

Berwick Bassett and Winterbourne Monkton Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the council held on Wednesday 3rd May 2023 at 7.30pm.at Winterbourne Monkton Community Hall

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

1. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest other than those on specific agenda items.

3. Questions from the public

There were no questions from members of the public.

4. Minutes of Meeting of March 1st

The minutes were accepted as reflective of the meeting and signed by the chairman of the meeting.

5. Matters Arising from meeting of March 1st not covered elsewhere.

Payroll. The Council is now an employer registered with HMRC. Council employees will be paid through HMRC and taxed at source rather than as self-employed. A new contract will be produced to reflect the fully employed status rather than self-employed. Draft contracts can be obtained from WALC or SLCC (Society for Local Council Clerks)

Coronation events. 70 people have booked to attend the lunch at the Community Hall. The Parish Council was requested to increase the budget for the Prosecco toast to £200 which was agreed.

Secondary School Collection. There has been no update on the Parish Council request that the bus for St Johns children picks up from the residential side of the A4361 so that children do not need to cross the road. Cllr Woodward will liaise with Andrew George-Perutz to identify any further action the Parish Council can take.

Millennium Bench. Cllr Scott has appraised the bench and concluded that it is able to be repaired. Cllr Scott undertook to find someone who could do this.

Knotweed. Before his resignation Cllr Saunders had sent letters as requested to Wiltshire Council and the landowner urging them to give the matter their earliest attention. The Parish Council has no other power in this matter.

6. Reports

a. Finance

At the year end the council has £5,553 to carry over. None of this is committed money as the long-term projects of defibrillators and A4361 are complete. £50 is a cheque paid to Link which was not cashed. A further £50 is owed to the church for church rental (not paid or invoiced). The precept of £5,357.00 has already been made.

Bills paid since the last meeting.

£50 Link reissues (grant)
£20 Hall rental March
£35 Data Protection payment
£1810 A4361 final payment
£396 Website maintenance and hosting

Bank Accounts

A new banking mandate is required in order to remove the previous chair and vice-chair and add Cllrs Woodward and Scott. A new bank account will be opened with the same signatories to avoid bank charges.

Audit

The exemption from audit form was completed to avoid external audit and associated fees. All forms which would be put on the council website that would be sent to the external auditor. The external auditor (PKJ Littlejohn) can then verify and cross check the required documentation if they choose to do so. The first of these, summary receipts and payments, is ready for upload.

Insurance

The 3-year insurance contract has expired. Cllr Scott will evaluate the suggested renewal.

b. Planning

PL/2023/01491. East Farm Winterbourne Monkton SN4 9NW

Erection of Oak Framed Outbuilding comprising of Office and Storage

Cllr Pattison reported that the Parish Council had commented that the Parish Council had no objections to the application as it stood but any amendment which may result in increased traffic egress to A4361 would be a concern.

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

c. Emergency and Flooding.

Cllr Woodward has been working on finalising the Emergency Plan which is nearing publication. Councillors agreed to hold a special meeting in June to finalise the plan. A waterproof container will be housed at The New Inn with the gel sandbags and a copy of the plan with contact details. Cllr Scott will check with the church that a small amount of the gel bags can be held there as the church is more easily accessible from the properties on the opposite side of the bourne.

d. Footpaths.

Cllr Woodward will determine whether the issues with the surface of School Lane Footpath have been reported and also ascertain the status of the proposed repairs to the footpaths at School Lane Footpath bridge and at Christmas House/Tonic which get very muddy in the winter.

e. Roads

Cllr Ramsey had now stood down from the council but reported that Wiltshire Council had confirmed the closure of the A4361 for resurfacing at Winterbourne Monkton in September 2023. Temporary fillings had been made by a different team

working without a road closure who had been loose filling the holes to make them less deep. This is an improvement, but the surface is still far from acceptable.

f Community Building

Neighbours to the Community Building had raised objections to the licence application and an enquiry had been held with the licencing authority. The licencing hours had been reduced from 11pm to 10.30pm. The hall trustees must advise the residents of adjacent properties if a licensable activity is to be held in the hall.

8. Matters Arising from Annual Parish Meeting

The issue of potholes on A4361 was the main concern raised at the Annual Meeting. This is ongoing. The flooding of the soakaway by Winterbourne Lodge will be reported on MyWilts when in flood. The soakaway is also on the regular Wiltshire Council sump cleaning list.

Reduction of speed to 20mph on roads within both villages was favourably received. This has become more of a problem since the speed reduction on A4361 implementation which resulted in National Speed Limit signs being placed at the entrances to both villages, thus implying that it was safer to drive faster on the narrow roads within the villages than on the A4361. It is too late to submit a proposal for the next LHFIG meeting, but the clerk will investigate for next LHFIG in the summer. Lighting of Lower School Lane Footpath was not deemed necessary, and this project will be cancelled with no further action.

The Annual meeting was reminded that the painting of Berwick Bassett Bridge remained an outstanding project. It was understood that ex Cllr Saunders had the paint for the bridge. This will be verified, and a working party sought.

Cllr Pattison suggested that a note be sent to all residents outlining the decisions arising from the Annual Parish Meeting including the options available for the Open Spaces Grant. This would refer to plans produced by The New Inn and an on-line survey.

9. Play and Activity Equipment – Open Spaces Contribution

Cllr Woodward declared an interest in this item. The favoured option remains that the money be used to create a play area at the pub with the money given in the form of a grant. This would leave the long-term ownership and responsibilities with the pub and not the Parish Council. Cllr Woodward, as owner of The New Inn, also expressed a desire to open up land for allotments and improve access to The New Inn across the bourne and also from Berwick Bassett. The land proposed is not the garden of The New Inn but the field land around The New Inn Garden which is designated agricultural land and for which Change of Use may be required. The Open Spaces Grant can be used to support all these projects. Councillors will continue to explore finding land for a restful garden in Winterbourne Monkton and a wildlife hide or exploration area in Berwick Bassett. Cllr Woodward will produce a summary of the proposals ready to circulate to residents for their input.

10. Outstanding Items from 2022/23

Cllr Woodward will address the list of outstanding issues from the March meeting with members of the previous Council to determine their status and need.

11. Confirmation of items for press release

It was decided that it was early days for the new council and no Press Release would be made

12. Date of Next Meetings

The next full meeting of the council will be held on July 5th. It is planned to hold an interim meeting of the current council which will finalise the Emergency Plan and co-opt new councillors to any vacancies available. This is planned for 7th June if vacancies for co-option are available then.

Councillors decided that it would be preferable to hold meetings in the Community Hall. A donation would be made to the church to compensate for the letting charges.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

