

Berwick Bassett and Winterbourne Monkton Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the council held on Wednesday 6th January 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 Neil Kirk,
Cllr Jill Petchey, Cllr Helen Ramsay
County Cllr Jane Davies

Mrs Janice Pattison (clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

There were none

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest

3. Questions from the public

A new gate has been installed on the fence at Christmas House and the footpath sign post moved to be by this gate. It was queried whether a footpath redirection should be applied for to give future clarity as to the route of the footpath. Cllr Petchey replied that, as the public footpath is still able to be used, the redirection is not necessary. Cllr Davies added that the route through the new gate with the footpath sign should be signed as a permissive path otherwise after a number of years of use it becomes a right of way, in addition to the existing footpath

4. Minutes of meetings of 2nd September 2020

The minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the meeting

5. Matters Arising from meeting of 2nd september (not covered elsewhere in the minutes)

The grit bins around the villages had been refilled in the Autumn. The bin at Berwick Bassett had been damaged. This was reported by Cllr Ramsay and the bin was replaced and refilled by Wiltshire Council

No letter had been written to Wiltshire Council about the lack of communications about road closure due to other responsibilities. Cllr Davies had already highlighted the difficulties caused by this to Wiltshire Council but agreed that the change of times had left contractors insufficient time to complete works within the time allocated. Cllr Davies also clarified that the A4361 through these villages was not resurfaced while the closure took place was that this section is not considered of high enough priority and thought there may be insufficient skilled labour available to undertake the whole stretch over the 2 days declared closure

Cllr Higgins had attempted to contact Rivar to ask whether there will be public access by footpath from Church Lane through the new housing to Old Dairy Lane (Chemega Road). This had been unsuccessful but Cllr Saunders confirmed that the plans for the housing showed a footpath from the houses to Church Lane. All vehicle access is via Old Dairy Lane not Church Lane

6. Reports

a. Finance

There has been no expenditure since the last meeting.

The council has a balance of almost £10,000 although a large amount of this is allocated to A4361 speed limit reduction and renewal of lease of defibrillators

The proposed budget has received approval from councillors prior to the meeting. Formal acceptance was confirmed unanimously by all councillors at this meeting. A request will be made to Wiltshire Council for the precept., agreed at £4562

The clerk has undertaken a banking Safeguard interview for the HSBC accounts. This is a requirement to verify banking security.

Other communications with HSBC have been less successful. One phone call was on hold for over an hour. A complaint about this has received a £20 credit in compensation. The requested transfer of funds from current to savings account has not taken place

A new mandate will be made when new councillors are in place in May. In the meantime formal telephone banking will be applied for.

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.

Councillors had no objections to this application

Councillors were advised that the consultation on the new Wiltshire Area Plan, which will colour development in Wiltshire for the next 10 years, would commence in January. There are separate days for the larger communities but the Rural Village presentations will be on February 1st and 2nd. These will all be held remotely.

The clerk reminded Cllr Davies of her request to help set the boundaries for the Community Area Plan as Wiltshire Council were unwilling to discuss this with the clerk. Cllr Davies replied that the costs of formalising the Community Area Plan for a small community like this one far outweighed any financial benefit it may receive from Community Infrastructure Levy. As far as protection from large developers was concerned this was not supported by Wiltshire Council in rural areas.

c. Rivers

There have been no further flooding issues to report

d. Footpaths...

Cllr Petchey reported that the footpath between School Lane and Church Lane has been cleared thanks to a few parishioners helping the Chair. Overhanging branches have also been cut back.

All other footpaths are clear and open.

Cllr Ramsay reported that at the last Winterbourne Monkton to Avebury Permissive Pathway meeting, the principal landowner advised that they had changed their minds on allowing the use of the field adjacent to the A4361 which meant that all plans had to be halted until alternative suggestions could be made. There are no further meetings currently planned.

The Combined Parishes Right of way Group led by Mrs Henshaw is to meet virtually on Thursday 7th January. Cllr George-Perutz will attend

The project to repaint the railings on School Lane footpath bridge by volunteers has been abandoned due to social distancing regulations. In September Cllr Ramsay requested that the railings on the road bridge at Berwick Bassett be painted and received the following update. "Thank you for your report. This would be a discretionary, summer job, that would need to be put through to the Parish Council so it can be reported onto the Parish Steward spreadsheet of work." It was considered that both jobs could be tackled together in 2021 with volunteers in collaboration with the Parish Steward. Sufficient Paint for the School Lane Footpath Bridge is available with Cllr Petchey when required.

