

Berwick Bassett and Winterbourne Monkton Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the council held on Wednesday 1st March 2023 at 7.30pm.at Winterbourne Monkton Community Hall

Present: Cllr Mark Saunders (chair),
Cllr Colin Pattison, Cllr Helen Ramsay, Cllr Ben Woodward
Mr Philip Scott
Mrs Janice Pattison (clerk)
1 member of the public

1. Apologies for absence
Cllr Neil Kirk, County Cllr Jane Davies
2. Declaration of Interests
There were no declarations of interest other than those on specific agenda items
3. Questions from the public
A member of the public spoke on the presence of Giant Hogweed in the parish. See specific item below.
4. Minutes of Meeting of January 11th 2022
The minutes were accepted as reflective of the meeting and signed by the chairman of the meeting.
5. Matters Arising from meeting of January 11th not covered elsewhere.
Individual email addresses have been allocated with the suffix bbwmpc.org to be used for council business and for contact from the website. The clerk will confirm with councillors that they are all working correctly. The emails translate to the councillors' own email address, so no further information is required. Some councillors may prefer to use webmail to maintain their emails separate to personal
6. Reports
 - a. Finance
There has been no expenditure since the last meeting.
Cheques were signed for rental for the Community Hall for the meeting in March and a re-issue for the LINK donation. The council has had further communication from Air Ambulance outlining what donations are spent on.

The precept has been submitted to Wiltshire Council but the amount has not yet been confirmed.

Finances are looking healthy with an approximate £5000 to carry to next year
Most of this money is unspent Village Project monies
The invoice for the speed reduction on A4361 has not been received. Marlborough LHFIFG have been reminded about this. The £5000 assumes that the A4361 has been paid by the year end

Cllr Saunders confirmed that the Gazebo was now the property of the Village Club but was available equally to any member of the community for a small hire charge that would be used for maintenance of the gazebo

The council is still paying usually £9 a month for banking plus £1 for each cheque. Councillors considered the options for cheaper banking than the current bank. It was agreed to use a High St bank because it had more branches and was easier to pay money in and approve signatories. Action clerk

b. Planning

Cllr Pattison reported that there had been no new planning applications since the last meeting.

c. Emergency and Flooding.

Cllrs Woodward and Kirk have been working on finalising the Emergency Plan which is nearing publication.

The clerk has obtained an amount of gel filled sandbags free of charge from Wiltshire council removing the need for sand and sand storage. These will be held in waterproof storage with open access at The New Inn

There has been no progress with the installation of a Grit Bin in Old Dairy Lane

d. Footpaths.

Cllr Saunders reported that the footpath between the church and the bridge over the bourne at the bottom of School Lane Footpath beside The Manor was resurfaced commencing January 20th. Unfortunately, weeds are already growing through the path lifting the surface. Cllr Woodward will report to Wiltshire Council

A channel was dug across the School Lane Footpath by one of the residents after consulting with Cllr Saunders. Cllr Saunders will investigate ownership of the path and the land over which it crosses for any future issues regarding the path.

Cllr Saunders will continue follow up with Mr Stephen Leonard of Wiltshire Council about the proposed scalplings and improvements by the kissing gates and improvements to the footpath by Christmas House/Tonic Construction. In the meantime a group of volunteers has surfaced the path with wood chippings to make the path by School Lane Footpath to the kissing gate to the field passable. Cllr Saunders will visit the site by Christmas House/Tonic Construction to confirm work required. Cllr Woodward offered donation of wood chippings.

A stone has been identified as the second large stone at the end of the footpath beside the Community Hall to help prevent vehicle parking which in turn was blocking access by pedestrians with wheelchairs or pushchairs. This has not yet been installed. Action Cllr Saunders

e. Roads

Cllr Ramsay reported that Potholes continue to be a major issue in the villages and on the A4361. The surface of the A4361 at the entrance to the main village road by the bus stops is rapidly decaying leaving a seriously undulating surface. The holes at the entrance to Private Road in Winterbourne Monkton have been patched but are open again due to the number of vehicles using the entrance for turning. There are other

holes in the Winterbourne Monkton village road primarily caused by the flooding followed by heavy frost earlier in the year. These continue to be reported to Wiltshire Council

The Insurance Company of one Winterbourne Monkton resident is taking action against Wiltshire Council due to structural movement in the property allegedly caused by vibrations caused by the rough surface.

