

Oberwick Bassett and Winterbourne Monkton Parish Council

Minutes

Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 5th April 2023 at 7.30pm at
Winterbourne Monkton Community Hall

Present – Cllr Mark Saunders (chair), Cllr Colin Pattison, Cllr Helen Ramsay,
Cllr Ben Woodward
County Cllr Jane Davies
Mrs Janice Pattison (clerk)

1. Introduction and Welcome

Cllr Saunders welcomed residents of the villages and thanked everyone for coming.

2. Apologies

Cllr Philip Scott, One resident

3. Minutes of Previous Annual Parish Meetings

The minutes were accepted as a representation of the meeting and signed by the chair

4. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

Any matters arising will be covered elsewhere in the minutes.

5. Chairman's Report – Cllr Mark Saunders

A report had been circulated to everyone in both villages outlining the work of the council in the past year. Cllr Saunders added that long term projects had come to fruition including the transfer of the Community Hall from the developers via Wiltshire Council to the Charitable Trust and the renewal of the defibrillators.

6. Financial Summary – clerk

The clerk reported that Parish Council finances are good with around £5000 in credit. This was a heavy spending year. The three defibrillators were replaced at a cost of £3800. The implementation of the speed reduction on A4361 cost another £3000. These were paid for from accumulation of savings. There was also a donation to the Jubilee Party and to local service groups such as Air Ambulance and Link. It has been decided that the Parish Council will only fund 2 defibrillators when the contract comes up for renewal and the other will be paid for by fund-raising. This saves money that can help fund upcoming projects. The Parish Council part of the Council Tax bill for each household has been kept low as a result of savings.

7. County Councillor Jane Davies to talk about Wiltshire Council Issues

County Cllr Jane Davies complemented the Parish Councillors for their hard work. She reported that times were financially challenging for Wiltshire Council and they had needed to increase the rate by the maximum permitted including the Social Levy in order to maintain services. Cllr Davies reported that 38% of the entire Wiltshire Council budget (£176 million) was spent on Adult Social Care, 19% on Childrens Safeguarding, 9% on highways, 10% on waste services and 2% on leisure and library

services as well as schools and other services. Cllr Davies advised that she had been working with the Parish Council during the year supporting the campaign for road surface improvement and helping with the transition of the Community Hall to its Charitable Status

8. Discussion about Wiltshire Council Issues

There was much complaint about the surface of the roads in the community and the poor drainage during the very wet weather. Resident A asked about the soakaway opposite Monkton Lea which has not been functioning several times over the winter leading to flood water several inches deep across the road. The soakaway is on private property, but Wiltshire Council installed the soakaway to replace a large sump which worked better but which left deep open water. Wiltshire Council have cleared the drain this year and it is on Wiltshire Council regular drainage clearance programme. There is also an issue with the drainage at 190 Winterbourne Monkton where the drain soaks into a private garden and at Fraxinus House where a spring which used to flow to a pond now runs to a drain onto private land. Most open ditches that used to run to the bourne many years ago were filled in during a period of many years of dry weather. There is no official record of these ditches.

Many residents commented on the holes in the road, primarily on the A4361 by Winterbourne Monkton where the rumble strips are now decaying so badly and taking away the surface. This is by the bus stop where the children wait to go to school. Vehicles swerve to avoid the holes or reduce speed suddenly. Resident B commented on the danger to pedestrians from flying pieces of road surface.

It was advised that all residents used the MyWilts App to report any issues and not assume that someone else had done it. Resident C advised that he had made regular reports to no avail and now was taking legal action. Cllr Jane Davies confirmed that the A4361 is on the priority list for resurfacing. Wiltshire Council has been given £6 million pounds for road repairs. The contractor has changed from Ringway to Milestone.

Resident C suggested that a temporary speed limit may be appropriate because of the condition of the road.

Cllr Ramsay agreed to ask for the timelines for repairs to A4361 to be confirmed by Wiltshire Highways and to contact the Police (Philip Wilkinson) to ask whether a temporary speed limit was possible.

It was noted that the speed reduction isn't observed by all vehicles. It was confirmed that the speed limit needed to be below 40mph for community speedwatch. The police have previously advised that they consider the A4361 too dangerous for police speed monitoring due to visibility of the police from traffic which then slows too rapidly with the potential to cause accidents.

Other residents commented on potholes on the main Winterbourne Monkton Village Road, in particular the junction of the village road with Private Road and the road surface where the road flooded, particularly by the soakaway. (Resident D)

Cllr Saunders advised that Andrew George-Perutz had carried out a lot of work to get the bus for St Johns School children to pick up at the North Bound bus stop, so children do not need to cross the A4361 in a morning. County Councillor Jane Davies advised that this would be considered when the tender for the bus contract is renewed. Wiltshire Council had recently resurfaced lower School Lane Footpath. This was much needed. Resident B commented that although a digger had been used to clear some of the path there was little preparation before the new surface was laid and weeds are growing through the surface only weeks after the surface was laid.

