

Minutes of the Works Committee Meeting held on
Wednesday 19th June 2024 at 6.00 p.m. at the Parish Centre, Gerald's Way
in accordance with notice given

In the Chair: Cllr Samaroo
Present: Cllrs Oakley, D Taylor, Wood
In attendance: Clerk, Chris Attwood

W.01.06.24 Elect a Chair – Cllr Oakley proposed “**Cllr Samaroo as Chair**” This was seconded by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed. There were no other nominations.

W.02.06.24 Elect a Vice Chair – Cllr Samaroo proposed “**Cllr Wood as Vice Chair**” This was seconded by Cllr D Taylor and unanimously agreed. There were no other nominations.

W.03.06.24 Apologies – Cllrs Gardiner, Funnell, L Taylor

W.04.06.24 Declarations of interest – None

W.05.06.24 Public participation – One member of public attended in relation to the Robert Hitchens owned area of Frith Wood.

The resident explained that she cares for the ongoing future of the wood, and while she feels that the PC owned area of the wood is starting to show signs of recovery, she has concerns about the Robert Hitchens owned area. She wanted to bring her concerns about bike ramps being built in the woods to the Committee's attention; the resident had submitted comments and photographs which had been circulated to the Committee for their consideration prior to the meeting. The resident felt that the large tree trunks had perhaps been sawn by adults for the children to use.

Committee members considered the resident's concerns, and while they were understanding of her viewpoint, Cllr Samaroo explained that the Parish Council do not have any jurisdiction over the Robert Hitchens owned area of the wood. However, the PC do have a good relationship with Robert Hitchens and any problems that are reported to them are always dealt with very efficiently. Robert Hitchens are acutely aware of bikes being ridden through the woods, and although they have erected signs stating no bikes/horses, in practice this is very difficult to police. Cllr Oakley explained that as with so many things, it is very difficult to find a balance, as everyone will have a different opinion on how the wood should be used, and it is there for all to enjoy.

Cllr Samaroo explained that this is not a new problem, it is cyclical, it may not happen for many months and then we go through a phase where it happens often. Robert Hitchens along with our PCSOs' where necessary manage the situation accordingly. The consensus was that sawn logs left behind from previous tree work had been used, rather than new logs being sawn. Cllr Samaroo asked the resident if she would feel comfortable to contact Robert Hitchens directly with her concerns. The resident confirmed that she would be happy for the Clerk to forward her email to Robert Hitchens, however she would like her details to be redacted. **ACTION: Clerk**

W.06.06.24 Minutes of last meeting – Cllr Oakley proposed “**acceptance of the minutes of 15th May 2024**” This was seconded by Cllr Wood and unanimously agreed.

W.07.06.24 Clerk's Report –

The bin on Parish Bank that belongs to SDC has become further damaged and is now dangerous. This has been reported to SDC again who have confirmed that it should be replaced within the next two weeks.

Thomas Keble Bus Shelter Mural – Cllrs Samaroo and the Clerk’s visit to the school has been postponed, another date is to be arranged.

Meadow Way – The sign is being sourced. When a design is ready, ChalCAN will send this to us for the Committee’s comments.

A419 Triangle – The Clerk contacted the Biodiversity Chair to ask for a schedule of maintenance for this area, this would be useful to help answer questions. The Chair confirmed that ChalCAN maintain a mown border to ensure sight lights are not restricted. They cut back each August after the seeds have set and they remove the uprisings. They periodically inspect to remove perennial weeds which may threaten to choke established wildflowers. The Clerk has asked for some further details if possible. Cllr Oakley is hopeful that once the Local Nature Action Plan is in place, we will be able to draw on others expertise, and gain help and advice.

