

## MINSTERWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Minsterworth Parish Council (MPC) held on 14 Jun 21 in Minsterworth Village Hall, commencing at 7.00pm.

### PRESENT:

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

Parishioners: 3

1. **APOLOGIES.** Apologies were received from Councillors S Ingham, R Thomas and S King, and from Borough Councillor P McLain.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.** There were no declarations of interest.
3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.** The minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 21 had been circulated with the agenda. An amendment to para 9.4.6 of the minutes was required, to delete reference to “traffic cameras” and insert “traffic counters”. With this amendment, the minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman.
4. **COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT.**
  - Councillor Awford opened his report with an update of staff changes in Gloucestershire Highways; Chris Riley had moved on to Worcestershire and his post has been filled by Sally Godwin the former LHM for Gloucester City. The LHM for this area remained Craig Freeman, supported by Chris Hawkins.
  - Committees were now starting after the recent Elections; the Environment Scrutiny was scheduled for 16 Jun 21. Councillor Awford had retained his seat on that together with County Planning and he will also Chair the Public Rights of Way committee.
  - The greatest challenge would be Charing Corporate Scrutiny given around 50% of the Council are new members and the political balance has changed.
  - Councillor Awford kept his report brief as Highways issues, in particular grass cutting, was to be discussed later in the meeting together with other items he would advise on if he could help.
5. **BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT.**
  - Councillor Smith stated that there had not been a full meeting of the Council yet, but there had been a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee. The planning process had been identified for further scrutiny, with an initial report due in July, and an Action Plan due in November. Councillor Smith also confirmed that she would be sitting on the Planning Committee in future.
  - There had been an increase in Environmental Crime, with 2185 occurrences reported in the year. There was therefore a requirement to raise awareness and ensure any incidents were reported.

- It was felt that the closure of the recycling centres (“tips”), followed by the current need to make an appointment to visit a tip, was likely to have contributed to the rise in fly-tipping. Councillor Powell asked if there were any plans to remove the current booking system required to access the “tip” and whether residents could visit any centre. Councillor Awford confirmed that these centres were a County Council responsibility, and agreed to ascertain if changes were planned and which centre residents could use. **Action: Councillor Awford.**

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT.** Mr T Moore-Scott raised the condition of the footpath between the church and the A48. The Chairman thanked Mr Moore-Scott for his comment, and said the matter would be addressed under PROW later in the meeting (see para 7.5).

## **7. MATTERS ARISING:**

**7.1 Report from Village Hall Representative:** Councillor Blowey reported:

- The external and internal redecoration of the Village Hall was largely complete and the hall was an excellent facility for the village.
- The Parish Council wished to record its thanks to the Village Hall committee for all of their hard work in the refurbishment of the building.
- The Parish Council also wished to record its thanks to Tewkesbury Borough Council for its generosity in providing grants to support the refurbishment.

**7.2 Minsterworth Park:** Councillor Blowey reported:

- The park remained well-used and was in a tidy condition; the wild-flower patch was developing well and looked excellent.
- Councillor C Thomas proposed that wild-flower seed should also be added to the re-seeding of Pound Lane after the recent work there. This was agreed unanimously.
- It was agreed that Councillor Blowey should approach the residents of Pound Lane to ensure they were content and then Councillor Ingham would obtain a cost for adding wild-flower seed to the grass mix. **Action: Chairman and Councillor Ingham.**

## **7.3 Harvey Centre**

- Councillor Blowey reported that work had started on the construction of disabled access for the Harvey Centre.

### **7.3.1 Charity Commission Scheme for Minsterworth Free School Foundation.**

- The Council had been invited to comment on a revised Scheme published by the Charity Commission for the Minsterworth Free School Foundation. This Scheme was the legal document that recorded the change of use of the building and the revised objectives of the charitable organisation. Although comment was not a requirement, it was an opportunity for the council to show their support for the Harvey Centre. The deadline for comment was 24 Jun 21.
- Not all Councillors had seen the document on previous circulation, so it was agreed that the Clerk would recirculate the document after the meeting. **Action: Clerk.** (Post meeting note – this action was completed on 15 Jun 21).

- Councillors were invited to provide written comment, and the Clerk would then collate an agreed response for approval and submission. **Action: All Councillors.**

## 7.4 Highway Matters:

### 7.4.1 Appointment of MPC A48 Committee Rep.

- The Clerk confirmed that in the MPC meeting held on 14 Sep 20, Councillor Powell was accepted as the new MPC A48 Committee Rep. It was agreed that this nomination would continue for the current year.

