

MINSTERWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Minsterworth Parish Council (MPC) held on 12 Jul 21 in Minsterworth Village Hall, commencing at 7.00pm.

PRESENT:

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

Parishioners: 3

1. **APOLOGIES.** Apologies were received from Councillor N Garbutt and from Borough Councillor P McLain.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** Councillor C Thomas declared an interest for item 9.4 on the Agenda.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.** The minutes of the meeting held on 14 Jun 21 had been circulated with the agenda. An amendment to para 7.9 of the minutes was required, to correct the delivery date for the new noticeboards. With this amendment, the minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT.** Councillor Awford reported the following:

- He had pressed the Highways agency on the subject of grass cutting, and had been assured that the main cut along the A48 would happen this month.
- He had been re-appointed to the same committees as he had been on previously, but he had also been appointed to the Severn Estuary Committee, which would be useful in contributing to the discussion on flood prevention.
- As requested at the last meeting, he had circulated the rules for farmers on the management of manure heaps to prevent water pollution. Although there were more stringent regulations, these only applied in areas designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, and Minsterworth was not designated as such. Councillor Powell stated that the manure heap in question was next to a water course, so constituted a pollution threat. It was agreed that he would provide the details to Councillor Awford who would raise the matter with the relevant authorities. **Action: Councillor Awford.**

5. **BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT.** Councillor Smith reported the following:

- The full Council will meet next week, so there was not a lot of feedback that hadn't already been sent from TBC directly to the PC Clerks.
- The Tewkesbury News should have been received by all households in the Borough. Again some of the Ward has been missed out and TBC communications have been informed. This is available online if it hadn't been received, and there was a feedback form on the TBC website to let them know of missed deliveries.

- TBC have received the Inspector's initial responses to the Tewkesbury Local Plan. They were now in the process of working up an action plan. The housing supply situation was demonstrated to have met the requirements of the Borough up until 2031. There was only a small shortfall of 563 houses, when agreed sites have been built. These will be addressed through the Joint Core Strategy review. This was welcome news for the 12 service villages that have been seen to take 880 new homes, which exceeded the JCS requirements.
- The Council continues to administer grants to businesses that are affected by Covid regulations.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT.

- Mr B Billingham raised the planning application for the Charlton property that was due to be considered by TBC on 20 Jul 21. He highlighted that he believed the drainage drawings submitted with the application were incorrect; the length of pipework shown on the plan does not represent the actual length on the ground, and the 2 x soakaways shown had not been installed. The drawings also show 4 x parking slots at the property, which were not present in reality.
- The drawings do not show the extension that was added to Mr Billingham's property in 1965; as a result of this extension, there is insufficient distance between his house and the proposed soakaways for the Charlton property. Mr Billingham also reiterated that the location of the property was not suitable for a care home environment.
- The Chairman thanked Mr Billingham for his comment, and confirmed that MPC had been granted permission to speak at the planning meeting on this subject. The Chairman would represent MPC at the meeting, and would ensure these points were raised. Councillor Awford confirmed that either he or Councillor McLain would also attend the meeting, and would reinforce the points raised in objection to the application.

7. MATTERS ARISING:

7.1 Report from Village Hall Representative: Councillor Blowey reported that the decoration of the hall was now complete and that the finishing touches such as pictures etc were now being installed.

7.2 Minsterworth Park: Councillor Ingram reported:

- As part of the early planning for the replacement of equipment in the park, she intended to seek the views of local children to see what type or equipment they would want. This was agreed, provided it was made clear that it was to seek ideas only, and that the actual equipment installed would depend on the funding available.
- The wild flowers at the park would be cut-back shortly, to encourage them to re-seed for next year.

7.3 Harvey Centre.

- Councillor Blowey reported that work was continuing on the construction of disabled access for the Harvey Centre. The discussions over the lease were ongoing with GCC.