There has been no village cleanup this year due to social distancing requirements

e. Roads

Cllr Saunders reported that he had received an email from a WM resident complaining about the state of the roads around by the Church. Photographs and an email were sent direct to Martin Cook of Wiltshire Council. Martin Cook responded that Wiltshire Council finances were insufficient to repair all but the most urgent cases and the potholes in Church Lane were considered not severe enough. Cllr Saunders also reported the potholes at the end of the private close opposite Highwaymans Cottage which, again, were not considered deep enough, despite them causing issues to a resident who uses an electric wheelchair. If possible a tour of the village with Martin Cook, Rebecca Busby and parish councillors will take place. Martin Cook and Councillor Petchey both suggested using the Wiltshire app to report the concerns.

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

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

g. Community Building

Cllr Saunders reported that work on construction of the building has started. The external walls are part constructed.

The Community Building committee has decided to name the building Winterbourne Monkton Community Hall and this will be the name of the charity under which the hall will be managed. Regular meetings of the committee are now taking place. A representative from Berwick Bassett will be sought to join the committee

8. Other Reports

h. Avebury World Heritage Site

There have been no meetings

i. Marlborough Area Board

Virtual meetings are taking place. Cllr Davies advised that there is still an amount of money in the community grant pot which can be claimed. There may be no money available next year due to shortage of Wiltshire Council funds. It was considered that the projector and screen facility for the new hall might be an appropriate candidate. The funding needs to be spent within 12 months of allocation.

j. Police

Cllr Petchey reported that although the Police have other priorities at the moment, it has been noted that there has been a presence on the local bye-way to Winterbourne Monkton on a couple of occasions, presumably monitoring hare coursing activity
No reports of thefts or incidents have been reported.

k. Defibrillators

The monthly report is being recorded and sent to SWAST on a monthly basis. Last years training was halted due to COVID-19 and until matters improve it is unlikely to be achievable in the foreseeable future. A new councillor is sought to manage the current defibrillators after the next election together with the renewal of the 4 year Lease when this falls due.

9. Safety of South Bound Bus Stop at Winterbourne Monkton

Cllrs Ramsay and George-Perutz have approached many agencies in regard to this issue including Katie Fielding of Community First who advised that the first contact should be with St. John's School but also gave details of a few people in Wiltshire Council to contact and our MP who offered his support. Eventually, following much correspondence a coherent albeit disappointing response in December from Jason Salter, vHead of Service, Passenger Transport, Communities & Neighbourhood, Wiltshire Council. The contract offered to tender is for Southbound pickup on A4361 as buses are as likely to start from Swindon as Pewsey. To include the pickup from the Northbound bus stop would cost £2000 per year which would not be paid by Wiltshire Council as their safety audit of the stop did not show that the crossing was unsafe.

Cllr George-Perutz will continue to pursue this and has requested transparency in the tender process and input to the process from the Parish Council

10. A4361 issues and CATG progress

Progress on the speed limit reduction on A4361 had slowed due to concerns by adjacent councils. Broad Hinton and Winterbourne Bassett are now not included as there is no reduction in there area. Avebury were concerned that they had previously had a recommendation of 40mph limit between Avebury and Beckhampton. This was not supported by the latest speed limit review. Cllr George-Perutz reported that Avebury have now decided that the 50mph speed limit is the right option although they will still continue to press for a further speed reduction from Beckhampton to Avebury to 40mph. Adverts will now be placed for pubic information. The advertising cost will be divided by 2 and not wholly the responsibility of this council. Furthermore the advertising will commence as soon as possible but the billing will not be until 2021/22 financial year. It is

understood that CATG will still contribute towards the costs but has to be confirmed. Cllr Davies will follow this up.

The implementation could take place in the 2021/2 tax year. The clerk asked Cllr Davies if the costs could be clarified and whether these would be shared between the councils by division by 2 or by cost within the parish. Cllr Davies will clarify

11. Lighting of School Lane Footpath to Church in Winterbourne Monkton

This footpath is currently unlit with a hedge on one side and a drop on the other to the bourne. When the Manor Farm development is completed more people will use this path including more children needing to use this path in the dark when going to catch the school bus. This is of course the only safe route to the bus stop especially on dark mornings and evenings. Some consideration was given to the installation of solar lights which will need to be properly surveyed to ensure there is sufficient light and may prove costly. The principal neighbouring property is let which may prevent installation of electric lighting using their domestic supply. Perhaps this is an item which could be revisited when the money from the CIL for the Manor Farm Dairy development is available, or new residents require it.

12. Works adjacent to bourne at New Inn, Winterbourne Monkton

A large pond is being constructed in the field behind The New Inn adjacent to the bourne. Cllr Higgins has discussed the works with the owners. They have given assurances that the works are in accordance with the Environment Agency and did not require planning permission. The pond is fed by rainwater from the pub roof. The pond may contain Koi Carp at a later date. Councillors were reminded by the clerk that the area on which the pond lies is within the flood plain which has been frequently flooded but not within the last 10 years.

13. Confirmation of items for press release

There was nothing to report

14. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 3rd March, at Winterbourne Monkton Church or Virtually

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm