

**Meeting of the Operations Committee
held on Thursday 29th February
at River Bourne Community Farm
MINUTES**

Councillors present: McDonald (Chair), Barker, Williams

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

The meeting commenced at 7.13pm.

0.24.01 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Lynn

Resolved: To accept the apologies received.

0.24.02 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

0.24.03 Approval of Minutes of Meeting

Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 14th September 2023 and 30th November 2023.

0.24.04 Matters Arising – from minutes

The Ops Officer stated that matters arising in respect of Norman Drive MUGA would be addressed later at 0.24.12 below.

Duck Lane Ball Court – the Ops Officer advised that he had not had success in obtaining reasonable proposals to refurbish the ball court.

0.24.05 Ops Committee

The Ops Committee discussed the issues of the committee's work as a working group. Councillor McDonald gave an overview of both arrangements and asked for views on this. Councillor Barker stated that being a working group would not diminish what we could achieve and that her preference would be to go forward as a working group. Councillor McDonald agreed and summarised the view of the operations group was for a preference as a Working Group. Councillor McDonald iterated that if we were to go ahead as a committee then there should be further discussion on decision making rather than making recommendations as at present. Recommended that discussion on this issue to take place at the Full Council.

0.24.06 Community Emergency Volunteer Group

An update on the developments of the Community Emergency Volunteer Group (CEV) was given by the Ops Officer, stating that a meeting had taken place between the CEV and the Environment Agency lead for community engagement, who presented detailed information on flood issues and methods for self-help. Councillor McDonald asked if Melksham Without parish council provided administrative support to the volunteers and if Laverstock & Ford may have to finance an administrative assistance. The Operations Officer advised that the coordinator had already identified the need for a volunteer to carry out a secretariat role and that this function would be carried out by the CEV group.

Councillors also discussed the need for the Laverstock & Ford group to link into other local volunteer groups.

0.24.07 Parish Environmental Action Group

Councillor Barker provided an update to the ops committee on the work of the Parish Environmental Action Group (PEAG). There was a meeting of the PEAG at the Boscombe Down Aviation Group at which there was a presentation and demonstration from DBCT on flooding and a talk by the CEV Coordinator. It is intended to invite the CEV team to a future PEAG meeting to discuss areas of common interest.

0.24.08 Operations Policy

The Ops officer presented a draft Business Continuity Plan to the committee before the meeting. A general discussion took place on the structure and content of the draft document, and it was proposed that as the document applied to the parish council as a whole, it should be circulated to all Councillors for comment.

0.24.09 Whitebridge Road Play Area

The Operations Officer stated that the draft Tender for the refurbishment of the Whitebridge Road Play Area was nearing completion and that he would need to have the maximum figure of the budget for inclusion in the Tender document. The RFO advised the committee of the funding arrangements and the sum of £82,000 was agreed for the project.

0.24.10 Bus Shelter

Following the decision at the Full Council to adopt the bus shelter on the A338, two options were presented to the committee. Option 1 – demolish existing structure and replace it with a new metal and glass shelter and option 2 – remove dilapidated roof and wooden framework and install new roof. The committee considered the merits of both options and accepted option 2.

0.24.11 Saunders Avenue MUGA

Discussion took place on the merits of three quotes for the erection of two sports walls, one of the quotes was discounted due to concerns about the ease of climbing. Concerns were also raised regarding the lack of an escape route to the rear of the sports walls. The Ops Officer was asked to contact suppliers to discuss an escape route at the rear of the sports wall.

0.24.12 Norman Drive MUGA

The RFO provided a brief on the funding of the MUGA. Following discussion, it was agreed that Norman Drive was not a suitable location for the siting of a MUGA. Alternative sites were also discussed, and it was proposed that the Ops Officer look at land on the Longhedge estate suitable for a MUGA.

0.24.13 Officer Report

The Ops Officer advised councillors of the recommendations made following the tree survey carried out at Bishopdown farm. It was recommended by the Arboriculturist that the London Plane trees at The Green, Bishopdown Farm should be considered for pollarding as a means of managing those trees. The Ops Officer further advised that invitations for quotes for the work would be issued,

The meeting closed at 8:50 pm

Next meeting: The next meeting of the Operations Committee will be held on Thursday 25th April 2024 at the Parish Council office, River Bourne Community Farm, Cow Lane, Laverstock.