

GASKELL RECREATION GROUND MUCH WENLOCK
Registered Charity no. 1116940

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held at
The Guildhall, Much Wenlock
at 7 pm on Tuesday 12th December 2019

Present:

Cllrs Mary Hill, Daniel Thomas (in the chair), Marcus Themans – Much Wenlock Town Council
Chris Bowden – Wenlock Estates
Peter Gylward – Much Wenlock Bowling Club
Mac Bardsley – Wenlock Olympians
Andrew Scott – Wenlock Warriors

In attendance:

Trudi Barrett – Secretary and Treasurer

1) Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman thanked all those who were involved in the recent Samaranch Tree planting. It had been a very successful and enjoyable event.

2) Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Duncan White, Bill James (Cricket Club), Mike Mowling (Wenlock Olympians), Colin Wildblood (Bowling Club), Ian Dadswell (Wenlock Olympians Athletics Club) and Mike Bainbridge (William Brookes School).

3) Declarations of interest

None.

4) Minutes

The minutes of a meeting held on 12th November 2019 were considered for approval. **It was AGREED that the minutes be APPROVED, signed and ADOPTED as a true record.**

5) Treasurer's Report

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

	£
Balance b/f at 1 st April 2019	15,795.59
Expenditure to 30 th November 2019	16,832.74
Income to 30 th November 2019	13,590.68
Balance as at 30 th November 2019	12,553.53

It was noted that income from Wenlock Olympians and Wenlock Estates was still awaited.

- b. There were no invoices for payment to hand.
- c. Members noted that the Town Council had agreed to pay the invoice from Alan Lewis for project management from the contingency budget for the drainage work.

6) Report from Charity AGM

- a. Members noted a report from the Charity AGM, held at 6.15 pm on 12th December 2019. It was noted that Councillors Harper and Walter had been replaced with Councillors Themans and White on the Management Committee and that a place had been allocated for a representative of Wenlock Warriors.
- b. The budget for 2020/21 had been agreed but due to the changes in maintenance requirements there might need to be some changes. There were concerns about the financial sustainability of the Ground.

7) Drainage

- a. Members noted that the consultant and contractor had identified the need for an additional drain across the top of the field. The new drainage was performing well but there was some pooling at the windmill end of the field. This drain had been discussed previously but had been removed from the project due to budgetary constraints.
- b. It was noted that the above was considered by the Council at their meeting on 5th December and it was resolved to agree to the additional drain. A drawing was required for the additional drain and this had been requested from the contractor.
- c. It was noted that there were six known points on the field where water issued. There was currently a very wet area between the Bowling Club and the Linden Walk just beyond the fir tree line caused by a spring. This would need to be addressed when funds were available. The Bowling Club was asked to avoid the area for the time being.

There was an outstanding issue to be discussed with the contractor regarding provision for vehicular access in the drainage design. Chris Bowden agreed to follow this up.

8) Maintenance Requirements

- a. It was noted that all previous members had now received a copy of the maintenance manual prepared by Alan Lewis. New members would be provided with a copy.
- b. Committee members noted information obtained on charges for other local football pitches. Discussion was needed with William Brookes School regarding their requirements. It was unlikely that there was space for a full size adult pitch. At present the pitch was marked out for three different age groups with only under 10s and under 12s playing outside of school. Andrew Scott would confirm pitch sizes, which could be checked before the specification for the footpath was issued.
- c. Members considered the standard of maintenance to be undertaken on the Gaskell Recreation Ground. It was noted that it would cost around £2,500 to maintain the functionality of the drainage with additional costs for grass cutting, line marking and pitch repairs to bring the football pitch up to sports level.

It was noted that the clubs currently undertook some maintenance themselves and that there was some duplication of work:

- Bowling Club - the contractor regularly cut the green but the Bowling Club carried out an additional cut on game days.
- Cricket Club – the club maintained the cricket square and outfield but paid nothing into the Gaskell budget.

