Holford Parish Council – Agenda/Motion Form

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| *Motion to be added to Agenda:*  ***Portway Play Area – background info for item relating to coffee morning items***  Words to put on the agenda, needs to be an action such as ‘to agree’ ‘to approve’ | *Meeting Date:* 11th September 2023 |
| *The situation to be addressed:*  In August 2023 the following post appeared on the Holford Community Facebook page and I have since been advised that it was raised at a coffee morning.  The Portway Play area is owned and managed by Falcon. In November 2019 Falcon wrote to the Parish Council advising that the play area and MUGA had been closed in April 2019 on health and safety grounds due to the high level of vandalism. At that time the association did not have the funds available to constantly repair the fence and equipment. They are a not for profit organisation. Their solution was to remove the play equipment and fencing and just leave the MUGA area and a grassy area which they would continue to maintain.  In June 2021 a planning application was made for change of use – these are the PC comments:  *The Parish Council made a site visit on May 27th and met with Kerri, Senior Housing Officer from Falcon Housing. Local residents were all invited by mail drop to make their opinions known and were advised how they could speak to any of the Parish Councillors with their concerns and all were given the details of how to access the West Somerset Planning portal. As far as I am aware no-one contacted any of the councillors about the planning application but they may have put their concerns on the planning portal.*  *We were greatly impressed that Falcon Housing had taken on board all the past discussions with the Parish Council in an attempt to address the problems with the Playground. It was disheartening to hear how much time and effort had been invested by the charity in attempting to keep the Play Area a usable and safe place for local children. As a result of which a great deal of money had had to be spent to constantly repair and replace vandalised equipment and structures.*  *The application for a variation of condition No. 08 of application 3/16/99/014 seems both entirely reasonable and effective in making this space more accessible and valuable an asset for village children. The use of durable materials and a more open and usable place for families to meet and chat while being able to keep an eye on their children seems entirely appropriate.*  *The Parish Council believes the plans are entirely as we would wish going forward and also welcome the chance for Falcon Housing to have one more, last attempt to keep this play area in use. If this is unsuccessful we would suggest that any more expenditure by the charity would be a waste of valuable resources better spent on providing affordable housing elsewhere.*  Covid then got in the way of progress but Falcon confirmed that the works had been completed with the installation of the basketball nets on 23 February 2023.  A trawl through the minutes indicates that there was an activity to check the covenants to determine whether a play area could be created on the Bowling Green, but this does not appear to have come to anything.  A Parish Council is able to provide a play area or contribute to one, however we do not own any suitable land nor have the finances for one. Indicative costs are £30k for a small area for babies and toddlers, medium size is £50k and upwards. | |
| *Your solution (if applicable):* | |
| *Benefits:* | *Disadvantages:* |
| *Costs (if known):* | *Are these costs actual or an estimate? If actual, we require 3 quotes.*  *Has opportunities for funding been explored?* |
| *Next Steps:* | |
| For completion after the meeting: Motion passed Yes/No  Agreed next steps: | |