

GASKELL RECREATION GROUND MUCH WENLOCK
Registered Charity no. 1116940

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held at
The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 6 pm on Tuesday 18th June 2019

Present:

Cllr Kate Southan (Chairman) – Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr Adam Davy – Much Wenlock Town Council
Cllr Dan Thomas – Much Wenlock Town Council
Mike Bainbridge – William Brookes School
Bill James – Much Wenlock Cricket Club
Ian Dadswell – Wenlock Olympians

In attendance:

Trudi Barrett – Secretary
Dan Shotten, drainage contractor
Alan Lewis, sports surface consultant

1) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2) Apologies

Cllr Graham Edgcumbe-Venning – holiday

3) Declarations of interest

None.

4) Drainage

- a. The Chairman welcomed Alan Lewis and Dan Shotten to the meeting. The following points were discussed:
- Alan Lewis confirmed that the recent changes proposed did not really alter the specification of the works. It was noted that there was no computer software for turf drainage calculations, all were based on building run off. 50% of the rain water would stay on the field and there was already plenty of attenuation in the pipes and gravel of the existing scheme. If a sports pavilion were to be built the new drains would cope with the roof run-off but foul drainage would be required. It was noted that all grant awarding bodies now insisted on some form of water harvesting.
 - As a result of the recent heavy rainfall there had been flooding on the cricket ground towards the pathway. The clay and silt in the soil caused the water to run along the top of the ground. The new drainage system and sand work would allow the water to infiltrate the ground.
 - Since the original plans had been drawn up the layout had been changed to allow the addition of drainage into the Youth Club compound. Services would be protected along the path near the compound and the school.
 - The football pitch would be sand grooved but not the cricket pitch. If required, this could be done separately at a later date.
 - No special access would be required for the cricket square roller; the existing roller would not damage the drains by moving over them.
 - Dan Shotten would prepare a health & safety plan, method statements, risk assessment and other documentation required for the work. The working area would be fenced off and banksmen would be used to manage members of the public. There would be no empty trenches – the pipe would go in and the trench be filled straight away.

- The ground would be free after 18th August and school would start again on 2nd September. A project start date of 19th August could be possible. The contractor would endeavour to avoid deliveries at school start and finish times. Access would be maintained along the path once the children were back in school. The project was expected to take 3 to 4 weeks to complete, depending on weather.
- Access would be maintained for Wenlock Olympians to move equipment along the path through the storage area. The cross country would be concentrated on the Windmill Hill end of the field.
- Fencing off the cricket square at the end of the season would not interfere with the project but the contractors would be working within 1m of the edge of the square. This would allow cricket covers to be tipped off into the new drains.
- The contractor would sand dress the cricket outfield. It was noted that rolling did not level a field, just applied pressure to the soil. A harrow should be used, not a roller.
- Members discussed the significant drop off on the cricket outfield. At the recent Charity meeting, members had agreed to level the field to be left with the best possible surface after the work. Alan Lewis explained that the quality of the soil which would be taken out during the drainage work would be too poor to use for levelling and would act like a cap on the drains. Sandy soil would need to be imported to do the job properly and this would double the cost of the project. It would be difficult to soil strip and level the ground due to the presence of trees roots.
The drainage would reduce pooling and if the cricket club were happy with the character of the ground it would be most sensible to retain the drop in level.
- As part of the project Alan Lewis would provide 12 months consultancy back up once the work was completed. Members requested sight of the maintenance plan before the usual date of practical completion.
- Following the requested changes to the project, the costs would be reviewed by the contractor and consultant and confirmation sent to the secretary.
- The contractor would be able to install more permanent fencing in the compound, if required.
- Following the work it would be possible to allow vehicles onto the field, providing the ground was assessed and aeration carried out after use. The sand used in the drainage work would firm up the surface but it would require maintenance as sand slits were easily blocked. If vehicles were to be allowed onto the ground as part of an event it would be wise to take a compaction reading beforehand, take a bond from the organizer and write into the user agreement that any necessary reinstatement of the ground should be covered by the bond.
- The hedges near to the play area would not affect the drainage as the carrier pipe nearby would have solid sides, not perforated.
- The best estimate of when the football pitch would be available for use was after at least 8-12 weeks to allow the grass to grow. The time needed would depend on the weather and the recovery of the drainage trenches would limit when the pitch was ready for use. Moving the goals on the field would not damage the ground, once it had recovered from the work.
- Fencing would be left up on the field initially to keep the public off sensitive areas. If there was a very dry spell it might be necessary to water the new grass.
- The works would be carried out under a JCT minor works contract.
- The consultant and contractor stressed the need for appropriate maintenance after completion of the work: aeration, feeding and cutting. The field should be used appropriately: if the ground was too wet, football matches should be cancelled.

Dan and Alan were thanked for their attendance and left the meeting.

- b. Members discussed how to publicise the planned work. It was agreed that advance warning should be given by means of local publications, including the Wenlock Herald, Shropshire Star and Bridgnorth Journal. William Brookes School would circulate information via their school communication system. Signs should be displayed on the entrances to the Gaskell giving advance warning and a plan of the works as well as on notice boards.

