

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE OF WATER ORTON PARISH COUNCIL

held on Thursday 17th March 2023 at 1.30pm at the Pavilion, Open Field Croft.

Present: Cllr C. Chown (Chair), Cllr. N. Bevan, Cllr. S. Stuart. Cllr. P. Robinson from item M22/04.

Guests in Attendance: 0

Public in Attendance: 0

Minute Taker & Clerk: Kate Clover, clerkwopc@gmail.com

M22/01. To elect a Chair of the Maintenance Committee for 2022/23: It was RESOLVED to elect Cllr. Chown as Chair of the Maintenance Committee for 2022/23. Committee members agreed to recommend to full council to amend the structure of the Committee to a working group from 2023/24. Terms of reference for the working group would be set by full council and the aim would be that the working group would be able to meet informally to discuss maintenance matters and then notes of any action points / recommendations from such meetings would be fed back to full council for decision.

M22.02. Apologies: None.

M22/03. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations: None.

M22/04. Maintenance Budget, Asset Replacement Fund and priorities: Committee discussed the overall remaining maintenance budget for 2022/23 and although there was some underspend which would allow for certain expenditure to be agreed under the financial regulations, the committee were aware of some overspend in other areas and so would keep expenditure to a minimum. The 2023/24 budget was discussed and the Committee understood that the budget for next year had been kept to routine maintenance and no allowance had been given for any additional projects in order to keep the precept and spending from reserves to a minimum. The outstanding projects / ideas in relation to maintenance / asset replacement were discussed and it was agreed that the current priorities for the committee were to improve the security of the Green from unauthorised encampments and to replace the missing dog bin on the Green on the Attleboro Lane side.

M22/05. Risk Assessments and Risk Management: Clerk had begun to look at Risk Management document and various risk assessments for the various services and tasks carried out by staff. As the Clerks time is limited, Committee members were asked whether they were able to provide some support in assessing risk, particularly those relating to buildings and support staff tasks. Cllr Stuart offered to assist Clerk with the Risk Assessments and would be able to meet with staff to discuss their tasks for an hour each week to work on this. Clerk would liaise with Cllr Stuart and provide existing information and template documents as required. Clerk would contact Warwickshire County Council regarding their Lengthsman scheme with a view to securing appropriate training for both village caretakers.

M22/06. Bus Shelter (Birmingham Rd nr Railway Station): The Water Orton Community Action Group (WOCAG) consulted users of the bus shelters in 2020 and provided the following feedback to the Council regarding the existing shelter. Perspex is badly scratched but the design of the shelter does not provide adequate cover from wind/rain, the seats are uncomfortable and can only be perched upon. Aspirations for the replacement bus shelter were to provide an adequate shelter covered on at least three sides and fit around 4 people to sit comfortably. An electronic bus timetable would be welcomed. It was felt that a brick bus shelter consistent with the shelters on the opposite side of the road would be aesthetically pleasing.

WOCAG were currently carrying out further work on the friendship site and the committee felt that a decision on the design of the bus shelter should be deferred until this work had been completed. Further research on suitability and costings would be required. Cllr Bevan felt that consideration should be given to improving three bus shelter areas (outside Smith's Way, Birmingham Rd & opp. Park Road) and that the committee should look into any opportunities for partnership working with WCC & NWBC to try and secure some HS2 BLEF Funding to improve public transport infrastructure in Water Orton and the wider area.

M22/07. Bowls Pavilion: Clerk confirmed from records that the Parish Council own the land and building. The rent paid by Bowling Club was provided from a valuation based upon a lease stating that building maintenance & insurance would be carried out by the tenant. It is unknown whether the lease document drawn up at the time of this valuation was ever signed. The current rent is not sufficient to cover the cost of maintaining and insuring the pavilion. The Council should consider having the building and land revalued for rental purposes including insurance and maintenance or come to an agreement with the Bowling Club on the original lease document drawn up and

discuss how future maintenance costs will be met and clarify expectations between the Council and the Bowls Club. Professional advice should be sought with regards to lease agreements and valuations.

A commitment has been given from the Parish Council to improving the Bowls Club and increasing its reach in the community by accepting the HS2 Grant, further discussion will be needed with the Bowls Club on how to achieve the expected outcomes.

The Building Control permission was subject to meeting additional requirements in terms of fire precautions for warning and escape. Means of warning and escape have been submitted to Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service for comment. Proposed fire precautions for the premises include Fire detection/alarm system to BS5839:Part 1, Emergency lighting to BS5266:Part 1 and Fire signage to BS5499:Part 1.

M Jenkins Ltd would be providing costs for the additional electrical work incurred in meeting these conditions as they do not form part of the existing contract. It is anticipated that this work will be in the region of £1500-£2000 and can hopefully be covered within the contingency costs.

