

**Meeting of the Operations Committee
held on Thursday 23rd February 2023
at River Bourne Community Farm
MINUTES**

Councillors present: Maskell (Chair), Barker, McDonald

In attendance: Elder (Operations Assistant), Prince (Responsible Financial Officer RFO)

The meeting commenced at 7pm.

0.23.01 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr's Smith, Vanstone, Lynn

Resolved: To accept the apologies received.

0.23.02 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

0.23.03 Approval of Minutes of Meeting

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24th November 2022

0.23.04 Matters Arising – from minutes

Ops Assistant reported that the contract for St Luke's and St Peter's play areas had been awarded to eibe Play Ltd. The contract is scheduled to commence on 3rd March with completion on 11th August 2023.

The Sycamore Drive Invitation To Tender has been issued and The Clerk has received four Intentions To Tender. Clarification questions have been received and responded to as per the schedule.

The Ops Assistant reported that he had spoken to the Head Grounds man at Wiltshire Cricket who advised that the cricket pitch at the Green, Bishopdown Farm was not suitable for adult cricket and that the wicket could be reinstated back to grass. This would allow the area to be reinstated as a wicket but it would have to be a formal arrangement with a junior cricket club to maintain the wicket.

0.23.05 Bishopdown Play Area update

The Ops Assistant reported that three quotes for the refurbishment of Drake Close PA, £34k, £24k and £15k. The lowest price quote was submitted by Redlynch leisure. Councilor Waller has expressed an opinion that she is not in favour of Springers. Redlynch Leisure has offered an alternative to the two Springers, which is an above ground play tunnel. Ops Assistant recommend that the Ops committee accepts the Redlynch quote for discussion at Full Council and that the ops committee may wish to consider recommending either option one – a play area with two springers, or option two, a play area with an above ground tunnel. Both options are within the Redlynch quotation price.

Resolved: to recommend to Full Council the Redlynch quote for refurbishment of Drake play area, to include two springers.

0.23.06 Norman Drive MUGA

Ops Assistant reported that Wiltshire Council have stated that all legal expenses relating to the Deed of Variation for Norman Drive MUGA must be paid for by Vistry. Wiltshire Council are waiting for Vistry to confirm or reject payment of legal fees. This item will be carried over to the next Ops Committee meeting.

0.23.07 Parish Environmental Action Group

Councilor Barker reported that the first meeting of the Parish Environmental Action Group (PEAG) had taken place at the Skies café. The meeting was attended by three members of the public, all very keen and brought lots of experience. One is keen on archeology and organizing walks, another is a keen cyclist and is interested in cycle routes and another who is not that familiar with the local area but is keen to take part in walks. There are also five people who have volunteered to be Footpath Wardens. Cllr Barker had taken advice from the Parish Clerk on insurance for volunteers and the outcome is that the volunteers will be covered by the Parish Council insurance however, they will not be insured for the use of electrical, machinery or power tools unless they undertake a specific course of training.

The next meeting of the PEAG will take place on Saturday 25th February at which PEAG members will provide an update on planned archeological walks to include the medieval bridge at Milford and ancient burial grounds in Old Sarum. Footpaths will be the focus of the next meeting and it is intended that a map of local footpaths will be developed and that on a monthly basis one of the volunteers will prepare a short description of a walk along a footpath. Cllr Barker also reported that as part of the PEAG she will be looking at Dark Skies as there is light pollution. She reported that a letter had been sent to Wiltshire Highway to ask if there were plans to install low energy lights and as yet there has been no response to the letter.

0.23.08 Operations Policy

Cllr Barker reported that The Parish Clerk had advised that the item regarding the Planning Policy and Guidelines had been removed from the agenda. Cllr Maskell asked what policies need to be addressed. Cllr McDonald stated that he had previously submitted a tree policy and that we need to identify a grading and frequency of inspection system. Ops Assistant informed the committee that he and the Parish Clerk had met that week with Jonathan Astill, Arboriculturist, to discuss this matter. The grading system proposed by Astill Tree Consultancy, covered the areas of Urgent (for immediate action) High, Medium and Low. The frequency of inspections for the majority of areas would be 3 ½ years and for two areas it would be 2 ½ years. This cycle would allow him to survey the trees in different seasons of the year.

The Ops Assistant advised that policy would need to be developed in the areas of Health and Safety, Flood Management and Environmental Policy.

0.23.09 Officers Report

Whitebridge Spinney

Ops officer reported that he has contacted the Environment Agency regarding the trees at Whitebridge Spinney, which are impeding the flow of the river along both banks (parish and private land). The fallen trees have been identified as requiring action following the recent tree survey.

Longhedge Play Areas

McCudden Drive and Trigg Green have had their play equipment installed; however, we are still waiting for the turf and gravel paths to be laid, which is weather dependent. Vistry PM advised that turfing should take place in the spring. Campbell Vale has been turfed and the gravel paths are in the final stages of being laid.

Outdoor Gym

The Outdoor Gym has been installed at Campbell Vale. Work is currently underway on the surface matting and the aim is for the Outdoor Gym and Campbell Vale Green Play Area to be opened at the same time.

Infiltration System

This was entirely fenced off along the Longhedge side of the Swales in mid-December for public safety reasons relating to the depth of water in the Swales. The issue between the developer and the contractor around the

construction of the Swales has been resolved and the contractor has begun remedial work to reduce the levels between the swales to enable the flow of water.

Tryhorn Drive – Bund

While noted it is not an official access route, it is still being used by people to gain access/egress to and from the school, and the bund has become very slippery over the winter period. Hannah Bosence from the Land Trust was asked to advise on a solution to prevent trips and falls. She concluded that Hessian matting of the type used to prevent soil erosion was not suitable as it, itself could become a trip hazard and she commented that the use of steps dug into the bund may be an option. A solution is required to this issue and the committee may wish to consider if we should investigate a means of allowing people to safely traverse the bund. If we agree to this then we must also consider the installation of providing steps up the mound immediately in front of the bund.

Action: Ops Assistant to investigate options for Bund improvements.

The meeting ended at 8.30pm

Next meeting: Date of next meeting of the Operations Committee will be held on Thursday 25th May 2023