The Clerk reported that the second spring rocker at FLPG has broken. Due to the breakage of the trampoline, there is only a balance of £283.20 left in the play equipment repairs and improvements budget. The Clerk had contacted Eibe about the breakage as both spring rockers broke in exactly the same place and were only three and four years old, she asked how long we should have expected them to last. Eibe confirmed that they would have been covered by warranty if they were two years old, and this breakage is classed as wear and tear. However, Eibe also advised that the replacement spring rockers heads have been upgraded over the last 12 months to a more durable material to improve their lifespan. This suggests that the original rocker heads cannot have been fit for purpose, or alternative materials would not have been sought. The clerk was asked to pursue this with Eibe.

ACTION: Clerk

Given that three items of Eibe play equipment have now broken, Cllr Wood suggested that we remove the broken spring rocker for the time being we remove and make safe until such time as we can afford a replacement; the Committee agreed. Chris Attwood will remove the rocker base. **ACTION: Chris Attwood**

Highways contacted the Clerk to advise that County Cllr Turner has offered to fund some work in the parish to be carried out by the ‘Community Maintenance Gangs’ previously known as the Lengthsman Scheme. Cllr Oakley suggested that we ask if they can clear the side of pavements/roads from weeds. This job used to be carried out by Highways, but ceased, eventually the weeds will break up the kerb stones and/or tarmac, this would therefore be a very useful task and would save money in the long run. The Clerk suggested that the area of ‘no man’s land’ at the entrance to Farriers Croft could be cut back again as it is difficult to get this area to be maintained by residents. Cllr Oakley will walk the Manor Estate to identify areas, he will compile a list and take photos. **ACTION: Cllr Oakley**

Cllr Samaroo asked Chris Attwood about the play inspection course that he and Kieran had attended earlier in the day. Chris explained that he and Kieran had found the course to be interesting and informative, and he will be meeting with the Clerk next week to discuss some actions. Chris explained that Kieran is now able to carry out the play equipment inspections without his supervision. Chris advised the Committee that our playground signs need to be updated as they should include details of the office address and phone number, the what three words location and the location of the nearest defibrillator. These will need to be installed across each of our three paying fields. Cllr Wood noted that the quality of the existing signs was not good. Chris Attwood had mentioned this to the Clerk as he noticed that the signs are fading. The Clerk will see who they were purchased through. Chris Attwood will count how many signs we have in total. This will need to be taken to Finance and Management as signage is expensive and there is not sufficient funds in the signs budget. **ACTION: Clerk/RFO/Chris Attwood**

W.08.06.24 Works Budget – There were no questions. However, the tractor had required repair as it had an oil leak, the repairs have been carried out and we are waiting to be invoiced. Chris confirmed that the tractor is 22 years old, and he feels this will need replacing before the Land Rover. Chris has asked the company that carried out the repairs to give us some prices for a tractor.

W.09.06.24 Correspondence – Several emails concerning grass/path cutting have been received. The Groundsmen are cutting back footpaths to make them passable as quickly as possible but the wet and sunny weather has resulted in everything growing rapidly.

One concern relates to The Old Common, this area of land is owned and managed by SDC, and they have introduced a new cutting regime in this area. The Clerk has replied to the resident explaining this and asking for permission to forward their email to our contact at SDC.

Two concerns have been received about the noise caused by the Gliding Club at Aston Down. The Clerk explained that the Gliding Club are currently holding the Open and Standard Class National Gliding Championships from the 15th to 23rd June but should note that the residents feel it has become noisier generally due to the method of releasing the glider. Cllr Wood agreed that it has been far noisier than usual. It was agreed to contact the Gliding Club to ask how often we can expect this type of competition to be held at Aston Down, and to make them aware that we have received concerns from residents who are being disturbed by the noise. **ACTION: Clerk**

W.10.06.24 To consider the Committee's Terms or reference – Cllr Oakley suggested that the following additions were made:

5.1 Duties delegated by the Charity Committee ... This includes ***'but is not limited to'***

5.1.4 Finance and Management ***'and Full Council'***

The new employee contracts make it clear that the line of supervision lies with the Clerk, therefore 5.1.4 conflicts. Cllr Wood suggested 5.1.4 is amended to read ***'Engagement with Council employees and contractors involved in'...***

