

MINUTES of the Highways & Streetscene Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held on Monday 8 April 2024 at Melksham Without Office Space (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, Melksham, SN12 6ES at 8.40pm

Present: Councillors Alan Baines (Committee Chair), Mark Harris, Shona Holt and Robert Shea-Simonds

In attendance: Councillor Peter Richardson (part of meeting)

Officers: Teresa Strange, Clerk

487/23 Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping

Councillor Baines welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting those present were aware of fire evacuation procedures for the building and understood that the meeting was being recorded to aid the minutes, which would be published on YouTube and deleted once the minutes had been approved.

488/23 To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given

Apologies were received from Councillor Glover who was helping at the Guide HQ, with Councillor Holt substituting; Councillor Pafford who had been to a funeral out of County; Councillor Franks who was on holiday and Councillor Chivers who was back in hospital.

Resolved: To approve and accept the reasons for absence.

489/23 a) To receive Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

b) To consider for approval any Dispensation Requests received by the Clerk and not previously considered

None received.

490/23 To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature *Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during consideration of business, where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

There were no items to be discussed in confidential session.

491/23 Public Participation

There were no members of public present.

492/23 To note Minutes of last Highways & Street Scene Committee meeting held on 15 January 2024 and updates on actions taken.

Members noted the minutes of the Highways & Streetscene meeting held on 15 January 2024 and the various actions taken.

With regard to Min 377(d) and the response to the Local Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP), the Clerk informed the meeting she had heard earlier in the day that Wiltshire Council had been awarded £375,000 for active travel and mentioned Melksham in the list of schemes. She had therefore contacted Wiltshire Councillor Tamara Reay, Cabinet Member for Transport & Assets to ask what was happening in Melksham, explaining that the parish council had made a comprehensive reply to the LCWIP and looked forward to receiving an update.

493/23 Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG)

a) To note Minutes and action log of Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) meeting held on 8 February 2024.

Members noted the minutes and action log of the LHFIG meeting held on 8 February 2024.

i) Issue 9-22-17: Waiting Restriction Requests

Councillor Baines raised concern the proposals regarding Mitchell Drive, Bowerhill did not seem to be in line with those proposed by the parish council.

The Clerk explained the various waiting restrictions would be included on the Full Council meeting agenda on 22 April, as they had been too late to include them on this agenda, for the parish council to respond to proposals by the 7th May deadline. Wiltshire Council were happy to meet with the parish council to discuss the various proposals and this would be arranged before the Full Council meeting.

ii) Issue 9-23-4: Semington Road Bus Gate

The Clerk explained it had been agreed to publish widely once the camera had been installed, including in the Melksham News, to forewarn people before tickets were issued to anyone who uses the gate illegally.

iii) Issue 9-22-22: Corsham Road, Shaw - reinstate louvre shutters on traffic lights.

Members noted the council's 50% contribution had increased to £378.59 which had been approved.

iv) Issue 9-23-17: – Installation of Realtime Information (RTI) on bus shelters on Mitchell Drive, Bowerhill

Councillor Baines explained the battery-powered RTI was not yet available and not accepted by Wiltshire Council as part of their contract, therefore LED RTI would be installed and would not cost as much as originally thought. Therefore, two more shelters on Halifax Road (Kestrel Court stops) can have RTI installed as they have an electric supply.

Unfortunately, the Market Place bus shelter does not have an electric supply and therefore cannot have RTI installed at present.

Funding for the RTI was coming from the shared Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) pot with the Town Council.

v) Issue 9-23-11: A365 Bowerhill, Devizes Road junction with Hornchurch Road – request to introduce double white line system to prevent overtaking.

This request had been closed by LHFIG as the parish council had subsequently indicated that they did not wish to proceed with this request at present as it was noted a new site allocation in the draft Local Plan was included adjacent to the school which could affect the road layout. There was also a petition for 20mph at this location and it was therefore felt prudent to see what future road layouts were planned, rather than making changes now.

It was noted this section of road was due to be resurfaced as part of planned maintenance by Wiltshire Council and whether it was prudent to change any road markings once the road had been resurfaced.

Recommendation: To ask Wiltshire Council if the road markings could be examined to make it more obvious that people should not overtake at this junction on the right; as part of the planned resurfacing and therefore re-lining.

The Clerk highlighted that at the LHFIG meeting, Town Councillor Hubbard had raised concerns at the current level of third-party

funding for Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council, which was currently set at 50%, compared with 25% for other parish councils. It was understood this had been raised at a subsequent Area Board meeting, but deferred, and therefore the Clerk sought a steer from Members if they wished to review this council's share of funding for projects in the parish.

Recommendation: To place an item on the next Full Council agenda regarding this council's share of funding for LHFIG projects in the parish.

494/23 To consider requests for support by the Parish Council including requests for the Local Highways & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) next meeting on 7 May 2024:

a) To note concerns of pedestrian safety on Top Lane, Whitley and consider a way forward

A resident of Whitley had written to the parish council concerned about pedestrian safety along Top Lane, West Hill and Purlpit due to the lack of pavement in places which meant people had to walk in the road.