M22/08. Pavilion Maintenance:

- Groundsman store – The lock change was quoted at £55 and should be carried out shortly.
- Modem wires – A quote for £160 had been provided for a bespoke cupboard to be built to house the modem and wiring. Caretaker had advised he would be willing to install a shelf and cable tidy. Concerns were expressed about the security of the modem as occasionally hirers had turned the broadband off. An option was suggested of using cable clips to tidy the wires and a shelf could then be put in the kitchen for the modem. Clerk would discuss this option with caretakers.
- Cooker Switch – Clerk had been advised during handover that there was an outstanding action regarding relocating the cooker switch in the Pavilion kitchen. Maintenance Committee confirmed that this work had been carried out and no further action was required.

M22/09. Playing Field & Play Equipment:

- Kickboard Repairs have not yet been invoiced; Cllr Robinson would check to see if the repairs have been completed.
- Play equipment project has stalled due to limited funding opportunities and reserves. Clerk advised that funding conditions often involve providing proof of land ownership and although the Parish Council have proof of maintaining the land for almost a century and have had play equipment on the Green since at least 1939, the land remains unregistered and further work is required to prove ownership to HM Land Registry. WCC have WOPC listed as the vested owners of this common land. Clerk has enquired with archive services in Birmingham and Warwickshire about records held for Water Orton. Cllr Robinson has also spoken to a local resident with a connection to a local historian to check for further information. A visit to the archive services may be required for further investigation.
- Painting of equipment – Village caretakers had not painted equipment in the previous year in anticipation of equipment being replaced, this year it was recognised that the painting of equipment would need to be prioritised. Caretakers traditionally work on annualised hours due to the nature of the role and the summer months involve grass cutting and watering plants (including watering planters for Water Orton in Bloom) The painting of equipment would also need to be carried out in fair weather and the Council will need to look into prioritising the village caretakers workload in order to ensure it is manageable. Clerk would look to arrange a meeting with Water Orton in Bloom to discuss how duties are shared and whether any additional volunteers could be sought to help with watering plants throughout the summer as these duties were taking up a significant amount of staff resources.
- Pitch Maintenance – Conditions this winter had resulted in some damage to the pitch, caretakers had reported that they are having to line the pitch marker directly onto mud and this would wash away each time it rains, so more time is being spent on marking the pitches due to this. End of season maintenance should be considered, Cllr Robinson would speak to the Bowls Club and Cricket Club for further advice on maintenance. Clerk advised that there were some grants available from the football foundation which local authorities were now able to apply for so this could be investigated.
- Goal Post Sockets – One of the hinged sockets had broken, replacement sockets (to use with socket covers) are in groundsman store but caretaker had suggested this was done after the season finished in a few weeks so that matches were not affected. Cllr Stuart suggested the Council and Football Club consider purchasing goals on wheels, which were FA approved as this would mean that the Council could move the pitch to help with areas suffering with wear and tear. Grants available from the Football foundation for the purchase of pairs of goalposts. Council should consider further discussion with the football club regarding this. Cllr Bevan felt that the Pavilion and pitch were not fully utilised and that the Council should explore options to increase the use of facilities.
- Boot Cleaning – Item deferred.

M22/10. Dog Bins and Litter Bins: The committee resolved to replace the former dog bin with a general waste bin which had a larger capacity and could be emptied by the village caretakers saving the cost of NWBC emptying the dog bin. Cllr Stuart suggested that the dog bin near the school could be moved to replace the missing dog bin near to Attleboro Lane and the new general waste bin could be placed near the school instead as the larger capacity of the general waste bin is likely to be better utilised in this area and the existing dog bin near the school smells particularly unpleasant for passing students and families. The Committee were in favour of this proposal. Clerk would discuss this option with the caretakers to ensure that it will be possible to re-site the existing dog bin.

M22/11. Replacement Bollards / Additional Knee Rail Fencing, The Green: The Council would need to get consent from the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State (DEFRA) to add further fencing due to this being common land. Due to budget constraints and planning constraints it was felt that the best course of action would be to fix the existing bollards. Cllr Robinson would speak to Stibbs haulage for a quotation for this work and the Clerk would speak to the caretakers to see if they would be able to carry out these repairs.

M22/12. Spring Planting: It was RESOLVED for a budget of up to £250 to be set for the purchase of plants and compost for planters belonging to the Parish Council. The Clerk in conjunction with Cllr Bevan as Chair of Finance were able to authorise this expenditure under the financial regulations. Water Orton in Bloom are responsible for purchasing materials for the sponsored planters. Clerk would contact Water Orton in Bloom for details of their plans for spring planting.

M22/13. Ramp for Van: It was RESOLVED to allow the purchase of ramps for van up to the value of £40 due to this mitigating the risk of injury to caretakers when loading equipment. Clerk in conjunction with Cllr Bevan as head of the finance committee were able to authorise this expenditure under the financial regulations. Cllr Chown suggested the Clerk obtains some quotations for vinyl printing of the Parish Council logo on the van for consideration at a future meeting, the committee was in favour of this action.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 15:10pm

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