9. Proposal for use of Open Spaces Grant

An amount of money around £30,000 is available to provide recreational space within the 2 villages. This has come from the developers of Old Dairy Lane through a section 106 agreement but there is no land available on that development which can be used for this purpose. There is 10 years to spend the money otherwise it passes to Wiltshire Council. Cllr Woodward outlined the proposals considered to date. These include some nature hides in Berwick Bassett, a trim trail potentially in the car park of the Community Hall, a community garden and a play area. The Parish Council owns no land on which to provide any of these facilities. Cllr Saunders has approached a local landowner to see if they would donate, sell or rent a plot of land in Winterbourne Monkton but there has been no response.

Cllr Woodward informed the meeting that The New Inn has offered to host a Childrens' playground adding additional funding and providing ongoing maintenance and insurance. The playground would be open to all children not just pub customers, but the pub would manage opening hours. Resident B thought that the insurance for the playground would be prohibitive but Cllr Woodward replied that had been investigated.

Cllr Woodward said that The New Inn has also applied for a grant in order to provide allotments on the land behind the pub.

10. Arrangements for Coronation of King Charles III

Several events will take place in Winterbourne Monkton over the weekend of the Coronation. These include a flower festival and teas at the church on Coronation Day, an event at The New Inn on the evening of Coronation Day and a lunchtime 'street' party in the car park at the Community Centre on Sunday. All residents are encouraged to attend the lunch. It is a bring your own lunch with a drink for a toast provided by the Parish Council. There is a committee organising this event and more will be communicated by them.

11. Suggestions for Upcoming Parish Projects

i. Speed reduction to 20mph on village roads. The speed limit along the roads within the villages is National Speed Limit. This is now indicated by road signs at junctions because the speed limit on the A4361 is 50mph. The first stage in the application process would be to check speed travelled is low enough. Residents were in favour of starting this process. Cllr Saunders also remarked that visual markers and road narrowing might help slow traffic. Volunteers will be sought to maintain Parish Council provided planters at the entrances to the villages. County Cllr Jane Davies also suggested contacting Caroline Thomas who is the Marlborough East councillor with responsibilities including roads and transport with photographs of the confusing signage at Berwick Bassett.

ii. Lighting of Lower School Lane Footpath. Residents considered that lighting wasn't required. Solar lighting was considered but the overhead canopy was prohibitive. It was suggested that the landowner would be happy if the Parish Council removed overhand and reduced the height of the hedge which borders the path.

iii. Berwick Bassett Bridge. Resident F commented that the bridge needs painting. Paint is already available. Volunteers will be sought, perhaps in the village clean up.

12. Update on new Community Hall

Cllr Saunders gave a brief summary of the evolution of the Community Hall leading to its establishment as a Charity. He demonstrated the new blinds paid for in part by a donation from Marlborough Area Board

A licence to serve alcohol until 11pm has been applied for. Resident E said that there are objections to this from residents of Old Dairy Lane, particularly those who live in adjoining properties. An enquiry will be held with the licencing authority. Residents are concerned about the late departure of people from the hall, noisy congregations in the car park and car headlights. Cllr Saunders advised that these would be controlled by monitoring lettings.

The clerk reminded the meeting that the Parish Council was not the applicant for the licence and this was the responsibility of the Community Hall Charity. The Parish Council had been consulted. The councillors involved in the application were not included in the discussion and formation of the response to the licencing authority. The Parish Council had recommended that residents of Old Dairy Lane were directly consulted rather than relying on the notice outside the hall. Cllr Ramsay had undertaken this.

Cllr Saunders told the meeting that decibel monitors would be installed inside the hall and on the perimeter fence in the car park. These would be set to a decibel limit of 85 decibels.

Cllr Saunders had written in the annual report about trespassers in the grounds of the Community Hall. Neighbours asked him to clarify but there was no further information.

Cllr Woodward was asked whether complaints had been made about the noise from The New Inn. He confirmed that complaints had been made about the noise generated by outside musical performances.

A resident (G - next door to The New Inn) thought that neighbouring residents should be more tolerant to allow the growth of local services

Resident F asked if a plaque would be erected to Mrs Gantlett as the originator of the idea for the hall. Cllr Saunders replied that her adult children had been consulted and was waiting for a reply.

Councillor Saunders closed the meeting announcing that he would resign as councillor and chair on April 30th.

