended 1:** *The petrol lawnmower, and petrol strimmer and leaf blower once purchased, to be stored in the boiler room at the Pavilion on large hooks on the wall to prevent any potential water damage, until such time as the Parish Council has storage facilities at the Briansfield Allotment car park. 2. The Parish Council enquire with Melksham Cricket Club where they purchased their outside storage and the cost. 3. The Parish Officer to undertake Fire Warden training with What No Safety Services Ltd. on 12th November, 2018.*

b) Hire Costs for Events & Activities:

- (i) **Use of Changing room for Personal Trainer:** A local personal trainer who carries out one-to-one fitness sessions with his clients on the sports field had enquired about the cost of hiring a changing room for his fitness classes when it is raining. He said that he would not need the use of the showers, but he might need the use of the toilet.

Recommended: *A retainer fee of £10 per month to be charged, with the Personal Trainer being able to use the changing rooms when not hired out to football teams or other groups, on the proviso that any mud is swept up and the changing room is left in a tidy condition.*

- (ii) **Charge for Future Bowerhill Bomber races:** The Clerk advised that under Min.142/18c)2), it had been agreed that the Bowerhill Bomber event held on 12th July, 2018 had paid £50 for the hire of the 4 changing rooms, lounge and toilets, but not the showers. It was noted that they had donated £500 from the money they had raised to the Melksham Carnival. They wanted to hold two further events, one in February and another in July. It was noted that they wanted to hold these events on a Sunday and that this would need careful scheduling so that the events did not coincide with the football season. As the lounge area is now the Parish Council office, they would only be able to hire the changing rooms and toilets for the foreseeable future.

Recommended: The Parish Council charge the Bowerhill Bombers £50 per hire of the Pavilion changing rooms and toilets.

265/18 **Street Furniture:**

a) Requests for New Seats in the Parish (Wiltshire Council Area Board Match Funding for Age Friendly Project): The Clerk explained that the Area Board has some ringfenced funding to match fund the provision of benches in the Melksham Community Area. This had arisen from recent Age Friendly sessions where older people had stated that they needed places to sit down. It was noted that the bench on Pathfinder Way, Bowerhill was not in a good state of repair and needed replacing, however, as this was on the site of the forthcoming Taylor Wimpey development, it was suggested that the developer was asked to replace this bench. She had asked the Community Action groups in the parish if they had any suggestions for sites in their villages, or if they had been asked by older residents for the provision of benches.

BRAG (Bowerhill Residents Action Group) had suggested the following sites:

- By Bowerhill School/Village Hall – this had been requested by a resident so that they could have a rest whilst on their way to the bus stop.
- On the green outside Robinson's Fish and Chip shop – as there are a number of bungalows for the elderly there.
- On Halifax Road near Kestrel Court – this is near to sheltered social housing flats.

CAWS (Community Action Whitley Shaw) had suggested the following sites:

- Top Lane, Whitley – opposite the Pear Tree Inn at the bus stop.
- Top Lane, Whitley – adjacent to the red phone box which is being converted into a library.

The Clerk advised that as a ball park figure it cost around £500 for a bench and £100 for installation. The Parish Council would have to match fund 50% of this cost, so approximately £1,500. **Recommended:** The Parish Council apply to the Area Board for match funding for the installation of 5 benches at the locations proposed by the two community groups.

b) Quotation for maintenance Work to Bus Shelter, Shaw Hill: The members considered a quote for £292.00 plus VAT from J H Jones to repair the bus shelter on Shaw Hill, opposite Beltane Place. This had developed a large crack in the wall and was being compromised by the large amount of ivy growing over it from the adjacent property. **Recommended 1:** The Parish Council accept the quote from J H Jones for £292.00 plus VAT to repair the bus shelter on Shaw Hill. **2.** The resident is asked to maintain the ivy on their property so that it does not grow over the bus shelter.

266/18 **2019/20 Budget Planning:** The Clerk explained that in the Financial Regulations it states that the various committees will give the Finance committee a steer as to what should be considered for the budget. **Recommended:** The following items to be put forward for consideration by the Finance Committee for the budget:

1. *Bins emptied once a week at the Sports Field – keep at this.*
2. *Water Bowser for watering trees on Bowerhill Sports Field – increased water usage (as on a meter) and additional staff hours (Caretaker or Allotment Warden), unless carried out by volunteer.*
3. *4 x new office chairs – existing ones are second hand and now very old.*
4. *Street furniture – there were no items which were considered to be required at the moment; only some maintenance consumables for existing benches.*
5. *Tree Works – the Clerk will review the quotes submitted for current works to give an indication of any future possible costs.*
6. *Replacement or repair of Beanacre Play Area wooden apparatus and safety surfacing – look at the cost of previous repair/relocation of wooden swing frame for cost indication.*
7. *Entrance gates for Shurnhold Fields – put £5,000 in budget.*
8. *All play areas have now been refurbished over the past two years, this will result in them all needing upgrading/refreshing at the same time – put £5,000 each in reserves each year.*
9. *Eight defibrillators were all purchased at the same time, so they will need replacing at the same time, and the advice is that they are replaced every 6 years.*
10. *Office relocation reserve – due to the recent move this reserve needs topping up to prepare for the move to the Campus – put £1,000 in reserves each year.*
11. *Sports Field - £18,000 put into reserve from precept each year.*
12. *Replacement or Renewal of Council Assets – it was noted that there was £20,000 in this reserve which was considered adequate.*

Meeting Closed 10:13pm

Chairman, 22nd October, 2018