

MINSTERWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Minsterworth Parish Council (MPC) held on 14 Feb 22 in Minsterworth Village Hall, commencing at 7.00pm.

PRESENT:

Councillors - R Blowey – Chair

N Garbutt

S Ingham

S King

N Powell

C Thomas

R Thomas

CC P Awford

BC J Smith

P Bell – Clerk

Parishioners: 4

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

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

- The Clerk stated that the written response from the TBC Borough Solicitor on declarations of interest had been received and circulated to all Cllrs. This confirmed that where a Cllr's spouse or partner held an unpaid position within another village organisation, there was no requirement for the Cllr to declare an interest if that organisation was discussed, or to recuse themselves from any vote on the subject. The Borough Solicitor did recommend that in the spirit of openness and transparency, Cllrs may make a verbal declaration in such circumstances.
- There were no other declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING.** The minutes of the MPC meeting held on 10 Jan 22 had been circulated and were accepted as a true record. The minutes of the Road Safety Meeting held on 25 Jan 22 had also been circulated and were accepted as a true record.

4. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT.

- Cllr Awford gave a brief report advising that the GCC Budget Council was to take place on 16 Feb 22 where a long day was expected. He confirmed that the GCC Budget would go through, although there may be some shall amendments. GCC will precept for an increase of 2.99%.
- He also advised that he had observed the most recent Appeal by developers against TBC, and that in his opinion the Inspector looked likely to determine for the developer. Much was made of the TBC lack of a 5 year housing land supply where a statement of common ground was agreed with a best case of 3.84 years or a worst at 2.83 years.
- He advised the Parish Council that GCC were waving the fee should anyone wish to hold a street party for this year's Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

5. BOROUGH COUNCILLOR REPORT.

5.1 BCllr Smith provided the following comment:

- Members had conducted a seminar on the 2022/23 budget position for TBC which was to be agreed at the next full council. There was to be no increase in funding for TBC from Government sources; there were 34 other District councils in the same position. Council tax would go up by £5 per year for Band D properties, and pro rata for other bands. This was the maximum that a council could raise it in one year. There were more houses, more people and more demands on the councils resources. TBC was looking at ways to save money whilst still investing in the future needs and priorities of the Borough. TBC is the 6th lowest for Council Tax in the Country and £70 below the average band D property.
- The Commercial Transformation Team (of which Cllr Smith was a member) was looking at money saving measures. Paperless billing was one 'option; residents could sign up online if they were able to do so. Licensing, garden waste scheme and bulky waste collections (this service is collected within the week and costs £22 for the first item and £10 for subsequent items) were also available online via the TBC website.
- The licensing system was undergoing a review.
- The New Homes and Homeless Strategy 2022-26 document was now available; it was a well written paper with lots of interesting facts in it.

5.2 BCllr McLain provided the following written comment ahead of the meeting:

- At the full council meeting on 25 Jan 22 they adopted The Treasury Capital and Management Strategies and Policies for the following: The Capital Strategy; The Investment Strategy; Minimum revenue Provisions Statement; Treasury Management Strategy.
- There was a new website being designed which will be more modern in layout and user friendly and would be considerably easier to navigate. It had been trialed by the citizens panel and was scheduled to go live in April.
- The Council was one of 8 to have been selected by Government to lead on a New Digital Pathfinder project and had received £150,000 to facilitate the project. This will be exploring how to improve customers' experience and reduce the pressure on the Planning Officers by developing a new planning application tracker.
- A new paperless billing system had been launched, allowing residents to view their council tax bills online rather than having a physical copy. The business transformation team had built the paperless billing system using existing software, saving £18,000 on the cost of a bespoke solution.
- A new Covid support fund was available for businesses which had been impacted by the pandemic, but were ineligible for previous grant schemes.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT. There was no public comment.

7. MATTERS ARISING.

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

7.2 Minsterworth Park:

7.1 Review of the Inspection Report and Follow-on Works. A review of the Inspection Report into the Play Park equipment had been conducted, and many of the minor observations had already been addressed. The remaining items would be addressed in the near future, and would be linked to the decision on the Totem Pole.

7.2 Totem Pole. There was evidence of some wood rot to the base of the Totem Pole, but the rest of the structure was very solid. The following options for addressing the rot were as identified:

- Lifting the pole out to remove the rotten section, and then re-installing the shorter pole.
- Excavating the base of the pole and installing a concrete and timber support to the base area.
- Fill the rotten areas of the pole and treat with wood preservative.

It was agreed that the third option should be adopted, and re-assessed after a year. Options to re-paint the Totem Pole were discussed; it was agreed that a notice would be placed in *The Villager* inviting any resident to submit a proposal for repainting. **Action: Chair.**

7.3 Harvey Centre/MFSF: Cllr Awford notified the Council that he had advised the Harvey Centre / MFSF to seek funding from other nearby parishes, as the centre provided a facility for an area wider than Minsterworth.

7.4 Highway Matters:

7.4.1 Severn Trent Water (STW) Works. The Chair confirmed that he had now established communications with the new STW point of contact, and had requested that the manual operation of the traffic lights during peak hours be reinstated.