Cllr Wood proposed ***"we accept the Terms of Reference subject to these three amendments"*** This was seconded by Cllr Samaroo and unanimously agreed. **ACTION: Clerk**

W.11.06.24 France Lynch Pleasure Ground – To consider a request to hold Chalford Hill School PTA firework event – The PTA have provided a risk assessment and a copy of their insurance policy, and they have applied to GCC for the relevant footpath closures. The Clerk contacted the Church to ensure that the event does not clash with a remembrance service. Following a brief discussion Cllr Wood proposed ***"subject to the relevant footpath closures being agreed by GCC, and the necessary insurance and risk assessment, we allow Chalford Hill School PTA to hold their bonfire event on Saturday 9th November at France Lynch Pleasure Ground"*** This was seconded by Cllr Samaroo and unanimously agreed. **ACTION: Clerk/Assistant Clerk**

W.12.06.24 Bussage Pleasure Ground Project – to consider the Working Group's recommendation – Cllr Wood explained that this project is very much reliant on sourcing sufficient grant funding; but subject to this, the Finance and management Committee have agreed in principle to the Works Committee allocating up to £25,000 from the recreational grounds and open spaces ear marked reserve towards this project. As the Finance and Management Committee are not due to meet again until September, this will allow the Works Committee to go ahead with the project as soon as they are able. A public consultation has been held and feedback has been very positive. The Clerk gave the Committee a flavour of the comments that have been received. The working group have met with three play equipment providers and quotes have been obtained from each. Both wooden and metal fencing have been considered in each quote. There will be six new pieces of play equipment and the area will be securely fenced to allow younger children to play in a dog free area. Having taken all factors into consideration, price, service, durability etc, the working group recommend we proceed with Wicksteed. It was agreed to install metal fencing and the colour green was chosen as this suits the environment and is cost effective. Cllr Wood proposed ***"we accept the working groups recommendation as detailed above"*** This was seconded by Cllr Samaroo and unanimously agreed. The Clerks will continue to source grant funding. **ACTION: Clerk**

W.13.06.24 Footpath Group report – A copy of Cllr Oakley's report was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting. Cllr Oakley advised that he has formed some wording and will be consulting with residents as to what colour to paint the barriers; the suggestion is yellow.

Cllr Oakley also advised that the Group will be clearing vegetation from footpaths.

Cllr Wood asked if the Burcombe Way entrances to the France Lynch Pleasure Ground can be covered with hoggins in readiness for Chalfest. Cllr Oakley confirmed that the group will be carrying out this work at their next session which is in the morning.

W.14.06.24 Chris Attwood report – A copy of Chris Attwood's report was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting. Cllr Samaroo asked how the mole situation in Valley Pleasure Ground was. Chris Attwood confirmed that it doesn't seem too bad now that the wetter weather has passed. Cllr Wood confirmed this, he had recently taken a look and noticed a much smaller, isolated area where there were pieces of debris, but it certainly wasn't as bad as it had been. Chris Attwood will continue to monitor and clear any debris as necessary. **ACTION: Chris Attwood.**

W.15.06.24 Ward Matters – Cllr Oakley has noticed that the allotment sign and the Brownhill end of the site has become tatty and needs replacement. Chris Attwood confirmed that this is a laminated sign, he will remove it and the Clerks will provide a new copy. The Clerk confirmed that all allotment notices were being reviewed as the 'dog control order' has been replaced by a 'public spaces and protection order' The Assistant Clerk has ordered eight new signs from SDC. We will ensure that all signs across the three sites are consistent. **ACTION: Clerk/Assistant Clerk/Chris Attwood**

Cllr D Taylor informed that Committee that he is delighted that problem with the soakaway in Freame Close is now completely sorted and it no longer floods.

W.16.06.24 Any Other Matters – There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 19.48pm.