



# Medstead Parish Council

## Minutes of Maintenance Committee Meeting – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025, 6.30pm

**Present:** Cllrs. Graham Bennell (Chair), Ken Kercher, Phil Quinlan, Mark Brayford

**Also in attendance:** Julie Russell (Parish Clerk), the Footpath representative.

	ACTION
<p><b>24.83 OPEN SESSION</b> An issue was raised and discussed regarding the noticeboard by Read’s Butcher’s shop.</p>	
<p><b>24.84 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> None</p>	
<p><b>24.85 DECLARATION OF INTEREST</b> None</p>	
<p><b>24.86 MINUTES</b> Councillors <b>resolved</b> to confirm the minutes of the Maintenance Committee meeting on <b>20<sup>th</sup> November</b>, which were signed by the chairman.</p>	
<p><b>24.87 MOWING CONTRACTS</b> The council approached six companies and received three quotes. No other responses were received to the advert on the website. The three quotes were reviewed and councillors <b>resolved</b> to select one contractor, with the recommendation to be put forward to the February full council meeting.</p>	
<p><b>24.88 PLAYGROUND / VILLAGE GREEN</b></p> <p>a. Councillors received a quote from Playdale to replace the bearings on the roundabout and to introduce a trapdoor to allow easy greasing as part of regular maintenance. There is no safety issue associated with the bearings, but the council was advised by the engineer that the spin of the roundabout will gradually get more uneven. They resolved to accept the quote and schedule the work soon, subject to approval by full council. It is proposed that this will use the remaining funds on S106 Project 700, with the rest covered by Neighbourhood CIL.</p> <p>b. The new picnic benches have been delivered and are scheduled for installation on 17<sup>th</sup> February.</p>	
<p><b>24.89 FIVE ASH POND</b> The Lengthsman team visited the pond on 17<sup>th</sup> January but decided that manually digging the grips on the verge would be too difficult and as a standalone job would do virtually nothing without digging substantially into the pond due to silt build up beyond the grips. That would be a major job, requiring mechanical digging equipment.</p> <p>Cllr Bennell and the clerk visited the pond at the height of recent floods to better understand the current state of it and identify what could be done. They decided that the issues were complex and mechanical dredging or digging further grips might slightly increase the volume of the water store but would not solve the root causes. Water floods from all roads leading into the junction, plus water bubbles up from the drains and feeds from the culvert from the neighbouring ditch and waterlogged fields during excessive bouts of rainfall. When the pond is full it is at a higher level than the road, which has a natural dip at that point, and so just spills out to flood the road. In the early stages of build-up on the road, a lower drainage grip could help get water off the road into the road,</p>	

<p>but by the time it is becoming a problem to cars, the water is flowing out of the overfull pond, and better drainage grips will not solve the problem.</p> <p>Beyond the pond, the water flows in an underground water course to cause flooding further down Lymington Bottom Road and onwards to Four Marks. Work is needed in conjunction with HCC to identify more radical solutions. The council has major concerns that further development in the area is going to make the situation much worse.</p>	
<p><b>24.90 UPDATE ON OTHER ACTIONS AND NEW MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The diseased tree by the enclosed playground area has now been removed.</li> <li>b. The Lengthsman has removed tree branches that have fallen over the fence from the village green into the school grounds.</li> <li>c. The clerk has had a response from the insurance company on what training in chainsaw use is required by volunteers in order for them to be covered on the council's insurance policy. This can be used in future if volunteers come forward, such as in the aftermath of storms.</li> <li>d. The clerk has been advised by Hampshire County Council Tree Team Services that it is not worth inspecting the ash tree in the cemetery at present as it is very difficult to diagnose ash die back when an ash tree is not in leaf. She has obtained a quote for inspection and will contact them again nearer to summer.</li> <li>e. No grit was used in the village hall car park during the recent bouts of snowy weather, so it does not yet need to be replenished.</li> <li>f. Pavilion quotes were already considered at the extraordinary full council meeting. It was agreed that we should go ahead with shower repairs as soon as possible.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>24.91 REVIEW OF POLICIES</b></p> <p>Councillors reviewed the following policies and <b>resolved</b> to recommend their readoption to full council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Illegal and Unauthorised Encampments Policy</li> <li>b. Drone Policy</li> <li>c. Closed Churchyard (St. Andrews) Policy</li> <li>d. Playground and Recreation Area Inspection Policy</li> </ul> <p>The clerk had checked that all contact names and details in the Illegal and Unauthorised Encampments Policy are still up to date, and has checked for any changes in legislation on drone use and has checked that the playground inspectors that we use have the RPii qualifications as laid out in the policy.</p>	
<p><b>24.92 FOOTPATHS</b></p> <p>The question was discussed with the footpath representative as to how Neighbourhood CIL money could potentially be used to improve footpaths in the village, particularly those through the Knapp from Soldridge Road up to Paice Lane and beyond up to Homestead Road, which could be used to connected residents to the village centre. The footpath representative said any attempts to put down scalplings to reduce mud would result in it getting quickly churned up by horses on the parts that are a permissive bridleway. There are likely to be issues with landowners, and in her opinion, there are few footpaths where extra maintenance would make much of a difference to the footpath surface.</p>	
<p><b>24.93 CORRESPONDENCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The HCC Arboriculture Team has written to say that they now offer tree inspections and surveys for parish councils on a commercial basis and the clerk will contact them later in the year for a quote for our next tree survey. Given their advice that ash trees should be surveyed in the summer, the Maintenance Committee should consider</li> </ul>	

<p>bringing forward its next survey scheduled for the winter, to be revisited at a future meeting.</p> <p><b>b.</b> The secretary of Alton Ramblers has contacted Cllr Bennell and is keen to meet up to discuss our village footpaths. The clerk will liaise with Cllr Bennell and the individual to work out how to take this forward.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
<p><b>24.94 AD HOC JOBS</b></p> <p>Moles have returned to the village green, so the clerk has contacted the council's pest control contractor to deal with this promptly.</p>	

There were no further matters to discuss and the meeting was closed at 7.35pm.

**Signed Chairman** .....

**Date**.....