

MINSTERWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the virtual Annual Meeting of the Parish Council Meeting held on 10 May 21, via Zoom, starting at 7.26pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors - R Blowey
S Ingham
N Powell
C Thomas
R Thomas
BC P McLain
CC P Awford
P Bell – Clerk

Parishioners: 6

1. **APOLOGIES.** Apologies were received from Councillors N Garbutt and S King, and from Borough Councillor J Smith. The Chairman sent best wishes from the Council to Dr Garbutt
2. **DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS.**
 - All Parish Councillors verbally made the Declaration of Acceptance of Office required by the Local Election (Declaration of Acceptance of Office) Rules 2012. Written copies would be signed and witnessed at the next available face-to-face meeting of the council.
 - Prior to the meeting, Councillor Blowey indicated his willingness to serve as Chairman of the Council for a further year. Councillor Powell nominated Councillor Blowey to serve as Chairman; this was seconded by Councillor Ingham. There were no other nominations. Councillor Blowey was unanimously elected to the position of Chairman of the Parish Council.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.** The minutes of the meeting held on 12 Apr 21 had been circulated with the agenda. An amendment to para 7.6 of the minutes was required, to delete “Councillor R Thomas” and insert “Councillor C Thomas”. With this amendment, the minutes were agreed and were signed by the Clerk on behalf of the Chairman.
4. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST:** None
5. **APPOINTMENT OF OFFICIALS.**
 - Prior to the meeting, all incumbents of Parish Council appointments had indicated their willingness to continue in their appointment for a further year.
 - There was uncertainty whether Councillor Garbutt had been formally appointed to the role of A48 Rep. It was agreed that the Chairman would review the previous appointment process for this position, and report back to the next meeting. **Action: Chairman.**
 - The following appointments were agreed:
 - Snow Warden: Councillor C Thomas.
 - Flood Warden: Councillor C Thomas.
 - Village Hall Committee Trustee: Councillor Blowey.
 - A48 Meeting Representative: Councillor Garbutt (subject to confirmation).

- Harvey Centre Representative: Councillor Blowey (with input from Farzana Aldridge).
- Minsterworth Park Representative: Councillor Ingham.
- Public Rights of Way Representative: Councillor Ingham.

6. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT. Councillor Awford confirmed he had nothing to add to his report to the Annual Parish Assembly (APA).

7. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT. Councillor McLain confirmed he had nothing to add to his report to the APA.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT. There was no further public comment.

9. MATTERS ARISING:

9.1 Report from Village Hall Representative: Councillor Blowey reported:

- The external redecoration of the Village Hall was progressing well. A grant had been received which would be used for the internal redecoration of the hall; this work had gone out to tender and was scheduled to commence on 17 May 21. The installation of a new audio-visual system had been successfully completed.

9.2 Minsterworth Park: Councillor Ingham reported:

- The seasonal grass cutting had started at the park; there was also evidence that the wild-flower patch had started to grow. The request for an extension to the lease had been submitted to Lindsay Reid of GCC and receipt acknowledged; a response was awaited.

9.3 Harvey Centre: Councillor Blowey reported:

- The plant sale at the centre on 8 May 21 had been well attended, and the tours had been a success. Details of the tour had previously been circulated on Whats'app, Mailchimp and in *The Villager*.

9.4 Highway Matters:

9.4.1 Cornham Lane.

- The surface of Cornham Lane had been badly damaged during work undertaken by the EA on the river bank. A temporary repair had been completed, but it was already deteriorating.
- The Chairman had written to the Highways Agency on the subject, and requested appropriate re-surfacing. This request had been acknowledged by the Highway Agency, but a response was awaited.

9.4.2 New Houses in Highnam.

- The Council were aware of proposals to build 97 additional houses near Two Mile Lane in Highnam, and potentially a further 125 houses near the Highnam church. The Council's concern over these developments was based on the potential for additional water run-off, which could come under the A40 and have an impact on Minsterworth.
- Any consideration of these developments should include exploring the option of using the River Leaddon to take more water run-off, via a tunnel if necessary. In

addition, the proposal for a Solar Farm in Maisemore may provide additional water run-off options.