It was noted the parish council had recently looked at the possibility of extending the footway, however, due to the costs associated with installing a footway c£100,000 they had not pursued this.

Councillor Baines noted the resident had suggested the installation of pedestrians in the road signage and noted such signage did exist on parts of Top Lane before footway works were undertaken some 5-10 years ago.

Councillor Richardson explained that Daisy Chain Nursery often walked young children along this road and that the speed limit changed to 60mph once reaching the village gates at Purlpit, the road became narrow at this point and queried if the speed limit here could be reviewed.

Councillor Baines highlighted Wiltshire Council had previously reviewed the speed limits not that long ago, with the conclusion the speed limit was appropriate.

Councillor Richardson noted on the village gateway signage coming into Whitley via West Hill, that on one side of the road, the sign stated 'Welcome to Whitley Please Drive Carefully', but there did not appear to be a sign on the other side, he was unsure if one had previously existed and had subsequently disappeared and suggested if similar signage on the other village gateway sign would help in slowing vehicles down when

entering the village from this direction.

It was highlighted if such signage had previously existed on the other village gateway sign and a request was submitted to LHFIG for new signage, there should be no cost to the parish council.

Recommendation: To submit a request for consideration to LHFIG for the installation of:

1. 'Pedestrians in Road' signage on Top Lane, beyond the First Lane junction with Top Lane for cars heading towards to West Hill/Purtpit; and in the opposite direction for those vehicles coming up from Purtpit towards West Hill in the other direction.
2. 'Please Drive Carefully' signage be added to the Whitley Village gateway signage coming from West Hill/Purtpit.

b) To note concerns of road safety on Corsham Road, Whitley and consider a way forward.

Councillor Richardson explained he had been contacted by a resident concerned at road safety on Corsham Road having witnessed a near miss with a vehicle and pedestrian.

Councillor Richardson was aware of various incidences having taken place on Corsham Road resulting in minor injuries, as well as numerous near misses. However, noted not all were reported, with himself nearly being knocked over recently by a car which had swerved to avoid something in the road. He asked what could be done to improve road safety on Corsham Road, noting another resident of Whitley had provided a list of possible road safety improvements.

- Re-activate the speed watch site nearer to the school entrance (Police action);
- Speed watch sessions are (deliberately) conducted to include drop off/pick up school times;
- Increase police presence during school run times;
- Hire a "Lollypop Lady";
- Creation of a permanent 20mph zone;
- Permanent radar speed signs (SID) closer to the school;
- Temporary 20 mph zone flashing lights;
- Serco-type speed camera (real or dummy) may do the trick;
- Temporary/permanent automatic speed cameras with number plate recognition and number plate display when speed exceeded;
- As above with registration numbers and speeds recorded and letters fines automatically issued.

With regard to the 20mph speed limit outside the school, Councillor Baines explained it was not Wiltshire Council's policy to have temporary 20mph speed limits outside schools on main roads during school times.

Councillor Richardson expressed frustration that the Shaw School needed to update their school travel plan in order for some highway improvements to be implemented.

On the crossing outside the school it was noted one of the 'belisha' beacons had a 'halo' on one side but not the other and asked if one could be included, which may help in slowing vehicles down.

It was noted that now a new contractor had been found to install the speed indicator devices and an eligible site on Corsham Road, that hopefully this would help in reminding people to drive within the speed limit.

Councillor Richardson explained that whilst driving to Frome he had noted 'slow' road markings painted on the road with 3 yellow lines under and above and queried whether similar lines could be added to the 'slow' road markings on Corsham Road to make them more obvious, but it was felt that no amount of extra road safety measures could compensate for bad driving.

Concerning a lolly pop lady as mentioned, it was noted these had been taken away some time ago all over the Country, due to lack of funding as well as due to fears at the level of abuse they often received.

Recommendations: To ask Wiltshire Council why one 'halo' has been installed on one side of the crossing on Corsham Road and not the other.

Councillor Richardson left the meeting after this item.

c) To note concerns of resident at the condition of the footway from Redstocks to Melksham.

Correspondence had been received from a resident concerned at the condition of the footway from Redstocks to Melksham.

It was noted the road surface was also in poor condition and was included in Wiltshire Council's resurfacing programme list.

The Clerk explained the condition of the footway had been put through on Wiltshire Council's app, however, no update had been received on what action if any, would be undertaken.

It was noted that given the condition of the road surface it would be a difficult job for the parish steward to undertake, without further damaging the surface.

Recommendation: To ask Wiltshire Council if they could repair/resurface the footway at the same time as they are resurfacing this stretch of road as part of their programme of resurfacing maintenance.

495/23 Road Safety (standing item)

a) To consider any items/projects for review by the Road Safety Working Group.

Recommendation: To ask the Road Safety Working Group to look at road safety issues relating to Semington Road ie not being usable for cyclists, speeding and misuse of the traffic calming.

b) To note correspondence to Michelle Donelan MP regarding road safety on Semington Road.

