

MINSTERWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Minsterworth Parish Council (MPC) held on 10 Jan 22 in Minsterworth Village Hall, commencing at 7.00pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors - R Blowey - Chair
S Ingham
S King
N Powell
C Thomas
R Thomas
CC P Awford (Items 1-6 only)
BC J Smith
P Bell – Clerk

Parishioners: 9

1. APOLOGIES. Apologies for absence had been received from Borough Cllr Mclain and Cllr Garbutt.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

- The Clerk informed the meeting that MPC currently did not publish its Register of Members Interests on its website, as it was required to do. As most of the declarations made by Cllrs were signed nearly 3 years ago, it was proposed that all Cllrs review their declarations, and resubmit them to the clerk. Cllrs are required to declare any financial interests on behalf of themselves and their spouse or partner; Cllrs are only required to declare non-financial interests on behalf of themselves. The Clerk will then remove any personal information from the declarations, and publish a summary of the register to the MPC Website. It was agreed that the clerk would circulate the blank declaration form to all Cllrs together with guidance on completion.
Action: Clerk.

- Cllr C Thomas declared an interest for items 13.1.1 and 13.4 on the agenda. Cllr Powell declared an interest on item 11.1 on the agenda.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING. The minutes of the meeting held on 13 Dec 21 had been circulated; there was a comment on para 13.1.1 of the minutes, which should reflect that the planning application was “supported with no objections”. With this amendment, the minutes were accepted.

3.1 Clarification on Recording of Cllrs’ Voting in MPC Minutes. The Clerk explained that the way in which a Cllr voted on any issue would not be reflected in the minutes, unless the Cllr specifically requested that it be recorded. This was in accordance with the Standing Orders and the guidance for Council Minutes.

3.2 Clarification on Query raised in relation to the Harvey Centre/Minsterworth Free School Foundation (MSFS). The Clerk outline 2 areas of clarification that had been received on this issue:

- The Borough Solicitor had confirmed that where a Cllr held a position within another organisation, but there was no remuneration possible for that position, then it did not constitute a pecuniary conflict of interests. The Cllr should still declare the interest, but it was a non-financial interest and did not prevent the Cllr from participating in the Council discussion or vote.

- In relation to the Harvey Centre/MFSF, it had been confirmed that a private limited company had been set up for the Harvey Centre in 2019, but that this company had never traded, and that it had not received any grants from MPC. An application had been submitted to strike-off that company, which was in progress. The previous grant from MPC had been paid to the MFSF, which was a registered charity. All future business on behalf of the Harvey Centre/MFSF would be conducted through the MFSF. It was further confirmed that there was not a conflict of interests for those Cllrs whose partner/spouse held a position within the MFSF for which there was no remuneration.
- The Chair stated that he was aware that this issue had caused a lot of concern, but he hoped that it had now been resolved. He reiterated his apology to the MFSF trustees that after he had been made aware of the existence of the private limited company, he had raised it at the last MPC meeting, without first seeking clarification from the MFSF trustees.
- In discussion on future MPC business, it was stressed that any requests for funding should be submitted in writing in advance of the MPC meeting, rather than being raised verbally at the meeting by a Cllr. This was in accordance with the MPC Standing Orders.

4. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT. Cllr Awford reported that his work has been dominated by the GCC Budget, including a five and a half hour Scrutiny session. He further reported the following:

- Given a better than anticipated Revenue Support Grant settlement from central Government, the GCC budget would be £519.833 million for FY 22/23; this was an increase of 2.9%, made up of a 1.9% increase in Council Tax and 1% increase for Adult Social Care. This equated to £42.14 on the typical Band D property.
- Adult Social Care and Children's Services remained key priorities for GCC, together with Highways and Climate Change. There were 9 strategic priorities in all; areas of increasing demand included 848 children looked after in Gloucestershire together with 28,600 adults over 65 needing Care Services.
- There would be an increase in the Elected Members Highways Local Funding of £10k per annum. This would help bring forward some of the local schemes, but the £30K a year had to be spread across the whole division. GCC would be investing another £100 Million in improving highways, with more focus on rural roads and nearly £10 million going into the pothole action fund.
- Other highlights were investment in rural bus services and £300,000 into identifying 20MPH zones, together with a commitment to plant 1 million trees over the next 5 years to aid the challenges around climate change and carbon reduction.
- Full details of the Scrutiny session were available via the link on the GCC website.

5. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT. Cllr Smith provided the following comment:

- The Gloucestershire County Council budget for 2022/23 was out for public consultation. It showed an increase of £37m on current levels. Details of where they would like to allocate resources was available on their website, but included Roads, schools, early years' support/safety, cycle ways etc

- The decision of the TBC planning committee to permit the Ashchurch Bridge and associated garden town was taken to judicial review by the PC. The application was dismissed and Court found in favour of the Borough Council.
- The Hyper Acute Stroke Unit had temporarily been moved to CGH to increase capacity at GRH. This was an emergency temporary change that they were able to make on behalf of the NHS, using the Memorandum of Understanding between the Gloucestershire integrated care systems; it did not need prior public consultation.
- Mike Dawson the Chief Exec of TBC was to retire in June. Recruitment processes were underway to get the correct person for the job.
- It had been proposed that the previous recommendation, that any objection by a parish council to a planning application should not automatically be sent to the Planning Committee, should go to full Council for consultation. Further details would follow when they were available.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT. The following issues were raised under public comment:

- **Harvey Centre / MFSF.** The Chair of the MFSF Trustees requested that the e-mail she had sent to the MPC Chair dated 6 Jan 22 be circulated to all MPC Cllrs; this was agreed. **Post Meeting Note:** The e-mail was circulated by the MPC Chair on 10 Jan 22.
- **New Housing.** Mr Moore-Scott expressed his support for the MPC response to the Tewkesbury Housing Strategy about the character of new housing.

7. MATTERS ARISING.

7.1 Village Hall: The Village Hall continued to be well-used and had recently hosted a very successful comedy night.

7.2 Minsterworth Park: The report from the annual inspection of the park equipment had been just been received; it was necessary to review the report and agree any remedial actions as a result. It was also confirmed that the lease for the Park was linked to the lease for the Harvey Centre building, and that they would need to be resolved together. It was agreed that the inspection report should be circulated to all Cllrs. **Action: Clerk.**

7.3 Harvey Centre/MFSF: There was no further comment on the Harvey Centre/MFSF.

7.4 Highway Matters: The Severn Trent Water (STW) works were still ongoing, though they had been suspended over the Christmas period. There had been a serious road traffic accident at the works on 16 Dec 21; as a result of this, STW had moved some of the warning signs so they were in a more prominent position. It was recommended that Class 1 high-visibility double signage was used; it was agreed that the Chair would raise this with STW. **Action: Chair.**

7.5 PROW: New styles and walking routes had been installed at the Oakle Street end of the village, that were very welcome. It was agreed that Cllr Ingham would write to Jeff Wheeler, the new GCC PROW officer, to introduce herself and see what support is currently on offer for Parish Councils. **Action: Cllr Ingham.**

7.6 Mains Drainage: The Chair confirmed that he had received an update from STW on

the required procedures for extending mains drainage to the village. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate that information to all Cllrs. **Action: Clerk.**

7.7 Tree Pollarding on Ham Green. The Chair confirmed that immediate remedial action had been undertaken on the fallen tree on Ham Green. He had also requested a quote for pollarding of the trees from a contractor, and would request a second quote from another contractor. It was agreed that obtaining 2 quotes for this work was sufficient.

7.8 Ash Dieback and Jubilee Trees: The Chair confirmed that the trees ordered under the Ash dieback and the Jubilee Oaks projects had been received and distributed. There had been some trees remaining after the initial distribution; these were advertised via the community WhatsApp page and have been distributed to residents. There was an opportunity to bid for more trees later in the year, and the Chair had already expressed an interest in this. The recommendation to install a plaque on the Jubilee trees was discussed; it was agreed that this would be reviewed nearer the time.