7.4.2 Broken 50mph Sign. The Chair confirmed that the 50mph repeater sign on the Eastbound side of the A48 just past Hygrove lane had been knocked down and not replaced. Cllr Ingham also highlighted that the triangular 'left turn' warning sign on the Gloucester side of the Harvey Centre had been dislodged. BCllr Smith agreed to raise both these with Highways. **Action: BCllr Smith.**

7.5 PROW: Nothing to report.

7.6 Tree Pollarding on Ham Green. The Chair confirmed that he had received 2 quotations from contractors to undertake the work. Both contractors were considered to be suitable for the job, and their specifications were similar. Both offered to leave off-cut wood onsite for residents, or to remove it if requested. After discussion, it was agreed to offer the work to Adam Shayle, on the grounds of value for money. It was further agreed that he would be requested to leave the cord wood and chippings on site.

8. ROAD SAEFTY REPORT

8.1 Outcomes from Road Safety Meeting. The recommendations from the Road Safety Meeting held on 25 Jan 22 were agreed.

8.2 Proposals to Publish Findings. The Chair requested approval to distribute the Road Safety Report to the Westbury on Trym Parish Council, the inter-Parish Council Group, and to Minsterworth residents (via Mailchimp); this was agreed. The report would also be uploaded to the Parish Council website. **Action: Chair & Clerk.**

8.3 Date for Public Meeting. After discussion, it was agreed that a public meeting was required, in order to get the maximum support from the residents for the measures proposed. It was agreed that the meeting would be held to coincide with the Annual Parish Assembly (APA) on Monday 9 May 22. The Road Safety presentation would begin at 6.00pm, with the APA scheduled to start at 7.00pm. The Chair will prepare a power point presentation and circulate to Councillors for approval prior to the meeting.

9. REVIEW OF MPC STANDING ORDERS. The Clerk confirmed that he had incorporated the changes to the MPC Standing Orders as agreed at the previous meeting. The revised orders had been circulated to all Cllrs. It was agreed that prior to publishing them on the Parish Council website, the views of GAPTC should be sought on the content of the Council Standing Orders. **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 January together with the end of month bank balances.

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

Ser	Item	Expenditure	Income	Comment
1	Parish Magazine Printing	0.00		Feb printing paid in Jan
2	Clerk Salary	254.68		
3	HMRC Clerk Salary Tax	63.60		
4	Village Hall Hire	45.00		Mtgs on 10 Jan and 14 Feb.
5	Tree Pollarding	2340.00		Including VAT (to be reclaimed)
6	Jubilee Beacon	598.00		Including VAT (to be reclaimed)
7	<i>Villager</i> distribution	51.59		Paid
8	Bank Charges	8.50		
9	<i>Villager</i> Advertising		255.00	Received
TOTAL		2976.37	255.00	

10.3 Review of Clerk's Salary. (Note: The Clerk left the room during this discussion). It was agreed that from 1 Apr 22 the Clerk's salary should be increased to Level 16 on the NALC pay scales, equating to £12.48 per hour. The contracted hours for the Clerk should be increased from 6.5 to 8 hours per week.

11. PLANNING

11.1 Applications: Nil

11.2 TBC Decisions:

21/01453/FUL – The Downs, Main Road, Minsterworth – Permitted.

21/01404/FUL – Henacre, Main Road, Minsterworth – Permitted.

It also was noted that application 20/00936/OUT – “Outline permission for 16 houses on land at the rear of the Village Hall” was due at the TBC Planning Committee on 15 Feb 22, with the recommendation that it be permitted. It was confirmed from the planning diagram that this referred to land at the rear of Ellis Bank, not directly behind the Village Hall.

11.3 Appeals: Nil

12. PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS.

12.1 Arts Council England Grants. The Arts Council England had offered grants in support of local arts based projects to support the Platinum Jubilee. It was agreed that proposals to buy celebratory items were unlikely to meet the remit to get an Arts Council grant. It was noted that a village Jubilee Committee had been established, to coordinate events.

12.2 Jubilee Beacons. The Council had received information about the official Jubilee Beacons that were available for purchase; these were gas-fuelled and cost £490 (excl VAT). The intent was for all Jubilee Beacons to be lit at 9.15pm on 2 Jun 22. It was agreed that the Parish Council should purchase such a beacon and coordinate it's lighting, if this was agreed by the local Jubilee Committee.

13. CORRESPONDENCE:

13.1 TBC Review of Parish Boundaries. TBC had completed a review of Parish Boundaries; the report had been circulated to all Cllrs. The review made no recommendations about boundaries for Minsterworth or any immediately neighboring parishes. It was agreed that MPC had no comments on the review.

13.2 TBC Consultation on Shop Front Designs. TBC had completed a consultation document on shop front designs; this document had been circulated to all Cllrs. The document referred primarily to Tewkesbury town, and had no impact on Minsterworth; it was agreed that MPC had no comments on the document.

14. MATTERS RAISED FOR NOTIFICATION.

14.1 Declaration of Interests. Cllr R Thomas requested clarification on the next steps for the Cllrs' Declaration of Interest Forms. The Clerk confirmed that when he had received all of the forms (due on 14 Mar 22) , he would compile a table showing all of the Cllrs' Declarations; this would be circulated to Cllrs for approval, and then uploaded to the Parish Council Website. The target for having the Declarations of Interest on the website was 1 Apr 22. The forms would also be sent to the Monitoring Officer at TBC for counter-signature.

15. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING: 14 Mar 22 at 7pm in the Minsterworth Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.37pm.

Signed:

Date: