



Minutes of the Meeting of the Operations Committee Held on Friday 30th June at 2pm in the Parish Office followed by a Walkabout to identify issues the committee needs to deal with

Present:

Councillors:

Ian Hill (IH) – Chairman
Andy Aherne (AA) – Vice-Chair
Roger Beattie (RB)
Keith Jackson (KJ)
Leo Pesci (LP)
Tim Horton (TH)

Co-opted:

Rob Smith (RS), Jenny Wilkinson (JW)

Officer:

Kristina Tynan (KT)

37/23 Apologies for absence

38/23 Minutes of the meeting held on 25th May 2023 which were received by Council on 20th June 2023 to be agreed as a correct record

Resolved: That the note of this meeting was a correct record of this meeting and that it be signed by the Chairman.

39/23 Declarations of Interest

There were none notified.

40/23 Matters arising

None other than agenda items.

41/23 New Tasks

a) **Installation of public toilets in the recreation ground** – Report from IH on progress

A Monkey Survey on line survey has been done and will be put on-line. A note on this to go into the Watlington Times.

b) **Removal of one High Street parking space outside the Orange Bakery** – TH proposed that we look at removing one space which would also allow the bus to get through more easily. This space could then be built out which would also make it harder to illegally park here. RS suggested putting bollards on the pavement by the Granary Café to stop illegal parking. It was thought that we should speak to the bus company and as there is a Public Transport meeting soon at OCC IH and TH will bring this issue up and see if OCC will take some responsibility. LP suggested putting red lines down which may be more effective than yellow lines. We would need to check if this is possible. We should also ask the WBA for their ideas.

c) **Repair / replacement of fence along northern edge of the Allotments** – It was agreed that this be looked at during the walkabout.

d) **Location of dog waste bin on Shirburn Road and Cuxham Road**– IH proposed putting this on the cul de sac sign on Allnuts Close. KT to check if this is acceptable.

e) **Responsibility for MUGA maintenance** – transfer from Major Projects Group in May – need to assess implications on Ops budget . KT reported that the MUGA does have its own budget for maintenance but this should be assessed as part of Operations remit.

g) **Commemorative bench proposal from Support Fund** – proposal from May Ops to identify a location by the new footpath from Red Kite View to Cuxham Road. A site would need to be identified.

h) **Coronation of King Charles planting of a memorial tree** – proposal from JW that we should do this. There was suggestions of putting one in Red Kite View or at Marlbrook. This could then have a simple plaque next to it.

i) **Map in bus shelter at Lewknor**- discussion on whether to replace. It was thought that it would be good to replace these, following the maps being updated at this location and also at Hill Road Car Park. KT to obtain some quotes. TH said that OCC have the formal responsibility for this bus shelter but we could see if OCC would give an annual grant for WPC to maintain.

j) **Priority list for road repairs for OCC** – TH said that the three main roads are Brook Street, Britwell Road and Spring Lane and the committee agreed with these. A letter to be sent to FvM stating this. It was also noted that the footpath on Brook Street needs attention.

k) **Broken Bench in Paddock** – KT has had no luck sourcing this from Aston Woodshop so will speak to Nettlebed Saw Mill.

42/23 Task list for Operations committee

The list of current tasks is attached together with proposed actions for information only. It will not be reviewed at this meeting.

43/23 Progress with current tasks

Report on any tasks where an urgent decision is needed. Please notify committee in advance of meeting of any such items. Other tasks will not be reviewed

44/23 Correspondence

1. Freshwater Habitats – This has been passed to WCAG
2. Few emails about the parking problem at the top of the High Street and the bus not getting through.
3. OCC – New Community Tree and Woodland Opportunity co-ordinator and office for OCC. This tree service is able to provide watering cans and advice on young tree care to any volunteers. They are also going to be looking at possibilities for future planting projects over the next few years.

45/23 Any Other Business

MUGA – It was noted that Smurfit has put up a sign advertising here

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 13.50 AND THE COMMITTEE STARTED THE WALKABOUT.

Notes from Walkabout

Parish Office

- Noted that woodwork of Office would be repainted in August.

Paddock

- Four of the benches had seat planks that needed replacing or refixing to the bases.
- The benches along the Gorwell side of the paddock are covered by low hanging branches.
- The table and benches unit near the gate to Davenport place is in poor condition and probably needs replacing or at least serious repairs.

- All the benches are covered in moss and need to be cleaned.
- The bins near the entrance to the toddlers play area and in the toddlers play area are buried in bushes.
- Need to get the “sink holes” dealt with

Davenport Place

- Noted that it has low hanging growth from residents’ gardens in places – need to get residents to cut this back.