Clarification was required of exactly what the clubs already did and might do in future. If the user groups were to undertake more maintenance then appropriate equipment, storage and training would be required as well as consideration of insurance and liability.

It was noted that a new pavilion could be a lettable facility to raise income. The current pavilion belonged to Shropshire Council and stood on their land. At present, it seemed that little fund raising was undertaken by the clubs.

Alan Lewis had provided outline costings for various elements of the sports pitch maintenance. Costs from the current contractor for the existing maintenance specification were also available. An exact specification for maintenance of the whole ground was required. Chris Bowden offered to draw up a spreadsheet outlining requirements and costs. The Secretary would find out who carried out the school grounds maintenance.

- d. Measures to reduce maintenance costs had been discussed under c. above.
- e. It was noted that a review of expectations of the community could provide a guide to the future maintenance of the Gaskell Ground – was there a desire for high specification sports pitches or just an open recreational area? Income generating activities would help to support the upkeep of the Ground. Members noted the difficulty in persuading individuals or groups to commit to regular fund raising activities or other support.

9) Play Equipment

- a. It was noted that an order had been placed for the repair of the gate into the enclosed play area with Shropshire Council's Great Outdoor Contracting team at a cost of £230 + VAT.

- b. Committee members considered the annual RoSPA safety inspection of the play equipment, which identified all issues as low or very low risk.
- c. The Secretary would obtain quotations for repairs which could not be undertaken in-house for consideration by the committee, including grinding down the picnic table and repair of the brace under the slide.

10) User Agreements

Consideration of user agreements was deferred.

11) Path and Access Project (LEADER)

- a. It was noted that the Lady Forester Trust had very generously agreed to award grant funding of £10,000 towards the project.
- b. It was noted that the Town Council had agreed to place the order for the fencing and gate to create the new access with The Great Outdoor Gym Company at their meeting on 5th December 2019. A drawing was required as well as confirmation that the gate onto the field was vehicle width.
- c. It was noted that the existing school gate was operated by a card reader / timer, however, provision had been made only for a padlock and key for the gate through to the field. Access would be possible out of school hours, at weekends and during school holidays. The school caretaker could open up the padlocked gate but not lock up. A member of the Bowling Club could lock up when the club was but not on other days. Mike Bainbridge was obtaining quotes for an electrical supply and timer for the gate onto the field, although there were currently no funds available to pay for this.
- d. It was noted that the contract for the construction of the path would need to go out to tender. Chris Bowden had reviewed the specification and agreed to finalise the requirements as a matter of urgency.

12) Tree and Hedge Management

- a. Members noted the quotation from the tree surgeon for removal of dead wood in the trees. The secretary was asked to check the location of the dead wood and obtain further quotations.
- b. Members noted that no response had been received so far from the Tree Forum to the request to cut back the hedges adjacent to the play area. Further consideration was deferred to the next meeting.
- c. Work was ongoing with the drawing up of guidelines for the donation of trees and their management. An official plan had been obtained from Shropshire Council showing the trees on the Gaskell Ground but there were some discrepancies. Chris Bowden had also held positive discussions with John Tuer of the Tree Forum.

13) Dogs on the Gaskell Ground

- a. Clarification was awaited from Shropshire Council on the Dogs Exclusion Control Order, its application to the Gaskell Recreation Ground and how to extend the Order.
- b. Further consideration of the introduction of pet walking areas was deferred.

14) Wenlock Olympians Annual Junior Cross-Country Event

It was noted that the above event had been scheduled for 1st December but had been cancelled as the ground was too wet. The event had been rescheduled for 19th January 2020.

15) Friends of the Gaskell Recreation Ground

It was agreed to keep under review the intention to set up a new Friends group and to return to this matter at a later date.

16) Next Meeting

It was AGREED to hold the next meeting of the Management Committee on Tuesday, 14th January 2020 at 6.00pm at the Guildhall.

The meeting closed at 9.08 pm

Signed
Chairman

Date.....