

Berwick Bassett and Winterbourne Monkton Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the council held on Wednesday 3rd March 2021 at 7.30pm. by Teams due to Covid restrictions

Present: Cllr Mark Saunders (chair), Cllr Andrew George-Perutz,
Cllr Lyn Bennett-Nutt, Cllr Gary Higgins,
Cllr Jill Petchey, Cllr Helen Ramsay
County Cllr Jane Davies

Mrs Janice Pattison (clerk)

1. Apologies for absence
Cllr Neil Kirk
2. Declaration of Interests
There were no declarations of interest
3. Questions from the public
There were none
4. Minutes of meetings of 6th January 2021
The minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting
5. Matters Arising from meeting of 6th January (not covered elsewhere in the minutes)
No letter had been written to Wiltshire Council about the lack of communications about road closure due to other responsibilities. There has also been a recent incident where the road from Broad Hinton to Rockley had been closed. Notification arrived at 11am when the road had closed at 8am the same day. It was agreed to write to Wiltshire Council Highways requesting better and more reliable information regarding road closures. Action Cllr Ramsay
Cllr George-Perutz will request clarification of the secondary school bus tender process, issuing a Freedom of Information Request. Action Cllr George-Perutz
6. Reports
 - a. Finance
Two Cheques have been issued
100416 £40.00 Data Protection
100417 £250.00 Website hosting and support

These are anticipated to be the final outgoings of this financial year. It was agreed not to make any further donations or additional expenditures until the next Financial Year. The Council currently holds a balance of slightly over £9,000. Most of this will go during the 2021/22 year on A4361 speed reduction implementation. It is still not clear how much this will be

The clerk has applied as requested by HSBC for official telephone banking which will allow the clerk to transfer money between accounts. It was agreed at the last meeting to complete a new banking mandate with new councillors after the election in May.

Councillors can also consider amending the Standing Orders to permit BACS payment

provided these have been approved in writing by a quorate of councillors. For example the items in the budget can be paid automatically as the budget has been agreed but items such as A4361 improvements would need to be agreed by quorate first (or the cheque book may continue to be used) A new mandate will be made when new councillors are in place in May.

b. Planning

20/10553/FUL 1 Manor Farm Cottages Winterbourne Monkton SN4 9NW

Extension above the existing attached garage and conversion of the garage. Works to comprise a new pitched roof with dormers (style to match existing) above the proposed extension.

This has been passed with conditions

Some of the houses on the Old Dairy site are now completed. Following a call to Cllr Petchey from a resident regarding the increase of cars driving aimlessly around the village looking for the new estate, she telephoned both agents. She requested that they ensure that prospective purchasers were given clear instructions as to where the houses were. Both agents apologised and said that they would ensure that more signage was erected to give clear directions

c. Rivers

There have been no further flooding issues to report

d. Footpaths...

It was confirmed that the footpath markings were still in place on the steps on the official public footpath at Christmas House.

Cllr George-Perutz attended the Combined Parishes Right of way Group led by Mrs Henshaw met virtually on Thursday 7th January.

Volunteers to help repaint the railings on School Lane Footpath Bridge and in Berwick Bassett will be sought. There may be help to be obtained from the Parish Steward although this may be more paint.

Similarly a village cleanup will take place once social distancing regulations are lifted

e. Roads

Cllr Saunders has walked the roads of Winterbourne Monkton with Martin Cook and Wiltshire Councillor Jane Davies. Martin Cook has identified the lower end of Church Lane from the speed hump to the Byway as needing resurfacing and the main village road as requiring a tar and chip surface replacement. There is, however, no funding left in the 2021/22 budget to do this unless another project is abandoned.

A pothole has appeared in School Lane Footpath which is considered by residents to be a fall hazard in the dark. This will be reported using the Wiltshire Council app. It was requested that all Wiltshire Council app reports be monitored in one place. Cllr Bennett-Nutt agreed to co-ordinate. Action Cllr Bennett-Nutt.

Councillors will join the West of Marlborough Traffic Group at their meeting with MP Danny Kruger at Avebury Manor on 11th June 2021 (11am) in order to explore further their concerns about traffic speeds and road safety along the A4 from Beckhampton to Marlborough and within the ambit of the World Heritage Site at Avebury. It is thought

that this meeting may also address the closure of the Avebury Avenue. Action Cllr Ramsay

Cllr Saunders had not ordered Children Crossing Signs as it was not certain that it would be possible to erect them. This will be further investigated. Action Cllr Saunders

f. Broadband

Berwick Bassett continues to have very slow broadband speeds. Residents should be encouraged to contact BT and complain about speed in the hope that fibre may be eventually be laid to houses. Fibre Optic Cable is being laid to properties in Old Dairy Lane

g. Community Building

A sub committee of the parish Council was set up by Councillor Saunders to liaise with the developer for the construction of the new community hall and to work towards the running and usage of the hall. The committee, which was set up in August 2020, was formed of Councillor Saunders and three village residents who were selected by Councillor Saunders for their individual skills. These being Simon Petchey (SP) for governance, Lindsey Robinson (LR) for safeguarding and hall letting and Jane Parker (JP) as treasurer.

