

**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 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Present:**

Cllr Bert Harper – Much Wenlock Town Council  
Cllr Mary Hill – Much Wenlock Town Council  
Cllr Dan Thomas – Much Wenlock Town Council  
Cllr Allan Walter – Much Wenlock Town Council  
Chris Bowden – Wenlock Estates  
Bill James – Much Wenlock Cricket Club  
Michael Theobalds – Much Wenlock Bowling Club  
Mac Bardsley – Wenlock Olympians  
Ian Dadswell – Wenlock Olympians Athletics Club  
Andrew Scott – Wenlock Warriors

**In attendance:**

Trudi Barrett – Secretary and Treasurer

**1) Election of Chairman**

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED** to elect Cllr Daniel Thomas as Chairman of the Committee.

**2) Election of Deputy Chairman**

It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED** to elect Cllr Mary Hill as Deputy Chairman of the Committee.

**3) Committee Membership**

Members noted that, following the resignation of Kate Southan and Adam Davy from the Town Council, the following were appointed to the Management Committee at the extraordinary meeting of the Gaskell Charity held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019: Councillor Bert Harper, Councillor Mary Hill, Councillor Allan Walter.

**4) Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mike Mowling and Colin Wildblood.

**5) Declarations of interest**

None.

**6) Minutes**

The minutes of a meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2019 were considered for approval. **It was AGREED that the minutes be signed and ADOPTED as a true record.**

**7) Treasurer's Report**

a. Members noted income and expenditure to the end of October 2019:

	£
Balance b/f at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2019	15,795.59
Expenditure to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2019	16,043.60
Income to 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2019	13,190.00
Balance as at 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2019	13,342.67

NB. There was a discrepancy in the figures due to the double repayment of an unauthorised direct debit to the value of £400.68

Mac Bardsley offered to arrange payment of the outstanding payment from the Wenlock Olympians.

b. It was **AGREED** that payment of the following invoices be approved:

Date of invoice	Supplier	Item	Net £	VAT £	Total £
31.08.19	Spacecare-Shropshire	Grounds maintenance August 2019	760.36	152.07	912.43
31.09.19	Spacecare-Shropshire	Grounds maintenance September 2019	657.62	131.52	789.14
31.10.19	Spacecare-Shropshire	Grounds maintenance October 2019	657.62	131.52	789.14

c. Members considered the following invoice from Alan Lewis Ltd:

Date of invoice	Supplier	Item	Net £	VAT £	Total £
22.10.19	Alan Lewis Ltd	Project monitoring with site visits to Gaskell Recreation Ground	800.00	160.00	960.00

It was noted that this payment had not been allowed for in the current year's budget and the Gaskell finances were very stretched. It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to pass the invoice to the Town Council to see whether the bill could be paid from any unspent contingency in the amount set aside for the drainage work.**

## 8) 2020/21 Budget

- a. Committee members considered the draft budget for the financial year 2020/21, including contributions from user groups.

It was noted that the budget would depend on the level of maintenance agreed for the Ground. According to the options outlined in the maintenance manual provided by Alan Lewis, the cost could be between £26,000 and £37,000 p.a. Even the lowest specification would cost around 50% more than the current cost and user contributions would need to increase. It was noted that some maintenance was currently carried out by the clubs and they might continue to assist.

It was agreed to proceed as follows:

1. Obtain competitive pricing from other sports fields in the area.
2. Agree the standard of maintenance to be offered.
3. Consider what can be done to reduce maintenance costs.
4. Consider what the town wants done.

It was noted that Dan Shotton would be maintaining the pitches until March.

The construction of the perimeter path might necessitate some renovation work to the field. However, this should not interfere with the drainage or grass cutting. Some maintenance to the path would be required after 3 - 5 years.

Mike Theobald left the meeting.

The Secretary was asked to provide all members with a copy of Alan Lewis' maintenance plan.

Chris Bowden offered to produce a first draft of what needed to be done, when, what could be done inhouse and what would need to go out to contract. Thereafter individual meetings would be arranged with the clubs, users and school. Information on the school's expectations and proposed usage would be required.

- b. It was noted that the draft budget would need to be submitted to the charity for approval at the meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

## 9) Drainage

- a. Committee members noted that the certificate of Practical Completion had been issued for the drainage work and that Dan Shotton had submitted his first invoice to the Town Council.
- b. It was noted that the area outside the Scout hut would need to be made good, but the ground was too wet at present. The drainage sand slits had been seeded but the ground was too wet for much growth yet. The soil mounds were also to be seeded and some areas needed to be levelled. There was one drain missing which still needed to be installed.

#### 10) Maintenance Requirements

- a. Committee members noted a report from the meeting held with Alan Lewis and Spacecare regarding future maintenance requirements attended by Chris Bowden on behalf of the Committee. Additional information was awaited from Alan Lewis. Also see minute 8 above.
- b. See minute 8 above regarding future maintenance.

#### 11) Play Equipment

- a. Committee members noted that the annual RoSPA safety inspection of the play equipment had been carried out and that all issues highlighted were low or very low risk.

