

AGENDA ITEM 22i

BOWERHILL RESIDENTS ACTION GROUP (BRAG)

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 20th May via Zoom, hosted by Mark Harris

Start: The meeting started at 19.03

1. **Appointment of Minutes Secretary.**

Sue Tweedie volunteered to take the minutes of this meeting.

2. **Welcome, Housekeeping and Apologies.**

Mark Harris formally welcomed members to the meeting and reminded them that the meeting was being recorded to assist with minute-taking.

Those present:-

Mark Harris (Lead Member)
Mark Blackham (Acting Treasurer)
Pauline Shea-Simonds (Committee Member)
Pauline Helps (Committee Member)

Robert Shea-Simonds (Member)
Sharon Pike (Member)
Luke Anstee (Member)
Caroline Fielding (Member)
Sue Tweedie (Member)

There being four committee members present the meeting was quorate.

Apologies were received from Nick Holder, John Glover, David Pafford, Dale Robinson and Marilyn Mills.

David Pafford and Sheila May have resigned their positions on the committee.

Mark Harris has taken David Pafford's place as the MWPC representative on the BRAG Committee.

3. **Co-Option of new members onto committee.**

The following members were co-opted onto the committee.

Proposed by Mark Harris and unanimously accepted:-

Robert Shea-Simonds
Sharon Pike
Sue Tweedie
Caroline Fielding

4. **Appointment of Acting Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary.**

Committee members were appointed to the following positions:-

Mark Harris – Acting Chair
Robert Shea-Simonds – Acting Vice-Chair
Sue Tweedie – Acting Secretary

5. **Minutes of the previous meeting.**

It was pointed out by Robert that the outstanding business was highlighted in red. The minutes of the meeting dated 15th April 2021 had been previously circulated by email. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mark Harris, seconded by Robert Shea-Simonds and agreed by all present.

6. **Matters arising (Unfinished Business).**

Sue Tweedie suggested an agenda item for all matters arising to be discussed under a separate agenda item entitled Unfinished Business and New Business.

Therefore, for the purposes of these minutes the items in red from the previous minutes will now be listed as Unfinished Business.

- A) Mark Harris made contact with Jenny Butcher re mowing of the grass on each side of the bridle-path to the canal and it was agreed that some areas would be left uncut.
- B) Mark Harris has had no reply from the Primary School re bulb-planting but will chase this up. It was not known if David Pafford had made contact with the Secondary School but Robert Shea-Simonds offered to contact David to see if this had happened. Sharon will approach garden centres in the autumn for free bulbs. Sharon also met with Paul Jupp who advised on the community project proposed at Brabazon Way. However, no progress can be made until BRAG has permission from WC to adopt the two areas either end of Brabazon Way and designate them Brabazon Way Community Wildlife Gardens. **Action Mark Harris, Robert Shea-Simonds and Sharon Pike.**

- C) Benches and picnic tables - to follow this up for clarification on which benches are to be adopted by MWPC. No more benches or picnic tables will be installed at Hornchurch Road until the anti-social behaviour has ceased. Caroline suggested relocating the proposed new picnic table either to the green opposite Tesco or the grassy knoll on Falcon Way (this will be an agenda item at the next meeting). It was noted that two new benches have been installed along the bridleway with one more still to be installed at the top of the path near the parking area. **Action Mark Harris.**
- D) Minutes of previous meetings have been sent to Teresa Strange for inclusion on the MWPC website, but this has not yet been done. **Action Mark Harris.**
- E) Pauline Helps has arranged a litter pick for 19th June with arrangements to meet at The Pilot at 2pm.

7. Correspondence.

No correspondence had been received.

8. Treasurer's report.

Mark Blackham is now a full signatory on the account and applied for online banking on 19/5/21. Mark Harris thanked Mark Blackham for the comprehensive report and Robert Shea-Simonds reiterated thanks to Mark B's son for creating the logo.