Cllr Woodward will confirm the route of the primary water main as it crosses the A4361.

It had previously been agreed to purchase and erect 'No Parking' signs at the end of the footpath between Church Lane and Old Dairy Lane, and by the treatment plant for the Old Dairy Lane houses. This action continues. Cllr Kirk agreed to source the signs

f Community Building

A licencing application has been submitted for the Community Hall for alcohol between 10am and 11pm and films between 12noon and 11pm. Cllr Saunders reported that each booking of the hall would be looked at with regards to possibility of nuisance. Specific terms and conditions of hire were not available, it was not envisaged that alcohol would be held on the premises. Cllrs Saunders and Scott left the meeting during the deliberation of council response. Councillors agreed not to oppose the application. Neighbouring residents would be encouraged to look at the application and submit their own responses. Action Cllr Ramsay

The Parish Council could not make a regular booking at the hall because their committee does not wish to prevent a weekly meeting because of the councils bimonthly meeting, The clerk suggested that perhaps one night per week could be allocated to irregular group meetings so that all the ad hoc meetings in the village would be held on the same night.

8. Appointment of Vice Chair

Andrew George-Perutz had been the vice-chair of the council. It was decided to defer the appointment of a vice-chair until more councillors were present. This may be deferred until the Annual Meeting of the Council

9. Advertising councillor vacancies and councillor co-option

Councillors unanimously co-opted Mr Philip Scott to the position of Councillor for Winterbourne Monkton previously held by Mr Simon Petchey. The councillor vacancy for Berwick Bassett created by the resignation of Mr George-Perutz is now available for co-option. The vacancy has been advertised and no election called by residents. Residents of Berwick Bassett will be encouraged to apply. Residents of Winterbourne Monkton are eligible to stand for Berwick Bassett but they would need to represent the residents of Berwick Bassett. 2 residents of Winterbourne Monkton had expressed an interest in the vacancies. The clerk will contact these persons advising of the representation and with appropriate information about becoming a councillor. Applications for the vacancy will be considered at the Annual Meeting on 3rd May

10. Arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting on 5th April 2023

The meeting will take place at the Community Hall at 7.30pm. Cllr Woodward will arrange alcoholic and non-alcoholic refreshments and nibbles and invoice the Parish Council. Cllr Saunders will produce an annual report that will be circulated to all residents in both villages prior to the meeting. Councillors will submit a report within the week to enable Cllr Saunders to combine

11. Plans for Events to Commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III

There are plans for a number of events in Winterbourne Monkton over the weekend, open to all residents. On Saturday 6th May, Coronation Day, the church will have a flower festival and teas. On the evening there will be an event at The New Inn with a professional cello and piano duo. On Sunday 7th May there will be a lunch party at the Community Hall. It is planned that this be outside in the car park to assimilate a street party but can move indoors if the weather is wet. The Parish Council provide a glass of prosecco and the enviro friendly flutes to cost of £100. A community committee has been set up to arrange this event. Cllr Woodward will produce a flyer to deliver to each household listing the events taking place

12. Speed Reduction on All Village Roads to 20mph

The clerk confirmed that the commencement of this process would be to contact Marlborough Local Highway and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG previously CATG) and apply for a monitoring strip to be installed in both villages. This would need to show an average speed of below 24mph. The cost of the implementation would be around £2,500 of which the Parish Council would need to pay £625. The next meeting of LHFIG is 2nd March with the next one expected in June. The clerk will investigate the application process with a view to producing for the next LHFIG meeting. The speed reduction will also be discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr Woodward also suggested that speed recommendation stickers could be fixed to bins or some other visual narrowing.

13. Collection points for secondary school transport

It remains an objective of the Parish Council to obtain a pickup for St Johns School from the village side of Winterbourne Monkton to avoid the children crossing the road and standing beside the road. Mr George-Perutz had been in contact with Wiltshire Council transport with a view to his being involved in the tendering process. Cllrs Saunders and Scott will have a meeting with Mr George-Perutz to obtain more information and continue the process.

