



# BOX PARISH COUNCIL

## **MINUTES OF AN MEETING OF THE PLAYING FIELDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 5<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2024**

- 1. Present:** Councillors: B. Walton (Chair); R. Bean; N. Ingledew;  
H. Parker; M. Tye; T. Walton; D. Wright  
Mrs Carey (Clerk)  
Ms. G. Potts – Box Allotment Group  
Mrs. T. Meek; Mrs J. Wright - Box Bowls Club
- 2. Apologies:** Nil
- 3. Absent:** Nil
- 4. Public Question Time:** There were no members of the public present
- 5. Declaration of Interests:** There were no declaration of interest relating to items on the Agenda
- 6. Minutes:** The Minutes of the Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 were taken as read and signed as a true record with one amendment under item 6e

**6. Matters Arising:**

**a. Play Area:**

RoSPA report The report had been received and a priority list drawn up, most of which had been completed. There are no high risk areas

The Thomas the Tank Engine has reached the end of its life, is falling apart and is getting vandalised becoming dangerous and likely to become a high risk.

It was **recommended** that, for Health and Safety reasons, the Groundsmen are asked to remove this piece of equipment. An article will be put in the Parish Magazine to notify people that it will be taken away. **Action: TW**

Community playground group to develop the play area: An article had been drawn up to go in the Parish Magazine to attract more members. The group will look into funding to replace the train

Issues raised on the walkround:

The weeds in the Under 7s to be sprayed and also those on the main Play Area and the Rock Circus. This will be done in April when the weather is warmer. **Action: JA**

**b. Allotments:**

Ms Potts reported that there were no issues with the allotments.

Trees: It was agreed to obtain a quotation from Tree Parts Ltd for pollarding the Hazel and Willow to reduce the shade and also to ask for quotes for work to the Ash trees in the Allotments. Pollarding has started on the Hawthorn at the bottom of 10b

Two people had given up their allotments and these have been relet. There is only person on the waiting list. An article to be put in the Parish Magazine to see if anyone wishes to be added to the waiting list.

**Action: TW**

Retaining work: To be carried out in March

More beech whips to be planted to fill the gaps

Letter received from Allotment holder 1a asking for a reduction in the cost of the allotment as part of this is in the shade. Also the surrounding hedge is very high and encroaching widthways onto the plot. Clerk to reply that previously allotment holders agreed to cut the inside of the hedge. The Parish Council's groundsmen can do this but they may have to tread on plants to achieve it as they need clear access. There is no agreed reduction for the rental. The Council will be looking at all the Ash trees on the allotments.

**Action: MC**

**c. Update on Lovar Garden:**

Community Fund update: Cllr Tye had completed and submitted the final report to the Community Fund.

The pond had recently flooded during the storm and a sharp piece of masonry has punctured the lining. The Groundsman will get a butyl patch to repair this.

**Action: CD**

Cllr B. Walton had spoken to Ashley Rich about future flooding in light on the work to the path. He reported that the hardcore and steps would be fine but some of the mendip dust layer might be lost. This will be put in the Asset Management Plan and money put in the budget to deal with this. The repairs to the bridge will also be added to the Asset Management Plan.

**Action: BW**

**d. Trees and Hedges:**

Veteran Chestnut tree: It was reported that this is looking good. It was suggested that hazel rods be put in to weave a dead hedge.

**Action: JA/CD**

Next working party to be held on 24<sup>th</sup> March

Notice board by the School: Cllr B. Walton and H. Parker to pursue this.

**Action: BW/HP**

Mill Lane Hedge: The Community Payback team have been asked to take out the ivy and put mulch down

A brace had been fitted to the Lime tree as agreed.

There are a group of three Maples which will need mulching in the future.

The Groundsmen are reducing their line of mowing and are not mowing under the trees.

**e. Bowling Green:**

Mrs Wright reported that the Club was getting ready for the opening on 15<sup>th</sup> April and were drawing up the calendar of matches. The Village Competition will be held on 18<sup>th</sup> May. The Club had covered the cost of the Vertidrain.

A light had been fixed to the gate but this did not work because of the hedge.

The Greenkeeper's Manual was being updated and will be forwarded to the Council.

A joint meeting will be held with ASMC on 20<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the terms of the contract and use of materials.

**Agreement between the Parish Council and the Bowls Club**

A draft agreement had been drawn up. It was agreed that this should run from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Cllr Bean felt that the payments to ASMC should be mirrored by payments received from the Bowls Club. He also raised the issue again of a possible Lease and peppercorn rent.

It was agreed to remove the words “Rules Covering the Hiring of the Green”. There was a discussion on the meaning of the words “surrounding area” which would include the paving slabs/ditches.

After discussion it was **recommended** that the agreed hiring fee of £10,000 (£6800 to cover the Greens Maintenance Contract; £600 for irrigation system; £100 contingency and £2500 for materials) should be paid over a twelve month period at a cost of £616.66 per month plus the cost of the materials used by ASMC.