- Councillor Awford confirmed that the resurfacing of Two Mile Lane was to go ahead; he had stressed the importance of improving the drainage of the road as part of this work.
- It was agreed that the Chairman should liaise with his counterpart on Highnam Parish Council to ensure Minsterworth's views were included in the consideration of these developments. **Action: Chairman.**

9.4.3 Minsterworth Sign.

- There had been no progress on the installation of a sign at the western end of the village. It was agreed that Councillor Awford would raise this with TBC. **Action: Councillor Awford.**

9.4.4 Hygrove Lane Leak.

- The Chairman confirmed that the video of the leak in Hygrove Lane had been received, and showed water was coming from the Highways Agency drain. Severn Trent water had undertaken water sampling in the area; the results were awaited.
- The Highways Agency had agreed to complete a camera survey of the area; the date for this was not yet known.
- Councillor Powell stated that the problem could stem from the lack of drain clearance by Ringway in the layby at the top of the road. It was agreed that the Chairman would raise this with the Highways Agency. **Action: Chairman.** (Post Meeting Note: this action was completed on 11 May 21).

9.4.5 Wild Goose Layby.

- Work to explore the options for installing lighting at Wild Goose Layby was ongoing. One of the options under consideration was the installation of a solar-powered light at the bus stop. If this was feasible, consideration would be given to including such lighting at the bus stops on both sides of the road.

9.4.6 Traffic Counters on Watery Lane.

- Councillor Powell asked for clarification of the origins of the traffic counters recently installed on Watery Lane. Given the current closure of Pound Lane, there was a risk that the traffic counters would not give an accurate reflection of normal traffic levels.
- The Chairman stated he believed the counters were installed as a private enterprise. It was agreed that Councillor Awford would try to ascertain the origins of the traffic counters. **Action: Councillor Awford.**

9.5 PROW. Councillor Ingham stated there was nothing significant to report on PROW.

9.6 Signage on Ham Green and Calcotts Green. The Chairman stated that this item would be deferred to the next meeting.

9.7 Mains Drainage. The Chairman stated that this item, including the examination of costs for bio disc systems, would be deferred to the next meeting.

9.8 Parish Council Equalities Statement.

- Councillor R Thomas raised a concern that the Parish Council equalities statement which was included on the meeting agenda may be out of date.
- It was agreed that Councillor R Thomas would circulate a proposed alternative, based on that used by the NHS. This would be considered at the next meeting. **Action: Councillor R Thomas.**
- It was agreed that the Clerk would investigate whether there was a specified equalities statement for use by Parish Councils. **Action: Clerk.**

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

10.1 FY20/21 End of Year Accounts.

- The end of year accounts for FY20/21 were reviewed. They were accepted by the Council as being suitable for submission for audit. **Action: Clerk.**

10.2 Monthly Budget for May 21.

- The following transactions for the current month were proposed:

Ser	Item	Expendi- ture	Income	Comment
1	MBD Landscaping - Benches	500.00		Paid
2	MBD Landscaping - Play Park	105.00		Paid
3	AGP Garden Services - Grass Cutting	74.00		Paid
4	System Force IT - Handover Support 1	60.00		Paid
5	System Force IT - Handover Support 2	60.00		Challenged - awaiting reply
6	Parish Magazine Printing - May	144.40		Paid
7	Katie Panting - The Villager distribution costs	40.26		Paid
8	Clerk Salary	254.62		
9	Clerk Salary Tax	63.66		
10	Precept		10500.00	
11	Interest		0.09	
TOTAL		1301.94	10500.09	

- The Clerk explained that the bill from System Force (ser 5) had been challenged, because although System Force had carried out some work, they had not been able to deliver the outcome requested. As the Council did not have an output-based contract with System Force, the Council would be liable for the bill if System Force declined to amend it.
- Where bills had been received that were in accordance with the agreed annual budget, they had already been paid, and were highlighted to the Council for confirmation. The items of expenditure highlighted above were approved by the council.
- The overall budget as at the end of April was reviewed. It was confirmed that the Precept payment had been received for the current FY. After only one month, it was not possible to determine any trends or forecasts in the current FY; it was therefore agreed that no changes were necessary to the planned budget.
- The Clerk highlighted that the Council's insurance was due for renewal on 1 Jun 21. The renewal quote had been received and had increased significantly; last year's cost

was £400 and the quote for this year was £580. The Clerk had confirmed with the Clerk for Deerhurst and Westbury that their insurance (with the same company) had increased by a similar amount. It was agreed that the Clerk should seek an additional quote before renewing. If a cheaper quote could not be obtained, it would be necessary to renew before the next meeting on the quote received. **Action: Clerk.**

- The Clerk stated that he had recently received e-mails from TBC confirming that additional grants may be available for community projects. In addition, grants may be available specifically for tree-planting from the Urban Tree Challenge Fund. Councillor Ingham offered to work-up bid proposals if anyone had any good ideas for suitable projects. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate the e-mails to all Councillors. **Action: Clerk.** (Post Meeting Note: this action was completed on 11 May 21).