8. ROAD SAEFTY REPORT – Arrangements for Specific Meeting. It was confirmed that a specific Road Safety meeting would be held on 25 Jan 22 to consider the measures proposed in the road safety report and associated documents. There was a discussion on whether this meeting should be open to the public; it was agreed that it was preferable for the Parish Council to agree its recommendations and priorities at a closed meeting first, and then present them to residents in a public forum; possibly at the Annual Parish Assembly. This would also be supported by an article in *The Villager* magazine. It was agreed that the Clerk would produce and circulate an agenda for the meeting.
Action: Clerk.

9. REVIEW OF MPC STANDING ORDERS. Cllr C Thomas had proposed a review of the MPC Standing Orders, in specific reference to the start time and duration of the MPC meeting. The Orders stated that the meetings started at 7.30pm and would last no more than 1.5 hours. After discussion, it was agreed that the Standing Orders should be amended to state that the meetings started at 7.00pm, and that they would last no more than 2 hours, with an optional extension of up to 30 minutes if agreed by Cllrs. It was also agreed that the Clerk would standardise the formatting of the Standing Orders document, and ensure the text was gender-neutral. **Action: Clerk.**

10. FINANCIAL MATTERS.

10.1 Monthly Reconciliation of Account. The Clerk presented the monthly reconciliation of the accounts, including the income and expenditure figures for December together with the end of month bank balances.

10.2 Proposed Expenditure for Jan 22. The following transactions were approved:

Ser	Item	Expenditure	Income	Comment
1	Parish Magazine Printing	150.20		
2	Clerk Salary	254.68		
3	HMRC Clerk Salary Tax	63.60		
4	Village Hall Hire	75.00		Mtgs in Dec and Jan (x2)
5	Bank Charges	8.00		
6	<i>Villager</i> Advertising		150.00	Received
TOTAL		551.48	150.00	

10.3 Proposed Precept Budget for FY 22/23. The Clerk presented a draft budget proposal for FY22/23. In discussion, the following points were noted:

- A review of the remuneration for the Clerk position would be conducted outside of the meeting.
- The likely areas of expenditure in FY22/23 included the Minsterworth Park play equipment, the council's IT equipment (including printer) and the tree pollarding work on Ham Green; the provisional budget was increased in all of these areas.
- The proposed budget for grass cutting was increased, to allow expenditure in areas other than the Minsterworth Park.
- Any grants for other organisations (eg Village Hall or Harvey Centre/MFSF) should be based on a written request to support a specific project. If approved, this grant would be taken from the Community Projects line of the budget.
- The agreed budget for FY22/23 was £16,920. The breakdown for this budget is shown in the spreadsheet at Annex A.
- It was likely that the bank balance at the start of the FY would be approximately £15,000. The Precept for FY21/22 had been £10,500. It was agreed that the only required increase to the Precept was to cover inflation.
- The current rate of UK inflation is 5.1%; when applied to the FY21/22 Precept this gives a new figure of £11,030.
- It was agreed that the MPC Precept request for FY22/23 should be £11,030.

10.4 Severn Trent Community Fund Grants. STW had invited applications for grants of over £5000 to support environmental projects. It was agreed that Cllr Ingham would review the grants available, to see if it would be applicable for the tree pollarding work on Ham Green or any other village project. **Action: Cllr Ingham.**

10.5 Application for a Grant of £1000 for the Harvey Centre/MFSF. It was agreed that any request for a grant should be submitted in writing to the council and should clearly specify the project for which it would be used. A grant toward the unspecified costs of the Harvey Centre/MFSF was not approved, and they were invited to resubmit a request for a specific grant if required.

11. PLANNING

11.1 Applications:

11.1.1 21/01320/FUL Ham Green Cottage – Amendment for Drainage Scheme and Flood Report. It was agreed that MPC supported this application.

11.2 TBC Decisions: Nil

11.3 Appeals:

11.3.1: 19/01025/FUL - retrospective application for the installation of an agricultural access track, including the part retention of works and construction of an overspill car park at land at Hygrove House. MPC had previously raised no objections to this application, but it was rejected by TBC due to the visual impact of the work. It was agreed that MPC continued to support this application.