Concerns had been raised about the gate into the younger children's play area, which was closing too quickly. This had been identified as low risk in the RoSPA report.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to lock the gate due to the safety concerns and to post an appropriate notice on the gate.**

Members noted the approximate cost of repair for adjusting or replacing the mechanism, as necessary. The secretary was asked to obtain further quotations for repair. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Secretary should then place the order for repair with the most competitive contractor.**

The Secretary was asked to circulate a copy of the RoSPA report to voting members.

It was noted that the leaning telegraph pole had been inspected by BT, who had identified it as an electrical pole, rather than a telephone pole. An inspection by Western Power had been requested.

- b. Committee members noted that the Secretary was obtaining quotations for the items identified in the RoSPA report.

#### 12) User Agreements

It was noted that Adam Davy had been leading on this item prior to leaving the Council. Cllr. Thomas agreed to discuss the matter and report back.

#### 13) Path and Access Project (LEADER)

- a. It was noted that the LEADER funding had been accepted by the Town Council and that the project had to be completed and all funding claimed by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
- b. It was noted that Councillor Thomas would be meeting members of the Lady Forester Trust with regard to possible funding support. Other possible sources of funding were also being pursued.
- c. Committee members noted a report from the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> November with the Great Outdoor Gym Company to discuss creation of the access between William Brookes School and the Gaskell Ground. Cllr Daniel Thomas, Mike Bainbridge from William Brookes School and the Secretary had attended. The representative had measured for the fencing and gates and confirmation of the quote provided previously was awaited. There was some concern among members about operational matters associated with the access including card holders and locking up. It was noted that this might need further discussion with Mike Bainbridge.

The Secretary was asked to forward a copy of the LEADER funding application to Chris Bowden.

- d. It was noted that the contract for the construction of the path would need to go out to tender due to its value. Chris Bowden would provide the latest version of the specification following discussion with Kate Southan (no wooden edging).

Ian Dadswell left the meeting.

#### 14) Tree and Hedge Management

- a. The tree surgeon had confirmed that there was some dead wood in trees which had not been present during the previous tree work. A price for removal of the dead wood had been requested and was awaited. The tree surgeon had advised that epicormic growth on the lime trees should normally be removed every two years as a minimum and that this had last been done in summer 2018.

- b. It was noted that there were a number of donated/dedicated trees on the Ground as well as some with Tree Preservation Orders. The committee was mindful of the cost of maintaining the trees and the need to limit the number of trees planted on the Ground. Chris Bowden had identified potential locations for further trees and displayed these on a plan of the Gaskell Ground.

Space 1 – on the side of the field adjacent to the school was a space which could be occupied by a tree that is not forming properly elsewhere on the Ground and needs to be moved, although there would be a cost for the relocation.

Spaces 2 and 3 were alongside space 1.

Space 4 was to the left of the current cricket pavilion.

Space 5 could be the location for another Olympic tree in 2020.

Space 6 was a spare slot.

Space 7 was where the Samaranch tree was going. A triangle of oaks would be formed.

It was noted that a request had been received from the Tree Forum to planting a replacement fir to remake the line of William Brookes dedicated firs. However, this was just inside the cricket field boundary line and the Cricket Club were not in favour.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED to approve spaces 1 to 7, identified on the plan, for the planting of new trees.**

Shropshire Council would need to be informed so that appropriate orders could be drawn up for the trees.

- c. It had been suggested that the Tree Forum might make an annual donation towards management of the dedicated trees on the Ground. Chris Bowden offered to draw up a suitable agreement for this arrangement and guidelines for the management of the trees.

**It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that an agreement should be drawn up for the management of the trees.**

- d. Members considered work required to the hedges around the play area. It was noted that the roots would not affect the new drain pipes. **It was PROPOSED, SECONDED and AGREED that the Secretary should write to the Tree Forum to request that the hedges be cut back to 3 ft high before February.**

#### **15) Samaranch Tree**

It was noted that a small ceremony would be held on Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> November at 11.00am to mark the planting of the replacement Samaranch tree.

Bill James left the meeting.

#### **16) Dogs on the Gaskell Ground**

Members gave initial consideration to the introduction of pet walking areas for both free and leashed animals. The Secretary was asked to contact Shropshire Council to establish the process for adding the Gaskell Ground to the list of sports pitches covered by The Dogs Exclusion Dog Control Order, which would allow enforcement.

It was agreed to discuss the matter further at the next meeting.

#### **17) Wenlock Olympians Athletics Club Annual Junior Cross-Country Event**

It was noted that the above event would be held on the Gaskell Ground on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and that the necessary documents had been provided.

#### **18) Friends of the Gaskell Recreation Ground**

- a. It was noted that there had been no response to advertising for volunteers to form a Friends of the Gaskell group in the Wenlock Herald.
- b. It was noted that the administrator of the Friends of the Gaskell facebook page had refused to transfer the page to the committee. This meant that a different name would need to be found for the new Friends group. Consideration of the next steps in setting up a group and a different name for that group was deferred to the next meeting.

**19) Next Meeting**

It was AGREED to hold the next meeting of the Management Committee on Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> December at 7.00pm. The Secretary was asked to bring forward the time of the scheduled Gaskell Charity meeting to 6.15pm to accommodate this.

The meeting closed at 8.08pm

Signed .....  
Chairman

Date.....