

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE
COMMITTEE OF BROCKENHURST PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 2nd FEBRUARY 2021 VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

Present:

Pete Wales (PW)	Chairman
Alan Bartlett (AB)	Michael Croker (MC)
Michael Harris (MH)	John Korbey (JK)
Pauline Mueller (PM)	Kevin Whittle (KW)
Richard Wolstenholme (RW)	
Mina Beckett (MB)	Planning & Communications Officer
In attendance	Heather Lawrence

Public Presentments None

21/01 Apologies for Absence Ros Bowles (RB)

21/02 Declarations of Interest None

21/03 Minutes of Meeting held on 6th October 2020

These were proposed, seconded and signed as a correct record.

21/04 Matters Arising (not already on the agenda)

Watersplash Expansion Joints - This work has been completed.

21/05 Physical Asset Report

Allotments

A request has been received for a pedestrian gate to be installed at the top end of the path from the Forest Park end to improve access for plot holders. A similar request was discussed by the Allotment Association approximately two years ago but was not taken forward. It is also understood that a five-bar gate was in place many years ago but is now deeply hidden in the undergrowth. Concerns were raised that an additional gate may increase the risk of break-in and theft but on balance the Committee were supportive of the idea provided it could be agreed with Forestry England. **Action: AB to follow-up with Allotment Association.**

The waiting list has now increased from 13 to 14. It was noted that this provides the Parish Council with more leverage to take action where there are neglected plots. It was agreed that the position will be re-reviewed in the summer.

The track inside the allotments was damaged during the recent wet weather. The Parish Clerk has emailed plot holders asking for vehicle use to be restricted until the track has dried out to avoid further damage.

Cemetery

The Chairman's review and MC's debate contribution paper in response were discussed and both were thanked for their work on this complex matter. It is to be recommended that the Parish Council acknowledge that, following receipt of the opinion from Hampshire Association of Local Councils (HALC), it funds the churchyard / cemetery in accordance with legislation for the benefit of residents as a pleasant space to visit to remember their relatives and friends and enjoy as an open space. The legislation is open to interpretation so it was recommended that discussions be opened with the Parochial Church Council (PCC) to determine a pragmatic way forward, ensuring that the churchyard continues to operate as at present including grounds maintenance, burials (including Exclusive Rights of Burial (EROB)). Diocese and Council records held at Winchester may eventually need to be searched together with specialist legal advice. It was also agreed that HALC opinion on the sale of EROB should be sought if not already received.

MC reiterated his view that the current arrangements cannot be demonstrated to be within the Council's powers and that custom and practice cannot be relied upon. Consequently he objected to these proposals, recommending that the Parish Council cease operations in the Churchyard until expert legal advice can be obtained. **Action: PW to check whether HALC opinion received to date includes EROB and to liaise with PCC to determine their understanding / legal position regarding Churchyard ownership and responsibility.**

It was noted that following the change of personnel, the Fire Station toilet facilities can no longer be used and alternative provision is required on site for use by the grounds staff. **Action: PW to seek permission from the PCC for use of the toilets at St Nicholas' Church.**

War Memorial

Remembrance Day wreaths have been removed but it is currently too wet to carry out work on the borders.

Playground

The Playground remains open during the current lockdown. There are some outstanding small tasks from the inspection to be completed, principally removal of algae from equipment.

Seats, Signs and Bus Shelters, etc.

Village Sign:

The design has been amended slightly to improve wind tolerance, however, the structural risk assessment cannot be carried out until the design is finalized. It was noted that formal approval is required for the design before works proceed and that confirmation needs to be obtained as to whether Planning permission is required. **Action: MB to contact NFNPA to clarify whether Planning permission is required. KW to discuss design options with MC to allow a final design to be proposed to the Committee.**

Seats:

MC has undertaken the annual seat inspection, the conclusion of which is that the majority of the 32 benches within the Parish are in good condition with no works required. The exceptions to this are the bench outside the Catholic Church (seat in need of replacement) and the bench by the school bus stop (some rot on the ends of the seat on which a watch needs to be kept). The seat of the Beachern Wood bench has been replaced by a third party but the type of wood employed is not known so investigations need to be undertaken to confirm its suitability / lifespan. **Action: PW to investigate.**