7.4 Highway Matters:

7.4.1 Cornham Lane Gate.

- The Chairman confirmed that 2 further residents had been given the code for the gate across Cornham Lane in order to access the area. He had also spoken with the land owner, who was looking to install a small pedestrian gate alongside the main gate, to provide access for walkers. The landowner had indicated that they would do this at their own expense.

7.4.2 Hygrove Lane Leak and Adoption.

- There had been considerable progress in addressing the water leak on Hygrove Lane. Severn Trent water had identified the source of the leak, and had agreed to investigate the potential repair by 23 Jul 21. The Highways agency had also agreed to attend the site meeting in order to assess whether the road drainage was contributing to the issue.
- Highways had also been approached about the possibility of adopting the lane for maintenance purposes. They had agreed to undertake a search to establish who owned the land; if no owner could be traced, it was unlikely that Highways would adopt the road, as they normally required the owner to bring the road up to adoption standard prior to taking on responsibility.
- **Post Meeting Note:** On 13 Jul 21 Highways confirmed that there was no owner registered for Hygrove Lane, and as such, it would not be possible for them to adopt the road for maintenance purposes.

7.4.3 Wild Goose Layby

- There was no update on the proposal to install low-level lighting in the layby. This lighting had been requested by residents and by people using the bus stops ; it was also aimed at deterring anti-social behaviour. There was discussion about whether the installation of lighting would encourage parking in the layby; it was agreed that the Council should pursue the installation of low-level lighting, especially for the benefit of the residents and the safety of the road crossing.

7.4.4 Cutting of Grass Verges.

- GCC highways had provided the financial amount they would contribute to the parish if the parish chose to take on the responsibility for cutting the road-side verges. They had also confirmed that if the parish did take on the responsibility, it would be reviewed on an annual basis. GCC would retain responsibility for cutting the verges by the dual carriageway, as this was considered too dangerous to be outsourced.
- Initial discussions with a potential contractor had raised questions about whether the contractor could use red diesel whilst cutting the verges, and whether the close-strimming around sign posts etc would be included within the contract. These questions had been forwarded to GCC Highways to consider. Councillor Awford agreed to follow-up on the issue. **Action: Councillor Awford.**
- It was agreed that it would be beneficial for the verges to be cut twice a year, if that could be done within the allocated budget, but that further work was necessary to assess the scale of the task. The Chairman agreed to contact Westbury Parish Council to see how they undertook the work. **Action: Chairman.**

7.4.5 Highways Traffic Survey.

- The Chairman confirmed that the traffic surveys to assess the speed in the village were ongoing, and the result would be provided in due course.

7.4.6 Pound Lane Wild Flowers.

- The Chairman had not received a response from Mr L Brazil on this issue; the matter would be deferred until the next meeting.

7.5 PROW

- The only PROW issue that had been raised was parking on the Church Landing during the period of the Severn Bore. Signage to deter this would be addressed with the signage on Calcotts and Ham Greens.

7.6 Signs on Ham Green and Calcotts Green and Grass Cutting.

- The wording for the 3 x signs was agreed as follows:
“This green is the property of Minsterworth Parish Council.
Walkers are welcome, but no vehicles or overnight stays.”
- A further sign would also be placed on Church Landing, to deter vehicle parking. The wording on the sign was agreed as follows:
“Footpath only. No Parking.”
- The sign would be mounted on a post so it was more prominent. The Chairman would liaise with the church to agree the exact wording and location of the new sign. **Action: Chairman.**
- Councillor Ingham raised the subject of the third piece of common land that was identified as belonging to the Parish Council. This is a small area, known as the Upper Ham Green, which has no vehicle or pedestrian access. Councillor Ingham asked if this land could not be used, could it be sold? As there was no access to the land, selling it was not considered feasible.
- In relation to the grass cutting on the greens, Councillor C Thomas said there had been no consultation with the responsible parties prior to changes being made, and it was currently uncertain as to who was responsible for what. The bales that had been cut were still present on the green, and had been there for over a month.
- It was agreed that the arrangement with Mr C Hall for cutting the grass should be formalized in a written letter from the Parish Council, including the responsibility to remove the bales from the site within 2 weeks of cutting. This was necessary to ensure the provisions of the Council's insurance were applied. The Chairman agreed to provide the details to the Clerk, who would write the formal agreement. **Action: Chairman and Clerk.**

7.7 Mains Drainage.

- The Chairman had written to Severn Trent Water and invited them to consider the provision of mains drainage for the village; he had proposed an initial consultation with the Council, followed by an open meeting with the residents. He had not yet received a response to his letter. The matter was deferred to the next meeting.