It might be helpful to hold a meeting with members of the public on site.

Notification of the work should be given at the next full Town Council meeting.

5) Minutes

The minutes of a meeting held on 14th May 2019 were considered for approval. **It was AGREED that the minutes be signed and ADOPTED as a true record.**

6) Treasurer's Report

- a. Committee members received the following financial report:
- The balance brought forward at 1 April 2019 was £15,795.59.
 - Expenditure from 1 to 31 May 2019 was £5,658.28. There was no income so far this financial year. The Treasurer would arrange invoices to users. The school invoice should be issued as soon as possible. Mike Bainbridge queried whether the budgeted income expected from the school was appropriate as only one term's use of the field would be lost.
 - It had not been possible to check the balance in the bank as at 31st May 2019 due to a delay associated with the change of authorised access to the bank account.

It was noted that Mike Mowling had reviewed the insurance policy and recommended no change at present.

It was agreed that the Treasurer's report be NOTED.

- b. **It was AGREED that payment of the following invoice be approved (paid between meetings):**

Date	Supplier	Item	Net £	VAT £	Total £
31.05.19	Spacecare-Shropshire	Grounds maintenance May 2019	760.36	152.07	912.43

7) Report from Gaskell Ground Charity Meeting

Members noted a report from the Charity meeting and the request from Trustees that the field be levelled. However, as discussed under 4a above, this was not going to be possible as the consultant, Alan Lewis, had advised against and there was no additional funding available.

8) Town Council 'walkabout' of Gaskell Ground

It was noted that Councillors had recently visited Town Council assets in the town, including the Gaskell Recreation Ground. Issues noted were as follows:

- Signage to be cleaned
- The very overgrown hedge by the play area should be cut down to a manageable size or removed completely
- The hedge by Linden lodge created dead space and should be removed
- Fencing around the toilet block site could now be removed as the grass had grown up. Some of the fencing belonged to the contractor and the rest was on loan. It would be useful to retain the loan fencing if a storage area could be found
- The tables and benches by the play area were to be cleaned by the Council's handyman on a regular basis
- Shropshire Council should be asked to cut the verge by the path running along the school boundary
- The wire forming part of the fence to Windmill Hill needed tightening
- The verge next to the play area along Station Road was very overgrown and should be reported to Shropshire Council
- The bins had been damaged and should be discussed with Shropshire Council

It was noted that there was no budget for the hedge work. Members considered whether a volunteer "Friends" group might be formed and whether volunteers could maintain the play area hedge if it were cut back.

9) Contract Specifications

As Chris Bowden was absent from the meeting, this item was not discussed. However, it was suggested that the existing Terms of Reference for the Committee might cover the delegation of authority for contract management.

10) Tree work

Members considered the cost of removing the 'monkey' tree (spruce). It was noted that there was no TPO on the tree. **It was AGREED that the tree be removed by Joffrey Watson at a cost of £250.** The funds would be taken from the current year's budget for tree work.

11) Cross Country Relay Event

Members noted that the Wenlock Olympians Cross Country Relay event would be held on the Gaskell Ground on Sunday, 30th June and that the necessary paperwork had been received. Other planned events were the Triathlon on 7th July and the Road Race on 14th July.

12) User Agreements

It was noted that the maintenance requirements following the drainage work would need to form a significant part of the new user agreements. Discussions would be held with individual users in due course.

13) Pitch Marking

It was noted that after January 2020 only paint could be used for marking out pitches as chemicals would be banned from use across the EU after 31st January 2020. Marking out would cost more and football teams might need to undertake some of their own marking. Due to the drainage work, marking of the pitches would not need to be carried out until later in the forthcoming season. The requirements for the next season would be checked with teams and the school PE department and discussed at the next meeting.

14) Leader Application

Information was still being put together for the application, but this would be ready for consideration at the next meeting of the decision-making body on 22nd July. The outcome would be advised on the following day.

15) Dogs on the Gaskell Ground

There were continuing problems with loose dogs and dog mess on the Gaskell Ground. It was noted that the football pitches needed to be cleared of dog mess before every game.

The Policy for use of the Gaskell Ground specified that dogs must be kept on a lead at all times, should not be in the play area, and should not foul the Ground. The secretary was asked to check the legal position with regard to dogs on sports pitches and play areas.

The drainage work could provide an opportunity to open dialogue with dog owners. A specific area on the Ground for dogs to be exercised off the lead might be an option.

Members were asked to give the matter some thought for further consideration at the next meeting.

16) Samaranch Tree

Members welcomed the news that funding had been provided for the provision of a new, mature tree, cage and plaque.

17) Next Meeting

It was agreed to hold forthcoming meetings of the Management Committee at 6.00 pm in the Guildhall on

- Tuesday, 16th July
- Tuesday, 13th August
- Tuesday, 17th September
- Tuesday, 15th October

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

Signed
Chairman

Date.....