### 7.4.2 Cornham Lane Resurfacing.

- The resurfacing of Cornham Lane had been completed to a sub-standard level; MPC had raised this with the Highways Agency but the meeting had not reached a definitive conclusion. The Highways Agency had agreed to make any subsequent repairs if necessary and the situation would be monitored in future.
- Councillor C Thomas raised the subject of the gate across Cornham Lane; some residents were not able to use the stile, and that the gate should not be locked. The reasons for the gate, and the history with the site were discussed.
- It was proposed that a solution would be to replace the stile with a “kissing gate” and then retain the gate across the road. It may be possible to get GCC PROW to fund 50% of the cost of this, and the other 50% could be funded by MPC. This proposal was agreed unanimously. The Chairman agreed to contact PROW to raise the proposal. **Action: Chairman.**

### 7.4.3 Minsterworth Sign.

- It was noted that the sign on the A48 at the western end of the village had now been replaced.

### 7.4.4 Hygrove Lane Leak.

- The water leak in Hygrove Lane was still present and appeared to be getting worse. Severn Trent Water were scheduled to visit the site on 15 Jun 21 to assess the situation.
- Councillor C Thomas proposed that this was an opportune time for MPC to try again to get Hygrove Lane as an adopted road, as there were a large number of vehicles using the lane. Evidence to support this could come from the Electoral Roll and also from the number of licensed pitches at the site. It was agreed that the Clerk would obtain this information and then write to The Highways Agency to request adoption of the road. **Action: Clerk.**

### 7.4.5 Wild Goose Layby.

- There had been no progress on the options for installing lighting at Wild Goose Layby and the matter was deferred to the next meeting.

### 7.4.6 Traffic Counters on Watery Lane.

- It was understood that the traffic counters on Watery Lane had been installed privately to make an assessment for potential development. The counters were not installed to assess or deter speeding.

### 7.4.7 Cutting of Grass Verges.

- The Chairman outlined the current situation where the Highway Agency cut the grass verges along the main roads. In discussion with the Agency, they had stated that Parish Councils can choose to cut the grass themselves, and the Agency will

reimburse the council for the amount that the Agency would spend on cutting that area.

- The insurance implications of the Parish Council taking on responsibility for the cutting of grass verges were explained. If the council took those cutting the grass on as employees, then they would be covered by the councils Employer Liability and Public Liability insurance. The council would also then be responsible for the training, equipment and supervision of the work. If the council sub-contracted the cutting, the work would be covered by the council's Public Liability insurance only, but the contractor would need to provide their own Employer Liability insurance.
- It was agreed that this would not be feasible for this year, but was worth considering for future years. It was further agreed that the Chairman would investigate the areas that needed cutting, and would obtain an estimate from the Highways Agency of the funding available. He would also investigate which other Parish Councils had taken up this option. **Action: Chairman.**

#### **7.4.8 Speed Surveys.**

- The Chairman had received confirmation from Gloucestershire Council that they would commence the traffic surveys in Minsterworth on the week commencing 21 Jun 21. As had previously been agreed, MPC would need to pay the sum of £258 (+VAT) for the surveys. **Action: Clerk.**

#### **7.5 PROW.**

- The Chairman had been approached by a resident in relation to clearing footpath EMW 8 between the church and the A48. The Chairman had visited the site, and it was overgrown, with the growth appearing to come from outside the boundaries of the resident's property. The Chairman had therefore written to the PROW office at Gloucestershire CC and was awaiting a response.

#### **7.6 Signage on Ham Green and Calcotts Green.**

- The Chairman had circulated a proposed form of words to replace the signs on Ham Green and Calcotts Green. The condition of the current signs was poor, and it was felt the wording of the signs could be more welcoming, whilst still maintaining the authority of the Council.
- After discussion, the following wording for the signs was proposed, and this would be circulated to MPC for further discussion

##### Ham Green / Calcotts Green

The Green is owned by Minsterworth Parish Council.

Minsterworth residents are welcome to walk on The Green, but there is to be no vehicle access and no overnight stays.

- It was agreed that the Chairman would progress the replacement of the signs, and a budget of up to £40 per sign was approved. **Action: Chairman.**

#### **7.6.1 Grass Cutting on Ham Green and Calcotts Green.**

- The subject of the grass cutting on Ham Green and Calcotts Green was raised as an additional item for discussion. There was no clarity on who was currently cutting the greens, and the arrangement needed to be formalised for the council's public liability insurance to be valid. The grass was cut at no cost, on the understanding that those doing the work could bale and remove the cuttings.
- It was agreed that the Chairman would contact Mr Martin Watkins, and that Councillor C Thomas would contact Mr Hugh Dowding, to agree the current arrangements. These

would then be formalised in the minutes of the next meeting. **Action: Chairman and Councillor C Thomas.**

**7.7 Mains Drainage.** The Chairman stated that this item would be deferred to the next meeting.

**7.8 GAPTC Executive Committee Nomination.**

- The council had been invited to cast a vote in the election to fill a vacancy on the GAPTC Executive Committee. Three candidates had been proposed, and their details had been circulated ahead of the meeting. As none of the councillors knew any of the candidates, it was agreed that MPC would not cast a vote in the election. **Action: Clerk.**

**7.9 New Noticeboards.**

- Since the last meeting, Councillor Ingham had successfully submitted a bid for a grant from TBC to purchase 5 x new noticeboards to be placed within the bus shelters in the parish, to display council and other information. A grant totalling £973 had been received from TBC, and the noticeboards had been ordered. They were scheduled for delivery on 16 Jun 21.

