

**Minutes of the Property and Amenities Committee Meeting held at
Corsham Town Hall on Wednesday 10 September 2025**

Present Councillor T Ellis (Chair)
Councillors S Abbott, N Brakspear and J Coward

In Attendance Mrs V Watson (Technical Assistant)
J Whittleton (Head of Technical Services)

P&A 27/25 Apologies

Apologies were received from H Belcher OBE and G Ward.

P&A 28/25 Public Question Time and Petitions

A resident asked the Committee to support the proposal under *Agenda Item 10iii – Corsham to Hartham Footpath – Request for a footpath between Middlewick Lane and Hatham.*

P&A 29/25 Declarations of Interest

Councillor S Abbott declared a non-pecuniary interest in *Agenda Item 10iii – Corsham to Hartham Footpath.* He was familiar with a property/land owner along the proposed route.

P&A 30/25 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Property and Amenities Committee meeting held on 30 July 2025

Minute P&A 08/25 Springfield Skatepark – The Head of Technical Services reported that Maverick, the Town Council’s chosen skatepark contractor, had recently sent through the first iteration of its designs for the new skatepark. The designs were due to be presented to the Corsham Skatepark Project Group later in September and were likely to be shared with Members at the 12 November Property and Amenities Committee meeting. The Corsham Skatepark Project Group was organising a ‘Skate Jam’ at the Springfield Campus on 27 September. The event would feature skateboarding lessons, a free skate session on ramps/kit provided by Route One and a competition. There would be food stalls and music, and the group was hoping to use the event to raise funds for the project.

Minute P&A 22/25 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) – The Committee noted that the consultation on the draft LCWIP had now come to a close and that the final plan was awaited. It was felt that the draft was not as detailed as the previous plans produced for other towns.

P&A 31/25 Public Realm – Moxhams and Wyvern House Boundary onto Newlands Road (*Minute P&A 05/25 and others*)

Consideration was given to plans to construct a section of dry stone wall within the recently planted Yew hedge along the frontage of Moxhams and Wyvern House. Whilst digging the footings of the proposed wall, the Town Council's contractors had discovered two uncharted electricity cables at a depth of c.40cm. It was not possible to construct the wall with these cables in situ. After a long delay, a price of over £15,000 had been received from SSE to divert the two cables. Given that this would need to be added to the cost of constructing the wall, officers felt that this element of the project was becoming prohibitively expensive and had suggested planting additional Yew hedging, rather than proceeding with the wall.

Issues discussed included:

- That the cost to divert the cables seemed to be excessively high; and
- That the existing Yew hedging looked attractive and had appeared to have established well.

Resolved

That, subject to gaining the agreement of GreenSquareAccord, to go ahead with the proposal to plant Yew hedging instead of constructing a dry stone wall at this location.

P&A 32/25 Asset Management Plan Update (*Minute P&A 07/25 and others*)

The Head of Technical Services gave a brief update on some of the work arising from the Asset Management Plan. He stated that a carpenter had recently addressed some of the joinery tasks at the rear of Arnold House – mostly replacing rotten sections in window and door frames. He also reported that the Town Council had decided to look for a new builder with experience of working on listed buildings, to address the outstanding works in Arnold House. The previous contractor had been unable to keep to promised start dates for numerous pieces of work and this had caused inconvenience for tenants in the flats.

Resolved

- 1) To consider the full Asset Management Plan at a future meeting.
- 2) To note the update.

P&A 33/25 Play Equipment at Coppershell Playing Field

Consideration was given to a specification which had recently been published on the Government's Find a Tender website, seeking tenders for new play equipment at Coppershell Playing Field.

Issues discussed included:

- That consultation with residents would take place when the tenders had been submitted and that residents would be asked for their comments on the proposed layouts; and
- The level of use that the play area received.

Resolved

That Councillors S Abbott, J Coward and T Ellis be nominated to assist with selecting the successful contractor.

P&A 34/25 Emergency Plan (*Minute P&A 23/24 and others*)

Consideration was given to an updated Emergency Plan. The Plan was presented to the Committee each year and had been updated to take account of changes in personnel and contact details. The intention was not to produce a proscriptive plan, but to provide the Council with a framework of issues to consider when faced with an emergency. Once approved the plan would be shared with Wiltshire Council's Drainage Team and with Wiltshire & Swindon Prepared.