7.8 Review of MPC Equalities Statement.

- Councillor R Thomas proposed an amendment to the MPC Equalities Statement that appears on the Council's Agenda and Notices etc. The purpose of the amendment was to ensure all characteristics protected in law were reflected. The proposed statement was as follows (changes in red text):

“Members are reminded that the Minsterworth Parish Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: **Equality Law (whether in relation to race, sex, gender reassignment, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity provisions)**, Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.”

- The proposal was accepted and was to be used with immediate effect. **Action: Clerk.**

7.9 E-Mail Address for the MPC Chairperson.

- Councillor N Powell had proposed that a dedicated e-mail address should be created for the MPC Chairperson, so it was clear that that such e-mails had come from the position, and to assist with future handovers. The Chairman noted that most other parish councils only had one official e-mail address, and expressed his concern that having 2 e-mail addresses could lead to duplication or omission. It could also create additional work for the Chairperson. The proposal was therefore rejected.

7.10 New Parish Noticeboards.

- The Chairman confirmed that the new noticeboards for the parish had been delivered and installed. The noticeboards were a significant improvement, and the fact that they could be locked would deter people defacing authorised notices and posting unauthorised notices. Keys for the noticeboards were held by the Chairman, the Clerk, and the Councillors responsible for posting notices at the various locations.
- The Chairman also noted that some remedial work was necessary on the roof at the bus shelter near the Apple Tree house. MBD Landscaping would be invited to look at the work necessary. **Action: Chairman.**

8. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

8.1 FY21/22 Accounts at End Jun 21.

- The Clerk presented the accounts summary as at the end of Jun 21. Expenditure for the month had been high, due to the technical issue the previous month that had prevented access to the online bank accounts for payment of bills etc. Consequently, the Clerk's salary for both May and June had been paid in June, and the annual insurance premium had also been paid in the month, together with the purchase of the new noticeboards. Income received had been the refund from System Force IT (£60) and the payment for advertising space in The Villager magazine (£240).

8.2 Monthly Budget for Jul 21.

The following transactions since the last meeting were proposed:

Minsterworth Parish Council - Monthly Financial Summary - July 2021

Ser	Item	Expenditure	Income	Comment
1	AGP Grass Cutting	111.00		Paid
2	Parish Magazine Printing	147.30		Paid
3	Clerk Salary	254.68		
4	HMRC Clerk Salary Tax	63.60		
5	Village Hall Hire (Jun & Jul)	60.00		
6	Village Green Signs	175.00		
TOTAL		811.58	0.00	

- The items of expenditure identified above were approved by the council.

8.3 Audit of FY20/21 Accounts.

- The Clerk confirmed that the audit of the FY20/21 Accounts had been completed and no observations had been raised. The record of the audit and associated documents had been uploaded to the Parish Council's website, and a Notice had been published advising residents of their right to inspect the accounts if they wish.

9. PLANNING

9.1 Applications: Nil

9.2 TBC Decisions: Nil

9.3 Appeals: Nil

9.4 Seven Acres Drainage.

- The Chairman had re-circulated the comments received from TBC, which confirmed that there was unauthorized development on the site, and that a number of issues remained un-resolved, including drainage, which were under investigation. The Chairman had reiterated to TBC the Parish Council's wish to be involved in the approval process for any remedial work.
- The Chairman had also circulated a document published online from the Administrators appointed to oversee the affairs of the original contractor for the houses. This document confirmed that the Administrators were aware of problems with the drainage, and stated the Administrator's intent to resolve these collectively, rather than asking individual home-owners to act.