Cllr Saunders reported the committee has endeavoured to understand the legal requirement of owning and running a community hall and all that entails. To date we have had five meetings, with decision and discussions minuted. The process of ownership is currently being discussed by Simon Petchey and Wiltshire Council solicitor Diana Miller. Specific questions were raised and asked by SP in August 2020 to Wiltshire Council, but no response was received. The same questions have been raised with Diana Miller and she is currently discussing with colleagues on who is best placed to answer SP questions, which relate to transfer of assets.

The subcommittee believes we need to register as a charity and this then brings financial implications, whereby the trustees of the charity could be responsible for any financial loss if the charity is required to be wound up. A conservative estimate of costs has been produced and this suggests that the hall would need a revenue of £7000 per annum to cover all outgoings. The estimate includes costs associated with paying for cleaning, commercial bin usage and an allocation for remuneration to a hall manager. This represents a considerable sum and may prove hard to generate. This may ultimately lead to the community hall running at a loss. There will be an allocation of £20k from the section 106 agreement, but once costs for tables, chairs, crockery, etc, are taken into consideration this does not leave a great deal to cover ongoing costs.

The requirement for insurance of various types would add additional cost burdens, all of which are unknown, and it is currently unclear whether the hall would attract council tax payment.

A meeting was convened on Wednesday 24th February where Jane Parker detailed her concerns with respect to inadequate funds being available and the realistic possibility of having insufficient income for the future. These concerns were all echoed by other committee members. JP announced that she wished to resign from the position of treasurer before banking and charity registration was started. MS thanked JP for her support over the past eight months.

In summary, it is felt that there could be a strong possibility that the community hall, if it does not generate sufficient income, would have to revert to being run by the Parish Council, with all the associated costs. This could represent a considerable financial burden to the Parish Council.

County Cllr Jane Davies suggested that the Community Hall committee talk to Community First who have a Community Halls Adviser. There are grants available from Marlborough Area Board in addition to the capital grant currently being investigated. For example there is a Health and Well Being Grant and a Young People Grant which could be accessed for Pilates/Yoga or a Youth Club respectively. She also suggested that Brian Rayment from Kennet Valley Hall for some advise. For example they have an automatic locking door and users have a keycode to the lock. This removes the need for having to have a key holder to let people in.

Councillors made various suggestions such as Yoga, Keep Fit, Children's Parties, Table Tennis table and/or youth club activities, Art Classes. Cllr George-Perutz agreed to form a list of opportunities

A suggestion to use the hall for overnight stays for example YHA, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions was ruled out due to implications for insurance

8. Other Reports

h. Avebury World Heritage Site

There have been no meetings

i. Marlborough Area Board

Virtual meetings are taking place. Quotes for a projector system for the Community Hall were being followed up with a view to applying for a Marlborough Area Board Grant.

j. Police

It has been noted that there has been a presence on the local bye-way to Yatesbury on a couple of occasions, presumably monitoring hare coursing activity

No reports of thefts or incidents have been reported.

k. Clerk

The Parish Council elections take place in May. All councillors must stand for re-election. Current councillors remain councillors for 4 days after the election regardless of the results. There will be 2 vacancies for Berwick Bassett and 5 for Winterbourne Monkton. If less than this stand then there will be no election and all those nominated will be elected by default.

Nomination papers will be available early April.

9. Availability of Social Housing in Winterbourne Monkton

There are 3 houses on Old Dairy Lane classified as affordable, one for shared ownership and 2 for rent. Applicants with local connections will be prioritised. They will be managed by White Horse Housing in Devizes. Some local advertising had taken place, on notice boards, Parish Council website, Parish Council email list and informally on community whatsapp group. Little notice was given of the deadline for applications which was March 1st

10. A4361 issues and CATG progress

There is a virtually held CATG meeting on March 4th. Cllr George-Perutz will attend.

The advertisement for speed reduction still has not been placed. It is hoped to obtain from the meeting firmer timescales for the advertisement of speed reduction and implementation and a better estimation of costs. The division of costs of implementation could be significant in costs. Action Cllr George-Perutz

11. Wiltshire Council Local Plan Review

The slides for the presentation meeting have been circulated and are now available on the Wiltshire Council website

.There were several mentions during the presentation about Community Plans being important to represent the development views of Parishes. There were subsequently many questions about how Wiltshire Council was going to support smaller parishes in the development of Community Plans. The presenters assured those at the meeting that this would be investigated. To date there has been no response. Cllr Davies agreed to look into this.

12. Confirmation of items for press release

There was nothing to report

13. Date of Next Meeting

It was decided to postpone the Annual Parish Meeting (Assembly) until 30th June when it is hoped that the meeting restrictions will be completely lifted. It was decided, however, to produce an annual report that can be circulated to villages representing the work of the current councillors who will finish their term at the elections in May.

The AGM and first meeting of the year should be 5th May. It was agreed that this meeting should be postponed until 12th May when new councillors are in place. The current route map for lockdown lifting would allow this meeting to take place in person

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