Brook Street

- Noted that HGVs and school coaches were going up onto the south side pedestrian path of Brook Street where the road is narrowest. OCC to deal with this.
- The lid of the salt box has fallen to pieces. Either a new lid should be fitted, or the salt bin should be removed.
- It was noted that tree roundels looked good after having been cleaned up and replanted, but one still needed attention.

Footpath at Pilgrims Cottage

- The southern end was being used regularly and is in reasonable condition, but the part north of the vet surgery car park was getting overgrown with lots of nettles.

Hill Road Car Park

- It was agreed that we get quotes for providing a sloped path for wheelchairs and buggies with a dropped kerb at the top end.
- TH described the proposal installation of a drain along the Watcombe Road end of the car park. it was agreed that we go ahead with this, but that also a trap be included to prevent the drain filling with mud.
- There was much discussion over what to do at the telephone box corner. Suggested a small group prepare proposals for making a feature of this corner.

Letts Alley

- The partially collapsed wall needs urgent repair. IH to approach Brakspears about getting it rebuilt.

Recreation ground

- Agreed to remove the tree causing damage to vans using the track between the Love Lane houses and the Rec and get advice on the feasibility of laying the remainder into a hedge.
- Agreed Smurfit bins could be placed alongside the path beyond the boot brush, but there was concern about giving one business use of an area for storage.
- Half Pipe - Some members of the committee pointed to the flaking edges of the wood under the horizontal sheeting of the 'ledges' . They are in no worse condition than two years ago when we did the reset of the main sheeting. They are fully covered by steel and in my view do not represent a significant problem. HOWEVER, what does need fixing is one of the sheets on the elevation closer to the pavilion. There is no foul graffiti under the halfpipe and that could be left. The runs have no trip points and that is key. There were concerns about the badly delaminated landing platforms of the half-pipe but the steel sheets covering them are sound.
- The grass areas that were sown after installation of MUGA is weed ridden with very little sign of grass. In addition, stones and rubble have been left all over the surface which will make it impossible to mow.
- TH had prepared a list of play equipment items that needed attention. The most urgent are the basket swing which now has a hole through it in which a child’s leg could get caught and the climbing equipment in the younger children’s area where some of the safety chains are broken.
 1. The infant 'walkway' - A horizontal rope is broken, and its seating distorted. Can Playdale fix this asap? Medium risk
 2. Entrance gate to small children’s area - The gate on the Love Lane side has, I think, a loose/fractured bearing . Playdale?

3. Plastic lacing to swing seat - This is breaking up. Not a wide patch at the moment - but could hurt a child. Might be taken down to ameliorate the risk? Playdale?
4. Some of the adult exercise equipment needs attention. Can we have tested the bearings issues (Playdale?) as these just get more expensive over time.
5. Barbed Wire - This wiring along that area never seems to last - but there are currently three strands of wire just of ground level. This is a considerable risk. The wire might be removed or replaced.
6. Thistle in chipped area under the monkey climber - This thistle started to appear two years ago. If it is not removed it will get a grip. Needs to be pulled out.
7. 'Carpet'/Braided material on zip-wire take off – This is now heavily worn out. As it is a high level it represents a serious trip point
8. Chips under zip wire -The last batch seems to have better lasting quality than the batch before - but a rake over is required to gain advantage. Can this be in an office diary?
9. We need to review the safety survey carried out by Playdale to make sure all serious hazards are addressed.
 - Under roof of youth shelter - There is a good deal of graffiti and sexual drawing - needs strong material to remove - (same as bus stop no doubt)
 - Trees - Ian rightly draws attention to the growth out of the hedge line on the 'rear of Love Lane' trackway. My view is that we will lose enormous time hunting down our own adviser (Gammie?) These are hawthorns and taken together with the trees actually inside the play area create a 'too crowded' feel and are even to an amateur distorting the growth of better species. Can we simply map the hawthorns we don't want to submit directly to SODC for removal/reduction. It should still be possible to save the hedge line with some autumn planting of say laurel.

Allotment fence

- The fence is ineffective as it has been trampled down in many places. Barbed wire on the ground is a safety hazard. The full length of the fence needs to be replaced.

We did not have time to get to the following items.

- Safety light MUGA
- Roundabouts
 - Britwell Rd/ Cuxham Rd
 - Cuxham Rd/Industrial estate (Had been inspected by AA and LP, little scope for improvement)
- Hedges in Pyrton Lane
- Marlbrook bollards (Rob Smith and IH had planned this last year, and would pick it up now)
- Installation of a dog bin at the entrance to Allnut Close (photo of proposed location circulated at meeting, some reservations about how useful it would be)
- Overgrown sidewalk from Castle Green (IH inspected earlier in the week – growth is not substantial and could be easily addressed by work party)