



West Monkton Parish Council

## ADOPTED

Minutes of the meeting of the Sports Pitch Committee of West Monkton Parish Council held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 at 7.00pm at Brittons Ash Community Hall, Bridgwater Road, Bathpool, Taunton, TA2 8FT.

**In attendance:** Cllrs Cavill, Gage and Haskins, Alan Hall, Giles Benbow (West Monkton Cricket Club), Sam Wallis (Taunton Rugby Club) and John Wrelton (Taunton Rugby Club) and Amy Shepherd (Clerk).

### **SPC01/25 To receive any apologies (with reasons), introductions with responsibilities**

No apologies were received.

### **SPC02/25 Election of Chair of Sports Pitch Committee**

It resolved to appoint Cllr Haskins as Chair of the Sports Pitch Committee.

### **SPC03/25 To review / confirm membership of Sports Pitch Committee**

Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council representatives on the Committee remain as Cllr Haskins, Cavill and Gage. Alan Hall continues to be a member of the Committee as a volunteer.

John Wrelton and Sam Wallis confirmed that they will continue to represent Taunton Rugby Club on the Committee and suggested that James Dean may also join the Committee / attend meetings.

Giles Benbow confirmed that he will continue to represent West Monkton Cricket Club on the Committee and another member from the Cricket Club will be identified to join the Committee shortly.

### **SPC04/25 To approve minutes of the Sports Pitch Committee meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024.**

The minutes of the Sports Pitch Committee meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024 were approved.

### **SPC05/25 Update on application to vary planning permission submitted in July 2024.**

Cllr Cavill provided an update on the application. Cllr Cavill confirmed that the Highways comments have been received on the updated proposals and although indication had been received from the planning officer three weeks ago that consent would be issued, notification of planning consent has not been received.

Cllr Cavill confirmed that he is continuing to chase the approval with the new head of planning. The main hold up appears to be with the Legal Team.

Cllr Cavill reported that he expected that confirmation of planning approval is imminent.

### **SPC06/25 Update on works undertaken on site**

Alan Hall reported that the grass and drainage is in place and working. The contractor has completed nearly everything and is going into mow the grass. Three squares for cricket have been put in, need to add artificial square. Cable ducts are in for flood lighting.

The remaining work can begin once planning permission has been obtained. It was noted that work to secure the site with fencing and gates can not take place until Persimmon have completed the access works.

Clerk confirmed that an email was sent to Persimmon last week escalating the need for the access works and utility connection works to take place. The transfer document for the sports pitches provided covenants requiring these works to be completed within 12 months of transfer. It was noted that the works should have therefore been completed by August 2024.

It was agreed that the Clerk would follow up the issue with Persimmon and highlight that legal advice is being sought for the non-compliance with the covenants, that the rugby pitch is required for the beginning of the season in September for a rugby match with players coming from France and that the matter will be raised by Cllr Cavill at the next Somerset Council Full Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July if a date isn't set for the commencement of the works before then.

### **SPC07/25 Prioritisation of works required to bring pitches into use.**

The following priorities were agreed to bring the pitches into use.

1. Access to the site by Persimmon contractors.
2. Securing the site by installing fencing adjacent to the ditch and gates. A quote for the gate is being developed by Kevin Chedzoy. Clerk has obtained one quote for the fencing and will contact alternative contractors for quotes.
3. Pitches need to be set out. John Wrelton and Sam Wallis to see if Taunton School have the facilities to help with this.
4. Pitch surface needs to be reviewed with the groundworks contractor to see if any remedial works are required. Alan Hall to arrange a site meeting with the contractor.
5. Rugby posts need to be installed. John Wrelton to provide specification for quotes to be obtained.
6. Car park area to be levelled and road scrapings / plainings to be used to provide surface. Alan Hall to see if ground works contractor could quote to carry out this work. Alternative quote to be obtained. A level point is needed to set the height of the car park.
7. Barrier fencing around the rugby pitch. It was noted that the pitch could still be played on with the use of respect barriers if the fencing wasn't in place. John Wrelton to provide the specification for quotes to be obtained. It was noted that the barrier fencing could be installed 3m from the pitch edge rather than 5m if needed.
8. A toilet is needed in the interim until the pavilion is in place. Clerk to check Dunns Auctions to see what is available. It was noted that the water connection and sewerage connection is needed to the location of the pavilion. This can then be used for a temporary toilet solution.
9. Storage containers to act as space for changing in the interim until the pavilion is in place.

To follow later:

1. Flood lights. Quotes to be obtained.
2. Cricket playing surface and square ready for the season. It was noted that the Somerset Cricket Foundation may be able to provide advice on work needed to get the cricket square ready for use.
3. Cricket nets for the beginning of the season (April / May 2026).
4. Artificial cricket square – less important.

Giles Benbow provided an update on behalf of West Monkton Cricket Club. The Under 11's side is established and there is a need to establish an under 13's side. There are enough players to justify starting the side but training for under 13's will be on Friday evenings and the main cricket pitch is already in use for Dynamos and All Stars on Friday evenings. The additional facilities are therefore needed to establish the side with training commencing in April / May 2026.

A Committee has been established at the Cricket Club with parents and other cricketers involved but the Club needs confirmation that the pitch will be available for next season as soon as possible to move ahead with establishing the side.

### **SPC08/25 Funding Opportunities**

Clerk advised that the money received with transfer of the land should be sufficient to complete all works on site apart from the cost of the pavilion. Clerk asked that details of any funding opportunities / grant funding bodies be forwarded to her to enable grant application to be submitted once planning permission is obtained.

Giles Benbow confirmed that the Cricket Club is focused on raising sufficient funds to obtain the required grass cutting equipment for the pitch – expected to cost in the region of £5-10k.

John Wrelton reported that Honda may support the clubs with the provision of grass cutting equipment at reduced cost.

Sam Wallis reported that she will contact ex-Chard RFC Chairman Billy Ellens to seek his advice on any grant funding opportunities.

**SPC09/25 Update from Taunton Rugby Club and West Monkton Cricket Club regarding readiness for maintenance when work is complete**

John Wrelton reported that the Rugby Club is ready to commence maintenance of the pitches, with the equipment and expertise available. John confirmed that there are 300-400 children in the junior sections and more on the waiting list.

Giles Benbow confirmed that the cricket club also has 100-200 children that use their facilities. The Cricket Club are fundraising to purchase the required equipment.

It was noted that the agreement is that the Rugby Club would maintain both pitches during the rugby season and the Cricket Club would maintain both during the cricket season.

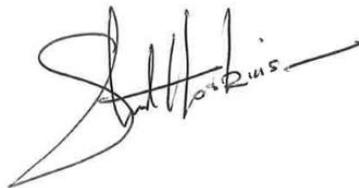
**SPC10/25 Other matters for report**

Clerk requested views on the name for the sports pitch site. Committee members agreed that the site should be called Hyde Park.

**SPC11/25 Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> August at 9.30am at Brittons Ash Community Hall with the opportunity to join virtually.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 8.30pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Wallis', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Signed Chairman:

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> August 2025