Cllr Bean to redraft the contract to include these changes and circulate a copy for approval at Full Council

**Action RB**

It was stated that the Bowls Club could apply for funding and the representatives agreed to follow this up.

VAT Refund: Letter received from HMRC stating that “based upon the examples in the guidance they can accept that the VAT declared by Box Parish Council on its supplies of bowling greens have been overpaid and that this is now due to be repaid. This will involve a repayment of £3853 + interest.”

The Parish Council has discussed a further claim that can be made for the use of the non-sports facilities let out for sports use in respect of the Yoga and Pilates groups. A claim can be made for the Bowls Club limited to use of the showers. ***To be discussed at the next Buildings Management meeting***

The Clerk reported that she had spoken to HMRC Officer dealing with the claim who had confirmed that the Parish Council could keep the refund. However, in a legal advice note received previously it had been stated that councils must avoid “unjust enrichment” which might occur if they reclaim the VAT and keep it, rather than refunding it to the customers

After discussion it was **recommended** that the refund in the sum of £3853 + interest should be repaid to the Bowls Club with the advice that they earmark this money for any future unforeseen expenditure required on the Green

**7. Other items for discussion:**

Tennis Courts: The report from the recent meeting of the working group had been circulated.

The group had set up a bank account and will now apply for crowdfunding and match funding from Area Board. Various ideas had been put forward for future fund raising including a pickleball tournament. There is currently a total of £8595 (including £6500 from the Parish Council earmarked for this)

**Forward Plan/Risk Assessment**: This will be updated. Waiting to hear from the

Cricket Club re Health & Safety procedures for grass cutting and maintenance re use of chemicals. This is now required urgently and must be received before the Cricket Club start their preparations for the forthcoming season.

The Clerk will write a further letter to the Cricket Club

**Action: MC**

It was suggested that Cllr Bean should be the Parish Council representative with the Cricket Club. Cllr Bean to approach the Cricket Club

**Action: RB**

Groundsmen to put grass seed down under the trees on the outfield.

**Asset Management Plan:** Cllr Walton to draw this up

**Signs on Recreation Ground:** Cllr Parker to put the signs up

**Action: HP**

**Monitoring of the Budget:** This is all on line

**Path round top part of the Recreation Ground:** It had been estimated that it will cost between £70-£100 per metre for putting down a compressed surface, edging and mendip dust. The Parish Council will have £4700 in the budget for any works. It was agreed that Cllr B. Walton would draw up a specification for the work to enable quotes to be obtained to ascertain how much can be carried out at the present time.

**Action: BW**

#### **8. Issues arising from the Walkround:**

- Tennis Courts – remarking of the netball lines. Calculated that this will take ½ - 1 day for the groundsmen to do. It was agreed that this should be done
- Gaps in hedge by car park – it was agreed to purchase some plastic grasscrete to put down in the gaps
- Groundsmen to reinstate the white lines for one of the parking bays in the car park
- Hiring pump for clearing the silt from the pond
- Hedge at top of Lovar Garden – replace whips in Autumn/Winter

#### **9. Climate Strategy Action Plan – Impact on Playing Fields actions:**

It was agreed to renegotiate the contract with Hills Waste to a monthly collection for the recycling unit as there is not enough being recycled for a fortnightly collection. This can be altered back when the bin is being used more.

**Action: HP**

It was agreed that a notice should be put on the bin that it is for Parish Council use only and to indicate the location of the public bin. It was also felt that details of what can be put in the bin should be displayed.

**Action: HP**

Location of next bin – it was suggested that this could be located next to the Tennis Courts

#### **10. Correspondence:**

- a. **Box C of E School – repairs to roof and scaffolding:** The School is having to undertake urgent repairs to the roof ends of the school's extension which, due to the height, will require the erection of scaffolding. Whilst access for the delivery and installation of the scaffolding will be via the school, one side will need to have the legs positioned out across the path on the Recreation Ground. The scaffolding will be erected on 9<sup>th</sup> February with the work carried out over the half term 12-16 February. It was agreed to grant permission for this.

- b. **Box Cricket Club Festival of Women's Cricket:** Letter requesting permission to hold the Festival of Women's Cricket on the lower field of the Recreation Ground. The proposed dates are Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July and Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September

It was **recommended** that permission be given in principle subject to receipt of an acceptable Risk Assessment and Health and Safety procedures and subject to not clashing with the football club on 15<sup>th</sup> September.

- c. **Work to pedestrian crossing by Post Office:** There was information on social media that the proposed work to the pedestrian crossing by the Post Office has been scheduled to take place during the period 8-26<sup>th</sup> July. A map had shown the extent of the work which included alterations to the flower bed. It was agreed to ask Wiltshire Council for a copy of the plan. A working party will be arranged to remove the plants prior to the work

**11. Items of report and future agenda items:**

- a. **Dumping of garden waste at Lovar Garden** – discuss at the next meeting
- b. Cllr Bean reported that a parishioner had expressed concern about the tyre tracks on the Recreation Ground created by the muie

**12. Date of next meeting** – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**Chair**

*Meeting closed at 8.45 pm*