Members noted the correspondence from a resident of Semington Road to Michelle Donelan MP concerned about road safety on Semington Road and what pressure she could bring to bear to try and get the matter resolved.

496/23 Highway Maintenance:

a) To note Wiltshire Council have increased investment into filling potholes, resurfacing roads and tackling highways flooding.

It was noted Wiltshire Council were investing millions of pounds into filling potholes, resurfacing roads and tackling the causes of highway flooding throughout the County in 2024/25.

b) To note Highway Maintenance Programme for 2024/25-2029/30.

A list of the various roads to be resurfaced in Wiltshire between 2024-2030, which included various roads in the parish, had been circulated to the Highways Committee for their information.

497/23 Hilperton to Melksham Active Travel Route and Byways

Members noted the update from Wiltshire Council on the Hilperton to Melksham Active Travel Route and Byways audit, noting there had been a few issues with increased vehicle use on parts of the route with

Wiltshire Council proposing to introduce an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order to prohibit motor vehicles from using these routes unless for access.

The Clerk expressed disappointment the concerns the parish council had raised regarding the safety of cyclists had not been included in the audit, such as cyclists having to go back onto the road once they reached Longford Road in the town and therefore had put these comments through as part of the response to the Local Cycling, Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

498/23 Rights of Way

Members noted improvements to rights of way MELW1 & MELW2 via S106 contributions from the Bowood View development had been undertaken in Berryfield.

The Clerk expressed disappointment that the Rights of Way officers had not sought improvements elsewhere in Berryfield, despite the parish council requesting monies be included in S106 agreements for Buckley Gardens, to improve rights of way in the area.

499/23 Bus Shelters

a) Semington Road Bus Shelters

i) To note concerns regarding the siting of bus shelters and consider any action

A resident of the mobile home park had contacted Councillor Holt concerned the bus stop had moved further up the road. Their mobility issues meant that they felt this was at the detriment of the Mobile Home residents, and that the residents in the new housing development were receiving preferential treatment.

Councillor Baines noted the parish council had tried to convince the owners of the mobile home park to allow a footway to be constructed adjacent to their site for their residents but this had been refused, also in places there was not sufficient distance between the fence and kerb to construct a footway.

Wiltshire Council Highways also felt if a footway was installed adjacent to the mobile home park it would be too narrow and didn't want to encourage residents to use it, therefore residents should be encouraged to cross the road to join the footway on the other side of the road and then cross back later on to access the bus shelter near Telford Drive.

Councillor Baines also noted that where the bus used to stop at the entrance to the mobile home park, there was quite a step down for people as there were no kerbs, which was not safe and therefore as funding was coming from the Bowood View development it was agreed to move the shelter where it would be safer to drop off passengers ie near Telford Drive.

It was noted the Townsend Farm development was funding a bus stop and there was therefore the possibility of having two bus stops close together with the possibility that passengers from the mobile home park could use a new one.

Recommendation: To arrange a site visit with Wiltshire Council regarding the siting of the new bus shelter and to discuss the location of the potential new bus stop.

ii) To note concerns regarding the side panels on the bus shelter near Telford Drive obscuring vision for vehicles exiting Telford Drive and agree way forward.

Correspondence had been received from a resident of Semington Road concerned the side panel on the bus shelter recently installed near Telford Drive was obscuring the vision of vehicles exiting Telford Drive.

Councillor Holt agreed drivers' vision was obscured by the positioning of the side panel, also drivers' vision was obscured in the other direction by an overgrown hedge.

The Clerk advised a letter would be going to the homeowner to ask that they cut back their hedge as it was obscuring the vision of drivers exiting Telford Drive.

Councillor Baines highlighted the bus shelter had been located in the visibility splay for Telford Drive, as shown in plans for Bowood View (17/10416), noting the bus shelter should have been placed at the back of the footway, which is highway land and therefore would not have caused visibility issues.

It was noted David Wilson Homes (Buckley Gardens) had installed raised kerbs at the bus stop outside the New Inn, making it difficult for the bus to pull in safely to pick up passengers without hitting the kerb and therefore had not been installed correctly.

Recommendation: To ask Wiltshire Council why the bus shelter has been located in its current position, instead of further back in the footpath which is Highway Land and to arrange a meeting with Wiltshire Council to look at both bus shelters and the high kerbs outside the New Inn. Councillor Holt asked if she could be included in the site visit.

500/23 Proposed A350 Bypass (Standing Item):

In response to the request to Michelle Donelan MP to follow up on the parish council's behalf when an update on the M4 to Dorset Coast Connectivity report would be released in the public domain, a response had been received from Guy Opperman MP. He confirmed that the Department for Transport had received the final report from National Highways and that the findings would be reflected in a document due to be published later in 2024.

The committee expressed frustration as the report was originally due to be published in Summer 2023.

Meeting closed at 10.00pm

Signed:.....
Chair, Full Council, 22 April 2024