A request has been made from a local resident for a “Happy to Chat” bench to support the health and wellbeing of the village. A similar scheme has been implemented by Portland Town Council and that they may be able to provide a template for stickers to be added to the relevant benches. Some concerns were raised that this practice may not be consistent with current social distancing requirements, however, on balance it was agreed that it would be of benefit to the community. It was agreed to start with four pilot benches, focusing initially on those in regular use, including those next to Pot Pourri in the village centre, outside the Catholic Church and at Sway Road adjacent to the bus stop. Following the pilot, the scheme can be rolled-out further or alternative benches selected and permanent signage designs agreed. **Action: PW to obtain copy of bench sticker template from Portland Town Council.**

Fire Bell:

A new post will be needed in approximately 18 months’ time.

Post Box:

PW was thanked for his efforts in securing a new post box at the junction of Brookley Road and Fibbards Road. It was noted that collection times for this box are not ideal (it would be better if they matched the previous Post Office collection times and/or nearby post boxes such as that on Sway Road) and that there is still no priority post box in the village. It was further noted that the damaged Broadlands Road box had not been replaced. **Action: PW to write to Royal Mail to lobby for alternative collection times for the Fibbards Road post box, designation of a priority post box within the village, and replacement post box for Broadlands Road.**

Defibrillator:

RW has inspected the defibrillator to confirm safe operating condition and the battery has been replaced.

Storage

KW and his wife were thanked for their efforts in removing the contents of the stable to the storage container. AB was also thanked for allowing some machinery to be stored on his premises. It was agreed that additional security measures were required for the containers to prevent break-ins and theft and that this work will be carried out by KW. **Action: KW to investigate costs and report to next Parish Council meeting.**

New Office

No works are being undertaken at present as the office is closed due to Covid restrictions. The window exhibition space is currently being used by the village Brownie pack who are celebrating their centenary this month. It was agreed to allow the WI and Royal British Legion to stage similar exhibitions in 2021.

21/06 Infrastructure Reports

Brookley Road Scheme:

Consultation documentation including parklets and cycle racks is due to be received from Hampshire County Council (HCC) shortly, ahead of the commencement of the consultation period in mid-February (to allow completion prior to Purdah ahead of May elections).

Footpaths:

A request has been received to improve the footpath between two sections of Broadlands Road which has become very muddy. This land does not belong to the Parish Council and it is difficult to identify the owner. It was noted that although this would be a relatively small and straightforward task, gravel cannot be laid when wet so nothing can be done at this time of year.

The permissive footpath parallel to Mill Lane was granted by the previous owner of Brockenhurst Park and subsequently closed. A meeting has been arranged by PW with the land manager to discuss its potential re-opening and enquiries will also be made about the Church Hill Farm bridleway and general land ownership.

Cycle Tracks:

Forestry England have added a post and gate to the cycle track next to the Primary School on Health & Safety grounds. **Action: PW to contact Forestry England to clarify the position.**

PM reported that there was no update on the Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) at this time. It was agreed that a small working party would be set-up to support this work.

21/07 Potential Youth Provision

Following a question raised at the January 2021 Parish Council meeting, it has been confirmed that the Council is not statutorily responsible for provision of youth facilities, however, it was acknowledged that provision is limited within the village although grants and support are provided to many local clubs and societies that cater for young people. It was agreed that the Parish Council could act as facilitators of initiatives to support young people and ensure that discussion of ideas takes place, such as through social media or similar operation to Sway Junior Parish Council. **Action: PW to consider appropriate advertising on office screen.**

21/08 Any Other Items

Brockenhurst Pre-School: RW advised that the Pre-School have created a 'virtual tour' video showing what they have achieved with the grants and donations received (including from the Parish Council and Brockenhurst Business Association) which is available online.

Brookley Road Car Park: Resurfacing work is being carried out during the first two weeks of March. Whilst the Parish Council was consulted, its suggestions have not been adopted.

Highways: A strategy meeting has been arranged for 4th February with HCC Highways officers and PW, RW, and Councillors Russell Horne and John Wingham.

21/09 Date of Next Meeting: 1st June 2021 at 7.00 pm - or sooner if required, via Zoom Conference.

The meeting closed at 8.50 pm.