9.5 Tewkesbury Development Plan – Inspector's Report.

- The Clerk had received and circulated a copy of the Inspector's Report into the draft Tewkesbury Development Plan. The report specifically mentioned Minsterworth, and the Inspector had observed that the planned development did not accord with the Parish Council's preferences. This was noted as a Main Modification, which meant the Borough Council was required to address the issue as part of the next stage of the Plan.

9.6 Highnam Housing Proposal – Report from Inter-Parish Group.

- The Clerk had represented the Chairman at the last Inter-Parish Working Group meeting; the group had expressed their gratitude for the report on drainage that had been produced and circulated by MPC, which was recognized as a comprehensive study into the subject.

9.7 Charlton.

- It had been confirmed that the planning application for Charlton would be considered at the TBC Planning Committee on 20 Jul 21; it had also been agreed that the MPC Chairman would be able to speak at the meeting, in opposition to the application. The points raised by Mr Billingham (see Item 6 above) would be raised then; the published parking policy for the business would also be challenged. The Chairman would provide a copy of his comments on the subject to Councillors Awford and McLain, to ensure they were aligned. It had also been confirmed that TBC would conduct a site visit to the property on 16 Jul 21, but that MPC were not invited to attend. **Action: Chairman.**

10. MPC Document Archive.

- The Clerk had produced and circulated a paper on the MPC Archive and proposed measures to reduce the amount of physical documents held. A copy of the paper is at

Annex A to these minutes.

- The following proposals were agreed:
 - Copies of all meeting minutes would be retained.
 - Financial records for the last 6 audited years together with the current FY would be retained. Older financial records would be professionally destroyed.
 - Outdated publications would be disposed of; the aerial photographs would be passed to the Minsterworth Photographic Club for retention.
 - Correspondence would be reviewed and retained where it was relevant or reflected an on-going issue.
 - Planning documents would not be retained; house owners would be given the opportunity to request the documents relating to their property, and the Clerk would circulate a note to PC members prior to insertion in Villager, to make these available to residents
- **Action: Clerk.**

11. CORRESPONDENCE. Nil

12. MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION.

12.1 Village Picnic.

- The Village Picnic was confirmed for Saturday 24 Jul 21.

12.2 GAPTC AGM.

- All Parish Councils had been invited to send representatives to the GAPTC AGM on 24 Jul 21 in Highnam; it was confirmed that no councillors from MPC wished to attend.

12.3 Anti-Social Behaviour.

- Councillor C Thomas notified the Council of incidences of anti-social behaviour that had happened in the village. These included verbal harassment, physical assault and threatening behaviour of both a racist and sexist nature. Criminal damage had included the firing of ball-bearings at properties. Quad-bikes racing had also been witnessed in the area.
- All incidents had been reported to the Police and inquiries were ongoing. The Police presence in the area had also been increased to act as a deterrent.

13. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING.

- The date for the next meeting was agreed as **Monday 13 Sep 21 at 7.00pm** to be held in the Minsterworth Village Hall. There was no meeting scheduled for the month of August.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Signed:

Date:

Annex A. Proposal for the Rationalisation of the MPC Archive.