**7.10 Great British Spring Clean.**

- The Chairman confirmed that he had registered Minsterworth Parish for the Great British Spring Clean, in recognition of the amount of rubbish-picking that was already undertaken by residents. Details of the initiative had also been posted on the MPC website.

**8. FINANCIAL MATTERS.**

**8.1 FY21/22 Accounts at End May 21.**

- The Clerk presented the accounts summary as at the end of May 21. Income for the month was high because the council had received 2 x TBC grants; one for the benches (£1756) and one for the noticeboards (£973). Conversely, expenditure had been low, due to a technical issue with the online banking system, which meant some payments had been carried over into June. It was therefore expected that June's expenditure would be higher.

**8.2 Monthly Budget for Jun 21.**

- The following transactions since the last meeting were proposed:

Ser	Item	Expenditure	Income	Comment
1	AGP Grass Cutting	74.00		Paid
2	BHIB Insurance	504.00		Paid
3	Barriers Direct (noticeboards)	1167.00		Paid (TBC Grant; VAT to be reclaimed)
4	Parish Magazine Printing	147.30		Paid
5	Clerk Salary	254.68		
6	HMRC Clerk Salary Tax	63.60		
7	Traffic Survey	258.00		£309.60 gross; VAT to be reclaimed
8	TBC Grant (Benches)		1756.00	Received
9	TBC Grant (Noticeboards)		973.00	Received
10	Interest		0.19	Received
11	System Force IT Refund		60.00	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2468.58</b>	<b>2789.19</b>	

- The Clerk had obtained a new quote for the council's annual insurance, which was over £100 cheaper than the renewal quote received. The policy was a like-for-like replacement and was with a company that specialised in providing insurance for local councils. This quote had been accepted, and the council's insurance had been renewed with effect from 1 Jun 21.
- The Clerk had received a positive response from System Force for the bill that had been challenged; the company had agreed to provide a 50% refund on the £120 that had been charged.
- The remaining items of expenditure identified above were approved by the council.

## 9 PLANNING

### 9.1 Applications: Nil

**9.2 TBC Decisions:** 20/01281/PIP – Planning in Principle for the erection of up to 8 dwellings and associated vehicular access. **TBC Decision: Permitted.**

**9.3 Appeal:** None **Appeal Decisions:** None **Site Inspections:** None

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

- The Chairman had raised the issue of the drainage at Seven Acres with TBC, in order to get confirmation that planning conditions had been implemented. In the response, TBC confirmed that there was unauthorized development on the site, and that a number of issues remained un-resolved. TBC confirmed that they were continuing to investigate this issue.
- Some councillors had not seen the correspondence on this issue; it was agreed that the Clerk would re-circulate the emails to all councillors. **Action: Clerk.**

### 9.5 Stroud District Council Draft Development Plan.

- MPC had been invited to comment on the Stroud District Council Draft Development Plan that had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The invitation to comment was issued to all authorities that shared a boundary with Stroud District. It was agreed that MPC had no comment on the plan, and that the Clerk would respond accordingly. **Action: Clerk**

### 9.6 Highnam Housing Proposal.

- The Chairman had produced and circulated a detailed paper on the potential drainage implications for new housing developments in Highnam. It was agreed that this paper should be circulated to the Inter Parish Group, to highlight the potential flooding impact on Minsterworth. Councillors Awford and Smith would also circulate the paper to relevant parties within the County and Borough councils. **Action: Chairman, Councillor Awford, Councillor Smith.**

### 9.7 Charlton.

- No further information had been received on the planning application for Charlton. The property continued to be occupied and the drainage had not been approved. It had been agreed that MPC would be able to speak on this subject when it was considered by the Planning Committee, but the date for this had not yet been set.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE.**

- The Clerk confirmed that the Resting Places benches project had featured in an article in the Tewkesbury News magazine.

**11. MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION.**

**11.1 Dung Heaps.**

- Councillor Powell asked if there was any information or regulation on the frequency with which dung heaps had to be moved. This issue had been discussed in the council some time ago, and it was thought that they had to be moved every 3-4 years. It was agreed that the Chairman would seek a view on this from the NFU, and that the Clerk would ask the Environment Agency. **Action: Chairman and Clerk.**

**11.2 TBC Town and Parish Council Seminar.**

- The Clerk had received notification that TBC planned to hold a Town and Parish and Parish Council Seminar on 23 Sep 21. Further details of the even would be sent in due course. It was agreed that the Chairman and Councillor Powell would attend the event.

**11.3 Village Picnic.**

- It was confirmed that the Village Picnic would be held on 24 Jul 21; further details would be published in *The Villager* magazine.

**12. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING.**

- The date for the next meeting was agreed as **Monday 12 Jul 21 at 7.00pm** to be held in the Minsterworth Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.52pm.

Signed: .....

Date: .....