11.3.2: 17/01268/FUL - Change of use from ancillary equestrian to residential use and erection of 7 new dwellings at Greenacres, Main Road. MPC had previously raised no objections to this application, but it was rejected by TBC due to the safety of the proposed road access for the properties. It was agreed that MPC continued to support this application.

11.4 Seven Acres Drainage. The administrators for the developers of the Severn Acres properties had recently published an update, stating that a drainage solution was to be

proposed soon. This had been highlighted by MPC to TBC, and it had been requested that TBC consult with MPC when the proposal has been received.

11.5 TBC Enforcement Action. The Clerk confirmed that TBC has started an enforcement review on the wooden structure reported at “The Falklands” property. The soil issue at the “Deep Furrow” was reported to be garden improvement work only, but this was to be confirmed.

11.6 MPC Response to Highnam Planning Application. The Chair confirmed that he had submitted a response on behalf of MPC to TBC in relation to the application for 95 new houses in Highnam. This response highlighted the potential impact on traffic congestion and the increased flood risk for Minsterworth.

12. CORRESPONDENCE:

12.1 TBC Register of Electors. The Clerk confirmed that TBC had produced its Register of Electors, based on the 2021 survey. All Cllrs were entitled to a copy of this register, but as it contained a lot of sensitive personal data, it was essential that the document was handled in an appropriate manner. It was agreed that the Clerk would request a single copy of the electronic register, and would retain it securely on behalf of the MPC. **Action: Clerk.**

13. MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION.

13.1 Disposal of Parish Council Planning Documents. The Clerk outlined the proposal to dispose of old planning documents relating to domestic properties in Minsterworth, as agreed at a previous MPC meeting. These documents were time-expired, as all current planning applications were submitted online. The proposal to offer residents the opportunity to have the old documents that relate to their own property was agreed, and the wording for a notice to appear in *The Villager* was approved.

13.2 Traffic Signs. Cllr Powell proposed that new traffic signs should be installed in the lower lanes to warn motorists about pedestrians, in the areas where there were no footpaths. It was agreed that this item should be discussed at the Road Safety meeting on 25 Jan 22.

13.3 Planning Applications – Building Materials. Cllr C Thomas highlighted that planning applications often include details of the building materials to be used, and that the Council should consider these to ensure they are in-keeping with the village. It was agreed that this should form part of the Council's consideration of any planning application.

14. DATES FOR NEXT MEETINGS:

14.1 25 Jan 22 at 7pm in the Minsterworth Village Hall – this is a specific Road Safety meeting that is not open to the public.

14.2 14 Feb 22 at 7pm in the Minsterworth Village Hall – this is the next monthly MPC meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.18pm.

Signed:

Date:

ANNEX A
To MPC MTG MINUTES
DATED 10 JAN 22

MPC BUDGET FOR FY22/23

Item	FY21/22 Budget	FY22/23 Budget	Comments
Clerk Salary	4853	3860	Assumes 1% NALC payrise
Meeting Expenses	315	420	14 meetings at £30 each
Insurance	430	505	Fixed Price
Admin	250	100	Stationery, postage, ink etc
Training	200	200	Cllr trg; Clerk CILCA
Ditch Clearing by the Church	50	50	Contingency
The Villager	1200	150	Contingency if drop in revenue
Grant to upkeep of Church yard	250	300	Discretionary
Grass Cutting	100	500	Excl Minsterworth Park
Upkeep of village/bus shelters	100	200	Contingency
Wreath/RBL	20	20	Fixed Price
Annual Audit fee	50	55	Fixed Price
Hire of Toilets	250	200	Contingency
Subs - GAPTC	123	125	Fixed Price
Website Hosting Fee	30	30	Fixed Price
Community Projects	2500	2500	Discretionary
A48 Speed Awareness	1500	3500	Discretionary; gates, signage
Minsterworth Park Play Area	1100	1300	Discretionary; incl grass cutting
VAT	28	0	Zero balancing
Defibrillator Maintenance	30	55	Contingency; £500 in FY23/24
Bank Charges	0	100	Fixed Price;
IT Costs	0	750	Contingency; new printer
Tree Pollarding / Ham Maintenance	0	2000	Discretionary
Total	13379	16920	