11 PLANNING

11.1 Applications: 21/00568/FUL Fairfield, Main Road, Minsterworth: Conversion of existing garage to study and construction of a new double garage.

- This application had only been circulated on the day of the meeting; Councillors were invited to vote on whether the application could be reviewed at the meeting, or whether more time was required to study the proposal. Four councillors voted in favour of addressing the application at the meeting, and one councillor abstained. It was therefore agreed to review the application at the meeting.
- The Chairman summarized the planning application; the proposal was to convert the existing garage into a study/hobby room, and to construct a new double garage on the other side of the house. The proposed design was in-keeping with the rest of the property, and though the new footprint extended close to the edge of the property boundaries, it did not encroach beyond them; no new windows were proposed that would impact on neighbouring properties.
- Councillors were invited to vote on whether the application should be accepted with "No objections". Four councillors voted in favour of raising no objections, and one councillor abstained. It was therefore agreed to raise no objections to the application. **Action: Clerk.**

11.2 TBC Decisions: 19/0465/FUL Charlton, Main Road, Minsterworth.

- The decision on this application was deferred by TBC at the Planning Meeting on 20 Apr 21, as further work was required on the proposed drainage. Despite having received prior agreement from TBC that they would be called to give evidence, neither the Chairman nor Councillor Smith nor Councillor Awford were able to speak at the meeting. The Chairman had raised his disappointment with TBC over this, and had received an apology from the Planning Director.
- Councillor R Thomas raised her concerns that this establishment was still operating without an appropriate license. Councillor McLain shared this concern, but reiterated that this was not a planning issue. Notwithstanding this, he had highlighted the situation to OFSTED, and would also raise it with the new Head of Children's Services at GCC.

11.3 Appeal: None Appeal Decisions: None Site Inspections: None

11.4 Seven Acres Drainage. Councillor C Thomas declared an interest and took no part in the discussion on this subject.

- The Chairman raised this issue; the Council had spent a lot of time discussing drainage for this development, but it was not clear if the appropriate solution had been implemented. At least 2 of the properties were now occupied.
- Councillor Powell stated that as the developer had gone into bankruptcy, the properties were being sold on a cash-only basis (ie without a mortgage) with the onus on the purchaser to ensure all planning regulations were applied.
- The Chairman proposed to write to TBC to ask for confirmation that the planning regulations for drainage were fully compliant, and how the matter had been handled. This was agreed unanimously by the Council. Councillor Awford suggested that the letter should go to the Planning Director, and also to the Flood Risk Manager at GCC (Mr David Lesser.) **Action: Chairman.**

12. CORRESPONDENCE. The Clerk confirmed that no further correspondence had been received.

13. MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION.

- Councillor Ingham stated that a Minsterworth Walk would be held on 3 Jul 21; further details were in *The Villager*.
- The Chairman also stated that a social event would be held on the Village Hall on 24 Jul 21; further details would be published in *The Villager*.

14. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING.

- The date for the next meeting was agreed as **Monday 14 Jun 21 at 7.00pm.**
- There was a discussion as to whether the meeting would be held virtually or face-to-face. The risk of holding the meeting virtually was that if any of the decisions from the meeting were challenged, they would not be considered as legitimate and could not be enforced. The risk of this happening was considered to be low.
- The Village Hall would be available on 14 Jun 21, and would be Covid-compliant. It may be necessary to limit the number of parishoners who attended, in order to achieve the required social distancing.
- It was proposed to hold the meeting as a face-to-face meeting in the Village Hall, subject to any changes in the regulations; this was agreed unanimously. **Action: Clerk.**

The meeting closed at 9.01pm.

Signed:

Date: