



## ADOPTED

Minutes of the meeting of the Sports Pitch Committee of West Monkton Parish Council held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 9.30am at Brittons Ash Community Hall, Bridgwater Road, Bathpool, Taunton, TA2 8FT and via zoom.

**In attendance:** Alan Hall, Cllrs Cavill, Gage and Munson, James Tolman, Sam Wallis and James Dean (Taunton Rugby Club), Giles Benbow and Sam Wadham (West Monkton Cricket Club) and Amy Shepherd (Clerk).

### **SPC78/25 To receive any apologies (with reasons), introductions with responsibilities**

Apologies were received from Cllr Haskins.

### **SPC79/25 To approve minutes of the Sports Pitch Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026.**

The minutes of the Sports Pitch Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026 were approved.

### **SPC80/25 Update on works / planned works:**

#### **a. Drainage works**

Clerk advised that quotes are being gathered to install a drain from the ditch on the entrance boundary to the attenuation pond, picking up the diverted land drain by the cricket nets. These quotes are being obtained for consideration at the April Parish Council meeting, once a quote is approved this work can progress as soon as possible.

#### **b. Flood lighting**

Clerk reported that a site meeting to agree the location of the flood light columns has taken place. The flood lighting groundworks are scheduled to take place on 27<sup>th</sup> April (4-5 days on site) followed by the installation of the columns on 11<sup>th</sup> May (4-5 days on site). Once this work has been completed, work can progress with the car park installation.

Alan Hall confirmed that the land drains under the pitches go as far as the position of the lighting columns. This confirms the drainage requirements for the car park as being as specified (for the whole of the car park).

Cllr Cavill suggested removing the turf from the flood light column positions to re-use where required on site.

#### **c. Landscaping / tree planting**

Alan Hall reported that he has been to the pitches and staked the positions for tree planting along the southern end of the rugby pitch.

Sam Wallis reported that the available trees / hedging will be confirmed towards the end of March. Although the trees / hedging plants will be provided at no cost, there may be some cost for stakes and other materials as required.

It was agreed to organise a working group to help plant the trees, details to be circulated when agreed to enable volunteers from the clubs and community to help.

Giles Benbow reported that the company that his wife works for could provide 200 – 3000 trees for landscaping. Other areas for tree planting were identified including on the fenced boundary of the attenuation pond / along the fenced boundary to the west of the site. It was noted that hedging plants could be added to the top of the bund adjacent to the fencing with the dog walking area.

It was noted that the earth from the flood light ground works and car park ground works will be retained on site and another bund created on the north west side of the cricket pitch. Giles Benbow to mark out the perimeter of the pitch to confirm the location of the bund.

#### **d. Utility and drainage connections**

Clerk reported that she is continuing to chase the company commissioned by Persimmon Homes to install the water and electricity connections. No update was provided in advance of the meeting. Clerk to continue to chase.

It was noted that a water connection may not be provided in time to be used to water the cricket square in dry conditions. Options on site including the use of the water bowser / pump were discussed.

#### **e. Pump track**

Cllr Gage reported that the pump track work is underway on site. Soil is being taken from the bund on the south-eastern boundary of the site to create the track.

The work is expected to take a further 4 weeks to complete but work is progressing well on site.

The fencing contractor has been advised of the anticipated completion date of the pump track to enable the fencing to be installed around it on completion.

A container for the pump track area was discussed and its potential positioning. Clerk to obtain prices for a container for consideration at the next PC meeting. The purpose of the container will be to house equipment that will be loaned out to people using the track. Giles Benbow suggested that Apple County Cycle may wish to support the track / initiative through possible sponsorship – Clerk to investigate.

Gates, fencing and security on site was discussed and it was noted that the retractable bollards should start to be used to keep the site secure – Clerk to hand out keys.

It was noted that there are two gaps in the hedging around the site that dog walkers use to gain access. Clerk to liaise with the fencing contractor about installing fencing at these two locations, one next to the field gate Hyde Lane and the other along the hedge on the southern boundary. Once the grass cutting equipment is stored on site, options to increase the height of the field gate on Hyde Lane to be considered.

Clerk updated the Committee on the Somerset wide Public Space Protection Order and the response submitted by the Parish Council requesting that the sports pitches are added so that dogs not being permitted on the pitches is enforceable.

Cllr Cavill suggested looking at examples of management committees for pump tracks that have been established. Clerk to investigate.

#### **f. Car parking**

Clerk reported that quotations are being gathered for the car park works with an updated specification to include drainage into the ditch. The quotations will be considered at the April PC meeting with a view to the works commencing after the flood light installation (mid to end of May).

#### **g. Pavilion**

Clerk reported that applications for grant funding to go towards the cost of the pavilion are continuing. The temporary toilet facilities will remain on site in the interim.

Giles Benbow suggested at the meeting that the proposed pavilion is not in the correct position as it is in line with the bowling arm. After the meeting Giles Benbow confirmed that the proposed position is fine and doesn't need to be moved.

#### **h. Perimeter fencing**

It was noted that the intention is to install the perimeter fencing around the rugby pitch in advance of the next rugby season.

#### **i. Ongoing maintenance of pitches**

Giles Benbow reported that a roller has been found and secured and collection is to be arranged. The intention is for the cricket club to repair one of their wicket mowers to use at the pitches.

James Tolman confirmed that the rugby club are cutting both pitches at the moment using equipment from the rugby club. The intention is that the rugby club will replace the mower that is being used so that the current mower can be used and stored at the sports pitches but this is unlikely to take place until the summer. There is therefore a gap from when the rugby season finishes where no grass cutting equipment is on site for the pitches to be cut / maintained.

Clerk reported that the PC had received a total of £3000 of grant funding from the Somerset Communities Foundation Stronger Communities Fund and that the PC has allocated £2000 of that towards grass cutting equipment. Clerk confirmed that the money would have to be used for the PC to purchase the equipment to comply with the grant funding conditions. The remaining £1000 will be used to fund equipment for the pump track.

Giles Benbow outlined grant funding applications and fundraising efforts being taken forward by the Cricket Club and outlined the cost of second hand mowers.

It was agreed that Giles would continue to look at options and provide an update for the next PC meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> April. If additional funds are needed Clerk to seek a resolution from the PC at the meeting.

### **SPC 81/25 Booking System for pitches**

Clerk confirmed that she has received a demonstration on an online booking system that the PC currently uses the accounts function of. Clerk has a demonstration with another booking system later this month. Booking System to be agreed at the next PC meeting.

Booking hire rates to be agreed / discussed further.

### **SPC 82/25 Finance and grant funding update**

Clerk reported that she is developing an application for lottery funding and requested feedback on items that could be included in the application. A discussion followed and items that could be included were highlighted.

### **SPC 83/25 Update from Taunton Rugby Club and West Monkton Cricket Club**

Giles Benbow reported that the Cricket Club will start their training at the end of the month and training / fixtures will take place on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday evenings and on Sundays.

Both clubs requested a formal agreement between the clubs and the PC about its use of the pitches. It was agreed to develop Memorandums of Understandings. Both Clubs to send their requirements to the Clerk. Clerk to develop draft MOUs for agreement by parties.

### **SPC 84/25 Other matters for report**

A discussion about tidying up the entrance including the removal of the bricks and if Persimmon intend to remove the gate near the entrance. Clerk to confirm Persimmons intentions regarding the gate.

### **SPC 85/25 Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 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 11am.



Signed Chairman:

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026