A number of issues had been reported to the Parish Council in recent weeks Potholes on the road are considered a hazard as vehicles avoid them or hit and lose some control. The condition of the road surface had been reported to Wiltshire Council. An incident was reported where cars overtaking the school bus causing near collisions with children crossing the road to catch the bus. Overtaking a school bus inappropriately is not illegal but causes problems if the children are not at the bus stop when the bus arrives. The bus should wait for the children to cross the road safely. The land allocated to the bus stop is considered too small for all the children and supervising adults. This is especially the case if the Dauntsey's bus arrives late. The area can only be increased through an application to LHFIG which would take time and be expensive due to the need to close at least one carriageway while the works take place but an application can be made. The bus that collects for Dauntsey's is a

private arrangement. This can be monitored and requests be made to the bus company or Dauntsey's to avoid both sets of children being at the bus stop together. The home bus at around 4pm has been seen to deposit the children at Winterbourne Monkton bus stop and then attempt to turn to travel back to Avebury in the road junction

14. Public Open Space Contribution – Section 106 Agreement

Cllr Saunders has yet to complete the side agreement to enable the finance to be transferred to the Parish Council who could then allocate the finance in the form of grants. Wiltshire Council will need to approve each project that the money will be spent on. The Parish Council has 10 years to spend the money, or it be returned to Wiltshire Council.

Cllr Saunders has approached owners of some land close to the School Lane Footpath bourne bridge to see if they would gift the land or sell at a low price. He also offered that the Parish Council would pay legal fees for transfer of ownership. This would enable a garden to be made or possibly a trim trail.

The playground at The New Inn is still planned.

Cllr Woodward will produce a mood board including all the options currently being considered so that residents can view them at the Annual Parish Meeting in April

15. Lighting of Lower Church Lane Footpath

Cllr Saunders has approached landowners with a view to gifting some of the land. The issue of lighting will be discussed at the Annual Parish Meeting to clarify whether this is an option residents wish to take further. Cllr Ramsay agreed to investigate solar installers. Action Cllr Ramsay

16. Millennium Bench in Church Yard

The bench in the church yard was provided by the Parish Council to celebrate the year 2000. It is now reported to be in a poor state of repair. Cllr Scott will investigate whether the bench can be repaired or whether in needs full replacement.

17. Japanese Knotweed in Old Dairy Lane

An infestation of Japanese Knotweed has been identified on land belonging to Yatesbury Manor Farm at the bottom of Old Dairy Lane. The infestation is covered but the rhizomes are creeping onto the land belonging to estate management. They are within feet of an LPG tank and a spring which feeds the Winterbourne. The original environment report from the purchase of the Old Dairy Lane site by Rivar said that the site was clear of Knotweed but this is many years old. No pre-purchase surveys for the properties in Old Dairy Lane identified the weed on the individual properties. Yatesbury Manor Farm is an organic farm so not open to vegetation spraying.

Alternative methods are being used including stacking and covering but this isn't preventing the spread. There are other approved organic methods including the full excavation of the land and removal of the weeds to a certified site. The landowner has not yet responded to any of the alternative methods offered.

Wiltshire Council can issue a Community Protection Notice should the knotweed cross into neighbouring properties. Wiltshire Council has been in touch with the landowner.

The National Trust are concerned that the weed may spread to their property along the Winterbourne and are monitoring the watercourse.

Cllr Saunders will compose emails to send to Wiltshire Council and the landowner and circulate to councillors for approval.

18. Employee Contracts and salary payment

Cllr Scott agreed to contact HMRC and register the Parish Council as an employer rather than pay an external company to carry this out. Employees will be paid this way in future. It is planned that this will be in place by May 5th.

Cllr Scott will also produce a contract for the clerk for future discussion as a move from self-employed to employed.

14. Confirmation of items for press release

The Clerk will compose a short piece for the Upper Kennet News announcing the date of the Annual Parish Meeting and the vacancy in Berwick Bassett

The Clerk had investigated becoming a member of Visit Wiltshire which will raise the profile of the area to visitors. Silver level membership was thought to be free of charge. Prior to taking this further, Councillors will consider what areas of the community should be promoted.

15. Date of Next Meeting

The next meetings of the council will be held on May 3rd which will be the Annual Meeting of the Council followed by a regular Parish Council Meeting, in the Community Hall if available.

The Annual Parish Meeting to which all residents are invited would be held on Wednesday April 5th

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