4 Jul 21

To: Minsterworth Parish Council

PROPOSAL FOR THE RATIONALISATION OF THE PARISH COUNCIL ARCHIVE

1. **Introduction.** On taking up the role of clerk for Minsterworth Parish Council (MPC) I inherited the Parish Council document archive, which comprises 3 x filing cabinets (1 x 4-drawer; 2 x 2-drawer) full of documents. This paper reviews the content of this archive, and makes proposals to rationalise the amount held.
2. **MPC Document Retention Policy.** MPC agreed a document retention policy in 2018, which is published on the council website. The document can be accessed here: [MPC Document Retention Policy](#). This proposal follows the principles set out in that policy, and also proposes an addition to the policy where appropriate.
3. **Documents – Type and Volume.** The archive currently comprises 5 broad types of document, detailed below with the approximate volume for each document:
 - a. **Minutes of Meetings.** The minutes of council meetings from 1997 to present, which comprises approximately ½ of one drawer.
 - b. **Accounts.** The financial records (including bank statements and receipts etc) of the council dating back to 1999, with some additional documents dating back to the 1970s. These fill approximately 1 drawer.
 - c. **Planning Documents.** There are 156 files for individual properties in Minsterworth, with planning documents (letters, plans and approvals etc) for each property. The documents date back to the 1990s, but there is correspondence within the files from the 1960s. These documents fill the 4-drawer filing cabinet.
 - d. **Correspondence.** There is paper-copy correspondence for the council arranged by subject and dating back at least to the 1990s. This correspondence is in hanging files and fills 2 x cabinet drawers.
 - e. **Publications and Photos.** There are 3 x books and 8 x pamphlets covering local government issues. The books date from 1983-86, and the pamphlets date from 2004-2011. There is also a folder of aerial photos of Minsterworth taken from a balloon, though the date of this is unknown.
4. **Proposed Disposal.** My proposed disposal of these document types, with explanation for my reasoning, is as follows:
 - a. **Minutes of Meeting – Retain All.** The signed minutes of the meetings provide a historical and auditable record of the council's business, and should be retained. I have already re-filed them chronologically and in labelled folders and they form the key documents in the MPC archive.
 - b. **Accounts – Rationalise.** The MPC document retention policy states that the council will retain the last 6 years of audited accounts plus the current year. It is therefore proposed that the accounts for FY15/16 to FY20/21 be retained, together with the ongoing accounts for FY21/22. The accounts prior to this will be disposed

of; I will also introduce a rolling review, so when the accounts for FY21/22 are audited, I will dispose of the accounts from FY15/16.

c. **Planning Documents – Dispose.** MPC is not the executive authority for planning issues, it is only a consultative body. As such, the definitive record for planning documents is held by TBC, and is now largely held online. All new planning issues are staffed electronically, so the archive held by MPC is not complete, and should not be used to inform decision making. Planning documents are not currently covered in the MPC Document Retention Policy.

d. **Correspondence – Review and Rationalise.** It is proposed to review the correspondence, and dispose of that which is considered time-expired. As a broad rule, documents older than 6 years will not be retained, unless they relate to on-going issues or are of historical significance. Ultimately, the aim should be to scan all correspondence and retain it electronically, but this is a follow-on project after the rationalisation is complete.

e. **Publication and Photos – Dispose.** The publications are all now out of date and should not be used as the basis for policy decisions. Up to date guidance is available online. The aerial photos may prove a useful historical record, but more up to date footage is now available online.

5. **Disposal of Documents.** Although the documents identified for disposal are not sensitive in GDPR terms, the volume and collective content is such that they should still be destroyed in an appropriate manner. As MPC has no contract for document destruction, if the proposal is agreed, I will contact TBC (and GCC if necessary) to see if they have a document destruction contract into which we can tap. If they do not, it may be necessary for MPC to pay for a one-off disposal, for a cost of up to £100.

6. **Storage of Retained Documents.** If the proposals above are accepted, the amount of retained documents will fit in one x 2-drawer cabinet and can reasonably be stored at the clerk's house. If however the council wishes to retain more of the documents, then a suitable location for the cabinets will need to be found.

7. **Document Retention Policy Review.** Following on from this review, it is proposed to amend the MPC document retention policy to make it clear that no planning documents are retained by MPC, and that future correspondence will be retained in e-copy only.

8. **Conclusion.** The current MPC archive is excessively large, has not been subjected to quality control and is not in accordance with the council's own policy. This proposal will greatly reduce the amount of nugatory information held by the council, and will ensure that the information held is both relevant and up to date.

Paul Bell

P N BELL
MPC Clerk and Finance Officer