WERRINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

MEIGH ROAD PLAYING FIELDS WORKING GROUP

MINUTES

MONDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2026

WERRINGTON METHODIST CHURCH

Present:
Cllr K Griffith, Cllr K Whitehurst, Cllr S Hill, Cllr D Shaw, Cllr B Hughes,

Cllr M Fair, Cllr T Latala,
G Keiher Knapper (Clerk), and 4 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr L Ibbs

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1. Introduction – Details of Volunteers

Councillors, the Clerk, and members of the public introduced themselves.

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2. Aim of the Working Group

The Chair explained that the purpose of the meeting was to engage with residents regarding the future of Meigh Road Playing Fields and to encourage the formation of a voluntary group. While the group is being established, Werrington Parish Council will develop a future plan for the playing fields.

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3. Drainage

The Chair explained that flooding affects the whole of Werrington, including Meigh Road Playing Fields.

The Parish Council has allocated a budget to **commission consultation work** to identify an engineering solution to improve drainage at the playing fields, ensuring that any solution does not displace water issues onto neighbouring properties. **Cllr Ross Ward**, who has relevant experience, is leading the project. Once the consultation is complete, findings will be shared with residents. Additional support from District and County Council may be required to implement the recommended works.

The Clerk advised that **Section 106 (S106) funding** is available from the new development adjacent to the Young Offenders Institute. Staffordshire Moorlands District Council has specified that this funding must be spent on sports pitches.

The Parish Council is therefore proposing to **replace the MUGA soakaway drainage system**, directing it into the land drain. This should protect the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) surface from water damage and improve drainage for the Bowling Green and football pitch, making the pitch playable again.

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4. Footpaths

Some footpath repairs have been carried out. However, due to ongoing water damage, deterioration continues.

Once drainage works are completed, improving the footpaths will be a priority to ensure accessibility for all age groups.

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5. Play Equipment

The Clerk explained that modern play equipment is not manufactured to the same robustness as older equipment. The current equipment has withstood significant wear and vandalism, whereas newer equipment may not be as durable.

However, the Parish Council recognises that the equipment requires refurbishment. A toddler **four-way springer** has recently been installed at a cost of £5,000.

Quotes have been obtained to replace the **basket swing** and its safety surface at an approximate cost of £10,000. This project has been put on hold until the new financial year. If the new springer remains undamaged by vandalism, the Parish Council will consider proceeding with the basket swing replacement.

The need for a voluntary group was reiterated, as such groups have access to a wider range of grant funding than Parish Councils. **Cllr David Shaw** is currently applying for grants to replace the large multi-play unit, which is particularly expensive.

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6. MUGA

The MUGA soakaway issue has been covered under drainage.

The **entrance gate** is missing and requires specialist welding. Sections of **fencing** also require repair. These are currently assessed as low risk and have not yet been addressed due to cost.

The MUGA is well used but frequently affected by smashed glass. Village Wardens regularly clear the area to maintain safety.

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7. Pump Track

Parts of the pump track are **deteriorating**, and preventative measures are required to prolong its lifespan. The original contractor was contacted but did not provide remedial suggestions.

Cllr David Shaw will contact Staffordshire Moorlands District Council for further advice.

The Parish Council will **earmark funds** for future repair or replacement of the pump track and other assets.

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8. Football Pitch

The Parish Council will request **S106 funding** to replace the **goalposts** and undertake **aeration works** (including verti-draining and spiking over a 12-month period) to reduce soil compaction.

Full improvement of the pitch remains dependent on an effective drainage solution.

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9. Bowling Club

The Chairman declared an interest as a member of the Bowling Club.

It was reported that membership numbers have doubled. However, the green also suffers from drainage issues.

Planned improvements include:

- Making the green more accessible for disabled users
- Recruiting younger members

- Improving toilet facilities

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10. Vandalism and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

Meigh Road Playing Fields experiences vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

The Parish Council works closely with **PCSOs** and has installed **CCTV**. **Cllr Michael Fair** is exploring commissioning a play to be delivered in local schools to highlight the impact of anti-social behaviour.

The Clerk explained that Werrington statistically records low levels of crime because incidents are often not reported. Residents are strongly encouraged to report any issues.

Two contracted Parish Wardens (14 hours per week each) spend much of their time clearing litter and glass from the playing fields to maintain safety.

It is hoped that improved drainage and facilities will increase positive use of the site, helping it to "self-police" through greater community presence.

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11. Woodland Area

The wooded area can **attract anti-social behaviour** and contains **litter and broken glass**. However, residents emphasised how valued the woodland is within the community.

The Clerk advised that a tree survey has been completed this year, with recommended works scheduled for April. The Clerk offered to share the survey with residents present.

The Parish Council aims to **improve management of the woodland** through selective thinning and maintaining clear footpaths. The Wardens will carry out this work.

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12. Security

Historically, some residents have requested that the **playing fields be locked in the evenings.**

Currently, only the car park is locked. Pedestrian access remains available at three entrances.

The Parish Council previously explored being gifted the bottom entrance, but the owner declined to repair fencing prior to transfer, and the Parish Council did not wish to assume the financial liability.

To fully secure the site, additional gates and perimeter fencing would be required. Furthermore, several properties have direct access onto the playing fields. Enforcement would require additional financial resources.

At present, the situation does not justify full closure. If circumstances change, a public consultation would be required, as implementation would necessitate an increase in the parish precept.

Regarding lighting, the Clerk confirmed that planning permission would be required for certain installations. Additionally, consideration must be given to the impact on neighbouring properties.

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13. Action Points for Next Meeting

- Installation of a notice board on Meigh Road
- Cllr Whitehurst to coordinate formation of a volunteer group
- Cllr Ross Ward to progress drainage project
- Cllr David Shaw to seek advice from SMDC regarding the pump track
- Cllr David Shaw Ongoing grant applications

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14. Any Other Business

None.

Meeting closed at 19:30 hrs.