Issues discussed included:

- That the Town Council had already started its winter preparedness work – it was due to receive a supply of gel sacs and road salt through the Parish Emergency Assistance Scheme; it would be undertaking audits of critical gullies and grit bins (with the assistance of the emergency volunteers) and would be monitoring trash screens and water courses over the winter months;
- That there were blocked gullies on the A4 near the Valley Road junction; and
- That there was a felled Ash that had been left in a gully at the Ridge.

Resolved

That the Emergency Plan be approved.

P&A 35/25 Update on Local Highway & Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG) Issues (*Minute P&A 23/25 and others*)

Consideration was given to whether to contribute up to £325 towards a post and socket for a Speed Indicator Device (SID) at Elley Green. If approved, it would be the first site in the parish approved under Wiltshire Council's new Practice Note for the use of SIDs.

Resolved

To contribute up to £325 towards a post and socket for the SID at Elley Green.

The Head of Technical Services passed on the following communication from Wiltshire Council's Highways Department concerning requests for signage through the LHFIG:

Due to high numbers of requests coming in via LHFIG groups for signing, we must remind Town and Parish Councils that overuse of traffic signs blights the landscape, wastes taxpayers' money, and dilutes important safety-critical messages. Clutter also increases risks to road workers and creates additional maintenance burdens.

Research carried out by the Department for Transport to inform the Traffic Signs Policy Review in 2013, showed that the number of traffic signs had doubled in the last 20 years, which was unsustainable. The 2016 revision of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions contains several legislative changes to provide a modern framework, meaning far fewer signs need to be placed and gives local authorities the right to remove many of their existing signs.

Warning signs can play an important part in improving road safety. However, they should only be used where there is a specific safety issue or hidden hazard, not to sign readily apparent conditions or routine features of the road, such as bends and junctions. Overuse of warning signs can dilute their effectiveness and tends to bring them into disrepute. Local authorities should work with local communities where specific issues and concerns are raised, to make sure the right solution is found. Warning signs should only be installed where there is an identified hazard or road safety problem, and not to solely meet a perceived need. Unjustified signing should not be used at individual locations simply in response to complaints from the public.

All traffic authorities are encouraged to formulate policy and practice accordingly.

Resolved

To note the communication from Wiltshire Highways.

P&A 36/25 Requests for Highway Improvements and Traffic Surveys (*Minute P&A 24/25 and others*)

Consideration was given to the following Highway Improvement Requests:

- i. Active Travel Signage – Request for better signage on the Corsham-Chippenham cycle route.
Issues discussed included:
 - That the most important location for signage might be on the cycle lane at Park Lane; and
 - That the A4 could be an intimidating route for cyclists and that cyclists should be made aware of the Easton Lane route to Chippenham.

Resolved

To support the request and send it on to the LHFIG.

- ii. High Street, Corsham – Request to allow disabled cycling in the pedestrianised section of the High Street.

Issues discussed included:

This request had been deferred from the last meeting to ascertain the views of Wiltshire Council's Senior Traffic Engineer concerning the legal status of the proposed signage. Her views had been received and were reported as follows

'The supplementary plate under the no cycling sign [as seen in BANES] is not legal and cannot be used. It has not been authorised by the Department for Transport and BANES should not be using it. Wiltshire wouldn't approve this request.'

Resolved

Not to support the request.

- iii. Corsham to Hartham Footpath – Request for a footpath between Middlewick Lane and Hatham.

Representations were received from the resident who submitted the request. He stated that whilst it was possible to walk from Corsham to Hartham on existing footpaths, it was a very circuitous route and was rather challenging for those who might not be physically fit. He stated that that a direct footpath would provide benefits both in terms of allowing people to get out and exercise and to allow walkers to access facilities at Hartham Park.

Issues discussed included:

- How the landowner might view the proposed footpath;
- Where such a scheme should sit within the Town Council's priorities; and
- How to take forward the proposal, bearing in mind that most of the proposed route was off the highway.

