



# Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Incorporating Milford, Bishopdown Farm, Old Sarum & Longhedge

Meeting held virtually at 7.00pm on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021

## OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

**Councillors Present:** Barker, Maskell (Chair), McDonald, Rigiani

**In attendance:** Prince (Clerk), Deane (Deputy Clerk), Cavendish (Operations Officer)

This was a virtual council meeting. In accordance with current regulations, no resolutions or decisions are able to be made at this virtual meeting. Members of the public may still attend and may address the Committee at the start of the meeting.

**O.21.019 Apologies**

No apologies were received.

**O.21.020 Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

**O.21.021 Draft Minutes of Meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

No comments were received regarding the Draft Minutes of 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**O.21.022 Matters Arising**

No current Matters Arising.

**Action List**

Skatepark Youth Art Project is progressing. The Operations Officer reported that Old Sarum Youth Group has given approval to host the project. The project will held in the Spring as it will need to be light enough for the activity to be held at 7pm when the Youth Group meets. The Youth Group will apply to the Parish Council and Area Board for funding in collaboration with the Operations Officer.

The Speed Indicator Device (SID) order has been placed and the Council are waiting for confirmation of the installation of the ground sockets.

The Land Trust have written to the Clerk to ask if the Council would give permission for Castle Hill Country Park to be designated as site for Biodiversity Net Gain. The Committee agreed in principle to the proposition.

The Clerk will give Hannah Bosence of the Land Trust the outline approval.

### **O.21.023 Bishopdown Farm Play Areas**

St Peter's and St Luke's play areas will soon be coming into the ownership of Laverstock and Ford Parish Council. The Clerk suggested that the Asset Replacement Fund may be considered to refurbish the sites. An estimated cost of £50,000 per play area would be required to refurbish each site. To carry out basic safety works would cost in the region of £12,000 for each site. The equipment is however currently 25 years old and made of timber, this gives an estimated remaining life span of 8-10 years.

Cllr Barker and Maskell suggested that by patching up the equipment it would be throwing good money after bad. The current asset replacement fund stands at £129,000. Each year 5% of the current asset value is added to the fund from the precept. This year the asset value was £1.3million. Cllr Barker asked if it was a possibility to close the play areas until funds were available.

The Clerk explained that most of the assets were obtained in the last 5 to 6 years so there is a significant lifespan left in most of the equipment. The exception to this is Whitebridge Play Area which may be considered as requiring replacement in the near future.

The Deputy Clerk informed the council that some of the equipment is dangerous and will require immediate removal. The bark will also require replacement with grass. An option would be to remove dangerous equipment and replace equipment in phases when funding was available. Cllr Maskell felt that the Asset Replacement Fund should be used as it was the purpose of the fund. Cllr McDonald agreed that the fund is there to be used but remove equipment and keep the parks open as an interim.

It was agreed by informal vote that the Council would initiate the Tender Process.

### **O.21.024 Ford Cycle Route**

Three propositions have been previously made to join Amesbury to Salisbury via Porton by cycle route. The preferred route crosses private land and the landowner has rejected the proposition. The only option is for Wiltshire Council to pursue a Compulsory Purchase Order. In order for Wiltshire Council to do this they must fully investigate other routes. Both involve the use of Ford Road instead of just a crossing.

The councillors indicated that they were still happy to support Resolution 19.173. In order to progress, the Cycle group must prove other options could not be completed safely, the Parish Council support these investigations.

#### **O.21.025 Allotments**

The Operations Officer informed the Council that investigations had been made into the provision of allotments within the Parish. The most suitable option was recommended to be sited at Castle Hill Country Park alongside the Community Growing Space.

Councillors supported further investigations into using Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to fund allotments in conjunction with the Land Trust. A restriction would be supported to restrict the use of the allotments to the residents of the Parish only initially to be reviewed

#### **O.21.026 Use of Community Infrastructure Levy**

CIL money has been spent previously on items such as litter bins and footpaths. The upcoming CIL funding from the Castle Hill Country Park development is half of the standard rate, as is the development at Longhedge.

The Deputy Clerk requested that CIL funding be used for a noticeboard at Longhedge subject to agreement from managing agent regarding location.

#### **O.21.027 Environmental Policy**

The Operations Officer presented research with potential policy points. Cllr McDonald felt that the policy should be a succinct document with an Action Plan worked on by the Operations Committee to achieve the policy points. The Action Plan would have goals over a set number of years.

The Clerk requested that Point D be expanded to include buildings. Cllr McDonald also requested that 'local' was included in the policy to ensure local businesses were prioritised.

The Operations Officer will produce a one page document with policy points for consideration by the council.

#### **O.21.028 Bus Shelters**

There are three locations remaining from the identified list of potential bus shelter locations. These include St Peter's Road, Bishopdown on land soon to be owned by the Council as well as locations at Greenwood Avenue and Church Road, Laverstock. Previously £12,000 has been budgeted each year to provide new bus shelters. The Deputy Clerk advised that there are a lot of upcoming budget pressures so recommended suspending the programme for at least twelve months to focus on maintenance only.

The Committee supported suspending the installation programme and budgeting £1,000 for maintenance only.

**O.21.029 Use of Old Sarum Youth and Adult Offsite Recreation Fund**

The Committee did not support putting a MUGA on the strip of land running alongside Norman Drive as it was too close to existing properties. The Clerk raised the limit to development on both height (4m) and archaeology.

Cllr Baker discussed the possibility of using the fund to assist the Scouts who are currently looking for a community building in Old Sarum or Longhedge. It was agreed that the money within the fund was not sufficient to fund a building for the local Scout group.

The Clerk informed the Committee that the fund will potentially increase if the development at Westfield Close is approved.

The Committee supported Operations Officer carrying out further investigation of an installation of a MUGA at Norman Drive.

**O.21.030 Tree Policy**

The Operations Officer recommended that the current Tree Policy should be reviewed as it is not currently being followed. It was also recommended that a replacement policy should be written into the policy due to the number of diseased trees that the Parish would be shortly acquiring.

Cllr Maskell recommended that the timelines within the currently policy be reviewed. Cllr McDonald recommended that the Tree Policy be reviewed in tandem with the Environmental to ensure that the environment is being enhanced. The Operations Officer recommended a working group be set up to review the policy. Cllr McDonald agreed to be a member of the working group.

The Clerk will take the report away from the meeting and make suggestions to Full Committee for inclusion in the budget.

**O.21.031 Budget 2022/2023**

The Clerk explained that the Operation's budget can be estimated for items such as litter bins, grass cutting and playground maintenance. No further input is required from the Committee at this time.

The virtual meeting closed at 9.05pm.