Recent committed expenditure (spent but not yet paid out):

- ♣ Bark chippings - £60+£60
- ♣ Strimmer fuel/cord - £75
- ♣ Paint - £30
- ♣ Compost - £20
- ♣ Zoom account - £28
- ♣ Total:£273

♣ Recent income

- ♣ Wiltshire Council - £2511 (Ring fenced for tables and benches)
- ♣ Tesco Grant (Groundworks) - £1000
- ♣ Total: £3511

♣ Bank account

♣ Signatory > Online banking > Treasurer

♣ Identify and update contacts for regular grant sources:

- ♣ Contacted Seend PC to update contacts
- ♣ Melksham TC grant follow up. Payment already received
- ♣ Tesco grant follow up submitted and payment received

♣ Current account standing £4233.63

9. Melksham Without Parish Council Report.

Councillor Mark Harris read his report and discussion ensued.

Cllr John Glover has been elected Chair and Cllr David Pafford Vice-Chair. Cllr Nick Holder has been elected Wiltshire Councillor for the Bowerhill Ward.

The Melksham Neighbourhood Plan has been approved by the Wiltshire Council Inspector and goes to referendum on the 1st of July. It has been declared a model for future neighbourhood plans. Although the Town and Parish Councils have no say in planning applications, objections and comments can be made and hopefully influence decisions. The planning application for 50 houses behind Townsend Farm has been refused and the MNHP was quoted extensively in the Planning Officer's refusal.

The Seend Parish Neighbourhood Plan recently went to referendum and has been adopted. The BRAG Picnic Area and Giles Wood are now "protected green space" within that plan.

The Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner election will be re-run on the 19th of August with funding from central Government.

Parish Council notice-boards are now back in use.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on the 26th May in Bowerhill Village Hall and will be a hybrid meeting. According to current legislation ALL councils must resume face to face meetings.

The public art piece on Pathfinder Way and the Parish notice-board for Pathfinder Place are still "works in progress".

A350 Melksham Bypass Project - there will be a major update at the next Area Board meeting on June 23rd.

There is a proposal to reduce the speed limit along Pathfinder Way from 40mph to 30mph.

The New Berryfield Village Hall project is ongoing. Eight tenders were received from contractors and are currently under examination.

Construction of the Melksham Community Campus is underway. When completed (estimated to be late 2022) the MWPC offices will relocate there from the Sports Pavilion in Westinghouse Way.

The litter bin in Hornchurch Road Park is to be moved nearer to the picnic tables and concreted in. Caroline suggested that a bin on Falcon Way, at present hidden and little used, be relocated. No further benches or picnic tables will be installed at Hornchurch Road until the anti-social behaviour has stopped. This is being dealt with by the Police, Parish Council and Young Melksham. Nick Holder, Wiltshire Councillor for Bowerhill, is also involved.

The litter-bin on the green at Locking Close has been replaced by a larger one. An additional bin will also be installed (re-located from Portal Way).

Cllr Harris has attended meetings of the Melksham Community Groups Network via Zoom. It is a forum designed for all voluntary groups in the area to provide a place for sharing information, advice and opportunities, as well as to get to know each other and work together. Cllr Harris will continue to attend any future meetings.

10. Wiltshire Council (Bowerhill Ward) report.

Councillor Holder was not present and no written report was available.

11. Picnic Area Working Party Report.

The most recent report had previously been circulated by email. A copy is appended below.

BRAG Picnic Area Working Party Report 19th May 2021 by Jenny Butcher

Hi, well here goes.

Picnic Area hours worked 128 hours. This includes Tuesday morning with approximately five to six volunteers plus Graham and I going down during the week to do more jobs as and when required.

This also includes ferrying down the first two loads of wood-chip which took a couple of afternoons with three to four volunteers.

I have asked for another two loads of wood-chip from the same contractor. All has gone quiet but I will chase them up again. Hopefully that will be enough and keep us going for at least a couple of years.

Bird boxes from Viv. Viv popped them round, Graham painted them up and we decided to put them up on the mature trees on the Brabazon Way Mound so hopefully next year we will have some residents.

The new benches are looking great and the brass plaques have been taken from the old benches and put on the new ones.

We went down to the site this morning to do a bit more work planting up the planters and as yet there is no sign of the extra new bench, which is to be positioned at the top of the bridle path. The contractor was going to do a cement base first but I expect with this monsoon weather it will be done when it becomes drier.