Resolved

To send the request to Wiltshire Council's Rights of Way Team (in the first instance) and to determine if there is an established way of creating new routes. Should the proposed route be taken forward by the Rights of Way Team, then the request could also be sent to the LHFIG to examine the highway element of the proposal.

- iv. Newlands Road, Corsham – Request for a pedestrian crossing near the junction with Bences Lane.

Issues discussed included:

- That the Committee had considered a request in September 2020 for a crossing at this location and had resolved not to support it;
- Wiltshire Council's Highways Department would require a pedestrian count to take place before supporting any new crossing. It was very unlikely that there would be sufficient numbers for this location to qualify;

- That a crossing at this location might encourage people to cross as at unsafe location;
- That there was a need to take a strategic approach to the siting of any new crossings across Newlands Road; and
- Whether or not there was a formal crossing, some people would attempt to cross at this location as it was the natural route for people going from Bences Lane to the Post Office end of the High Street. As such, it would be helpful to have dropped kerbs to aid those crossing with buggies or on mobility scooters.

Resolved

To support the installation of dropped kerbs at this location and to send this element of the request on to the LHFIG.

- v. Station Road/Pickwick Road Junction – Request to alter junction markings.

Issues discussed included:

- Whether the proposal would improve road safety at this junction; and
- That the Active Travel Group was looking at this junction. It may make sense for the applicant to speak with this group to find an agreed way forward.

Resolved

To ask the Active Travel Group to invite the applicant to their next meeting to discuss proposals.

P&A 37/25 Speed Indicator Devices and AutoSpeedWatch (*Minute P&A 25/25 and others*)

The Head of Technical Services reported that there had been a few issues (technical and staffing) which had prevented the production of SID data at this meeting. He added that he hoped to have data from several sites available at the next meeting. Recently, one of the devices had been stationed on Velley Hill and had recorded average speeds of 27.4mph (coming from Melksham) and 27.6mph (coming from Corsham). The highest speeds were 55mph (from Melksham and 81mph (from Corsham). 60mph had been exceeded approximately nine times in the eight-day period.

The Head of Technical Services stated that data/information from the AutoSpeedWatch Camera had been sent to Wiltshire Police from its deployment at Valley Road from 22 July to 29 August. He stated that one vehicle had been recorded speeding at 10mph (or more) over the speed limit 14 times in this period. The Neighbourhood Policing Team had found that this was a company vehicle and had contacted the business involved. The driver had been spoken to. It was hoped that this vehicle would not reappear in future reports.

Resolved

To note the update.

P&A 38/25 Annual Site Visit

The Committee noted that the Annual Site Visit had taken place on 19 August and had been attended by seven Councillors. Councillors had visited Springfield Rec, Pictor Close, Park Place Allotments, Beechfield Nature Area, the Guide Hut and Arnold House.

Resolved

To note the update.

P&A 39/25 Secure Cycle Storage

Consideration was given to the possible purchase of three secure bike parking units from Spokesafe and trialling their use by installing them on the pedestrian area near the Newlands Road crossing (to the side of Hong Kong House). The units would not be fixed and could be moved to another location if this site proved unsuitable. The purchase of the three units would cost approximately £10,000 and there would be a monthly maintenance fee of £20 per unit (£720 per year for all three). It would cost users c.£1.50 per day to hire (these proceeds would go to Spokesafe) and they could be booked through an app. All booking and maintenance issues would be dealt with by Spokesafe and the Town Council would have no day-to-day responsibilities for their maintenance.

Issues discussed included:

- Whether this was the right location for secure bike storage and whether the car park might be a better site;
- That the design of the units was not in keeping with the area and this prominent location in the public realm;
- The merits and demerits of the design and whether they would stand up to weathering, use and misuse;
- Whether there would be demand for such units;
- The cost and charging regime for the units;
- The financial status of the company and negative comments from customers on TrustPilot; and
- Whether a company who were based in London would be able to provide a reasonable maintenance service for units in Wiltshire.

Resolved:

- 1) Not to approve the purchase of the three units at this time.
- 2) Councillor S Abbott to raise the issue of secure bike storage at a future meeting of the Active Travel Group.

The meeting began at 7.00pm and ended at 8.00pm. There was one member of the public present.

CHAIR

DATE