



Medstead Parish Council

Minutes of Maintenance Committee Meeting – 23rd July 2025, 6.30pm

Present: Cllrs. Mike Smith, Ken Kercher, Jez Hood

Also in attendance: Julie Russell (Parish Clerk)

	ACTION
25.17 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN In line with Standing Orders, Cllr Smith chaired the meeting in the absence of Cllr Quinlan.	
25.18 OPEN SESSION The Clerk informed the Committee that Idverde had raised its charges for litter bin emptying by 6.5%, above the 3.4% inflation amount indicated by the contract arrangements. She sought and was granted the Committee's approval in challenging it with the company.	
25.19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE An apology was received and approved for Cllr Quinlan (holiday).	
25.20 DECLARATION OF INTEREST None	
25.21 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES Councillors resolved to confirm the minutes of the Maintenance Committee meeting on 28th May , which were signed by the chairman.	
25.22 UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ACTIONS The tree survey is scheduled for 5 th August. Fire extinguishers in the allotment shed have now been serviced, together with servicing at the pavilion, and the two buildings have been moved onto a single contract.	
25.23 MEMORIAL BENCHES a. The Clerk had circulated a document in advance considering the options for a policy for memorial benches, with regard to who buys, installs and maintains the benches. It recommended that the best option with regard to risk and ease of implementation is for the Council to make the purchase and be responsible for installation, inspection, maintenance and end-of-life removal with a fee levied to cover this. Councillors agreed with this approach and the Clerk will now finish drafting the policy for consideration at the next Maintenance Committee meeting. The Committee agreed that it should choose one or two designs that are standard to be used for all memorial benches, and these will be made of recycled wood-effect plastic. The Clerk will investigate and propose product options for the next meeting and will look into installation costs. b. To consider any updates on a resident's request for a memorial bench: the resident has not yet replied with any information.	Clerk
25.24 DRAGON'S TEETH The Clerk had respoken to the two companies that provided previously-shared quotes for dragon's teeth replacement following recent threats of a traveller incursion and discussed options including concrete and steel posts as an alternative to timber. The document also considered the viability of other approaches such as creating a rut or ridge or planting trees. Indicative costs suggest any differences between the cost of steel, concrete, treated timber or untreated chestnut would be minor so the decision comes mainly down to aesthetics, longevity, initial costs, whole-life costs and strength of deterrent.	

<p>Councillors felt that as no option is completely infallible, aesthetics should be very important when considering the appearance alongside the other chestnut posts and in the semi-rural setting.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Clerk and Councillor(s) would visit one of the contractor's yard to compare the appearance of steel, treated timber and concrete, to be arranged by the Clerk. Cllr Hood volunteered to be involved. There is no merit in getting costs until a decision has been made on material since it would involve extra work for the contractors to cost multiple, and we have been told the difference would be small.</p> <p>Whereas previously we proposed replacing around 20 posts, we now need to replace the whole layby as recent events have indicated that measures to firm up the posts were not sufficient and it is clear that there is rot in all of them. This will significantly exceed the amount allocated for dragon's teeth in earmarked reserves. The Clerk has checked if Neighbourhood CIL, Strategic CIL or S106 Environmental funds can be used, but EHDC has said no but suggested S106 Transport funds are still available and we could potentially apply for a grant.</p> <p>The Committee also suggested that it looks into better options for securing the gates.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>25.25 ALLOTMENTS</p> <p>Cllr Quinlan had met with members of the Residents Group for the Ivatt Way development. They are in the process of agreeing the handover from Cala Homes to the resident's management company. There is still an open question on whether Cala Homes has any liabilities for the bank adjoining the playground, based on whether or not it is a latent defect, but the Maintenance Committee agreed to defer pursuing this until after the handover has been completed.</p> <p>Cllr Smith agreed to look into options and get quotes to provide a lower cost solution to provide electricity for the lighting in the allotment shed, including a solar powered solution and a generator. The Clerk advised that it may be possible to apply for an S106 grant using the Environmental Improvements Fund and will look into this once the quotes are available.</p>	<p>Cllr Smith</p>
<p>25.26 VILLAGE GREEN</p> <p>The Clerk informed the Committee that following the removal of dangerous den material adjacent to the school border, new material was appearing in a new site by the zip wire. The Clerk has asked the school to speak to the parents of the children known to be involved and she will keep a regular watch on the situation, as again wood was found tied up at head height in an unsafe manner. The Clerk has also requested that the school remove a heap of used planks of wood on its grounds close to the boundary fence, which is believed to be the source of some of the material, and the school has agreed to do this over the summer holidays.</p>	
<p>25.27 WAR MEMORIAL</p> <p>The Clerk had circulated in advance indicative insurance premiums obtained from Hiscox for various valuation values of the war memorial. These ranged from £70 premium for a £10,000 valuation to £200 for a £50,000 valuation. Insurance would only cover damage (e.g. car crash, vandalism), not regular wear and tear. Councillors regarded its position to be well-protected from collision. The next step if we were to insure it would be to pay for a valuation survey. However, it is still believed that the Church retains ownership of the war memorial and therefore the responsibility of insuring it (which Cllr Maloney is going to check).</p>	

25.28 FLOWER BULBS The Committee agreed to spend £50 on flower bulbs for the Village Green. The Clerk will talk to the Gardening Club to see if they are interested in helping with planting again.	Clerk
25.29 THE KNAPP FOOTPATH The Clerk will ask the Lengthsman to help clear the Knapp Footpath, and failing that will get quotes to clear it. The Council cannot intervene to remove the gate installed in the URC property opening onto the Knapp woodland as it is not illegal to own and install it, although the owner cannot legally use it for access without permission.	Clerk
25.30 PONDS a. There had been concern over the sudden appearance of blue algae in the village pond. However, prior to this meeting it has now cleared up. The pond maintenance representative reported that it was a temporary issue triggered by the introduction of new plants into the pond. Cllr Malony had inspected the pond and suggested that a cap on a particular pipe may prevent leakage from the pond onto the road. The Clerk will arrange a time to visit the pond with Cllr Maloney and the pond maintenance representative to assess this. b. There is no further action on Five Ash Pond to report. The reply received from HCC to the Council's letter was unsatisfactory. The Clerk will search through older files for anything that might be useful with regard to past correspondence from HCC.	Clerk
25.40 CORRESPONDENCE AND ANY NEW MAINTENANCE MATTERS ARISING The Clerk informed the Committee that the Village Hall Committee had asked for permission to put another noticeboard on the Village Green next to the existing noticeboard and this was agreed. They also asked if the Council were interested in jointly purchasing new noticeboards, but this was declined as existing facilities are considered sufficient.	
25.16 NEXT MEETING The next meeting is confirmed as 24 th September.	

There were no further matters to discuss and the meeting was closed at 7.29pm.

Signed Chairman

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