The Picnic Site is looking good so, apart from the local deer, which seems to like eating my red hot poker flowers, all is well but very damp and soggy. All drainage ditches and the pond are full of water. The ornamental pond is still full of tadpoles and much loved by the families with children and of course us adults. Two bird boxes on the site are rearing young so a busy place.

We have had more donations of plants and bulbs which people have left on the site. One was a wonderful four-foot Christmas tree, totally pot-bound, which we think came off a boat as it was very heavy. When we managed to cut it from the pot, it breathed a huge sigh of relief and is now dug into the ground at the back of the site - another tree to decorate at the end of the year.

We do have a problem with the back of the main noticeboard, which the wet weather is not helping. It looks as if the back is peeling away. It's not solid wood but looks like plywood and the damp has got in at the top and made the layers protrude out so either needs loads of gorilla glue and tacked back or other ideas. Is there a DIY wood person who has some skills in our BRAG group or extended family that can rectify this problem? Eventually the whole back of the noticeboard may protrude and fall off. If we cannot find anyone we will try and do something ourselves.

I spoke to Sue Tweedie yesterday about her Wild Child Flower Group. As long as they have the gazebo on the right of the bridle path, near where the new bench is situated next to the canal, this will be then out of the way of our horse riders, bikers, pedestrians, mad young electric scooter riders and the mobility crowd. You see it all down there.

I cannot think of anything else at the moment. Cheers, Jenny.

12. The Great British Spring Clean 28th May - 13th June.

Pauline Helps has arranged a litter pick for 19th June - meet at The Pilot at 2pm.

13. Wessex Water Environment Fund.

It was agreed that an application should be made as the Brabazon Way Community Wildlife Garden meets several of the criteria to be awarded this grant of £1500. It was agreed to go ahead and apply as the application is time sensitive even though it is not yet clear that the areas in question can be adopted. Mark Blackham is to make the application and it was agreed that Sharon Pike lead the project. Mark Harris had approached Teresa Strange to find out who owns the land and who cuts the grass but, to date, had not received a satisfactory reply. This to be chased up. **Action Mark Blackham, Sharon Pike and Mark Harris.**

14. Footpaths/dropped curbs on Halifax Road.

Mark Harris and Caroline Fielding had met to discuss areas on Halifax Road that are of concern. Caroline, who is registered blind, advised where new sections of pathway, dropped curbs and tactile markings could go to assist those with visual impairments and wheel-chair and mobility scooter users. Mark H suggested this should be an agenda item for the next meeting. All agreed.

15. Anti -Social behaviour at Hornchurch Road play area.

This is now in the hands of the Police, Parish Council and Young Melksham. There used to be a minibus from Bowerhill to the youth club at the Canberra Centre and it is hoped that this will be reinstated soon. PCSO Janet Gould is involved and is very effective at helping young people. She had provided a report which was circulated to members by email.

16. Work for the Parish Steward.

It was suggested that cutting back the undergrowth to facilitate access to the litter bin on Falcon Way is a job for the Parish Steward. Future requests for jobs are to be made directly to Teresa Strange at MWPC. **Action Mark Harris.**

17. Any other business.

Mark Harris has spoken to Marilyn Mills about her technological difficulties and these have now been resolved. Marilyn has a certificate that was issued by RHS South-West In Bloom for the picnic area for 2020. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic preventing judging all those who entered were awarded a certificate. Those for 2019 and 2020 will be put on display in the Village Hall.

Sue Tweedie is to arrange for the date of AGM to be placed in the Melksham Independent News when the date is confirmed. **Action Sue Tweedie.**

The BRAG Facebook page cannot be accessed as the only administrator was Mike Mills, now deceased. Luke Anstee suggested that FB could be contacted and provided with a death certificate. Access could then be gained to the account and changes made. Mark H and Luke are to contact Marilyn with a view to dealing with this. **Action Mark Harris and Luke Anstee.**

Added Agenda items for next meeting - AGM.

1. Election of Committee
2. Appointment of Executive Officers
3. Picnic table on green opposite Tesco
4. Additional bench and/or picnic table on the "grassy knoll" at Falcon Way
5. Footpaths and dropped curbs (with tactile markings) on Halifax Road
6. Plant a Tree for Jubilee (2022)

18. Closing.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.36