

# MONKSILVER PARISH COUNCIL

## Draft Minutes of the Quarterly Parish Council Meeting held at 7:30 pm on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at the EMN Hall.

**Present:** Cllrs. Mervyn Orchard-Lisle (chair), Andrew Howe (vice-chair), Dan Cotterill, John Stace, Kate Adams, Tina Coggan

1. Apologies: Cllr. Sue Westbury and Carol Juffs, Clerk and County Cllrs. Christine Lawrence and Marcus Kravis.  
Absent: County Cllr. Stephen Griffiths
  2. **The Minutes** of the Quarterly Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2022 were approved.
  3. **Declarations of interest:**  
Mervyn as a member of Monksilver PCC declared an interest in any grant offered for the churchyard.
  4. **Matters arising:**  
4.1 The website was not discussed at the meeting Its development is continuing. ECJ
  5. **Somerset and West Somerset & Taunton Councillors' reports**  
Mervyn reported that he had received an email of apology from Cllr Kravis for tonight's meeting. It had included the reports for September and November, but he had mislaid the October one.  
Mervyn will forward these to all councillors. MOL
  6. **Planning Application:**  
7.1 The Notley Arms: Noisy Extract Fan – matters are on-going with no update to report MOL  
yet.  
7.2 Wayside – Now approved
- 
7. **Flooding Issues and Updates**  
  
Kate reported again that the proposed installation of the telemetry device is moving very slowly. She had been notified by Emma Giffard at the Somerset Rivers Authority that she was moving on elsewhere. It is not known who would take over, but the change suggested a possible further delay. Emma had reported that they were considering an alternative site for the device on the Pond Orchard bridge. KA

The Flood report following the flooding problems of 16<sup>th</sup> August was issued with the previous meeting's minutes. Some work has been initiated by Somerset County Council and by Wessex Water in the last few months, for which the parish is grateful. However

there is still much to be done as there are still blocked drains on Beech Tree Hill and elsewhere. In due course the County Council have agreed to carry out a walk-about with Katherine Tyson, Christine Lawrence, Kevin Bridgewater and parishioners to establish the detailed work required, but there seems to be no timescale for this urgent action. In the meantime the Flood Report must remain as a current summary of the problems.

Christine Lawrence's suggestion for a lengthsman to be employed, shared between a number of parishes, is still an excellent proposal, such an appointment being funded from the Local Community Network which itself is funded from SCC.

Bryony continues to live in fear of future heavy rain-storms causing flash floods, and Viv's issues have not yet been resolved. There are measures that Bryony can initiate such as boards which would lessen the risk of water getting into her house.

Sue had submitted a report to Mervyn earlier in the day, part of which Mervyn read out. Sue was suggesting various changes to the Flood Plan with changes in the people involved. Andrew was reluctant about being one of the coordinators, preferring to be out in the village clearing the problem drains rather than telephoning people. A dedicated WhatsApp Group for the flood group was suggested. Any changes need to be agreed amongst themselves.

SW  
KA  
AH

Concern was expressed about giving advice, as this must not be construed as proper professional advice. Any ad hoc advice must only be given by councillors as from individuals, rather than representing the council. This is because it was not certain if the council's public liability insurance would cover it. The policy small print needs to be investigated.

ECJ

It is understood that the next road-sweep will be in The New Year. Kate commented that Coombe Cross Hill was on a different schedule to the rest of the village.

## 8. Highways Report

John has continued to put pressure on the Highways department at Somerset Council. Unfortunately Becky Pearson has now left the Council's employment. He was now in contact with Katherine Tyson, a senior traffic engineer.

Regarding the speeding issue, Katherine Tyson had suggested that John should talk to Daniel Cox at the Avon and Somerset Police who should be able to give advice. John has done this and a meeting is being set up to discuss ways of reducing the speed of traffic through the village. Potential traffic calming measures will be discussed, but John assured the meeting that sleeping policemen were not going to be considered. It was repeated that the roads in Monksilver are too narrow to allow central white lines.

JS

JS

Extending the 30mph limit to beyond Inglewood is still considered a top priority. Adopting flashing signs that record the speed a vehicle is travelling, to make the driver more aware in the speed limit, is still an option.

It was noted that a road closure is planned between Raleigh's Cross and Fair Cross for 30 days commencing 5<sup>th</sup> December. This will put extra traffic through Monksilver, including large vehicles. It was noted that "Road Closure" signs and "Diversion" signs remained in position for a long time; it would be helpful if they were removed immediately after they were no longer valid.

Concerns still exist about road safety at Fair Cross and Elworthy Cross junctions.

**9. Pathways and Deer Management Group:**

DC

Nothing to report.

**11. Neighbourhood Watch:**

The Police publish a monthly newsletter, which can be seen on the web.

The Neighbourhood Watch post below Orchard House had earlier been reported as having fallen down. It was felt that new Neighbourhood Watch signs would be a more effective deterrent as it would suggest more active members of the Neighbourhood Watch team. It is understood that they are freely available from Police Stations.

TC

**12. Finance.**

With the Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer being unable to attend, most of the financial matters were not discussed.

ECJ

A contract of Employment still needs to be drawn up stating that clerk's salary payments which are being paid gross to the Clerk and Financial Officer, with the responsibility for payment of tax to be made by her direct to HMRC. It was agreed that all cheque payments to Carol should be signed by the chairman and vice-chairman.

The change of address for statements and cheque book issues is nearly correct at Natwest. The addressee still needs to be changed, but matters are with Natwest. Due to the protracted problems with address changes, it had earlier been decided to wait before considering the need for on-line banking. However potential payments to HMRC initially triggered the enquiry, but as these are now paid by personal debit card, there is now no current need for on-line banking.

It was agreed that the normal annual grant to the Somerset and Avon Air Ambulance should be increased to £150.00. A cheque needs to be prepared by Carol.

EJC

Similarly, it was agreed that the grant to the Monksilver churchyard fund will also go up to £150. Mervyn reported that path through the churchyard is well used by parishioners and the public generally as it is part of Somerset's hallmark Coleridge Way. There had

been a request to make it wider and usable by wheelchair users, who found it impossible to use in its present form. A cheque needs to be prepared by Carol.

EJC

The Precept needs to be requested and submitted by 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023. Last year's Precept had been £3,000 and it was felt that it could be lower this year. Mervyn and Carol have been in discussion about it, and Carol is investigating what reserves need to exist for equipment that will eventually need replacing.

EJC

**14. Area Panel Meetings**

There is still no news of the reinstatement of Dunster Area Panel Meetings which is a vital networking forum for the wider community, except that they have not yet agreed boundaries.

**15. Village Defibrillator Update**

KA

There had been a seminar in Williton for people to learn how to use the defibrillator. Nine people from Monksilver had attended.

A fund-raising event (Wreath making) is to be held on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

SW

The group organizing the Queen's Jubilee celebrations had voted that any excess funds should go into the Defibrillator fund.

Tina stated that she still had some signs to pin up, one on the noticeboard in the Notley car park, one at the EMN Hall and one where the defibrillator had earlier been sited. She also has the necessary scissors and gloves. Andrew reported that he had a laminator if that was needed.

TC

**16. BT Openreach Update**

Fallen telephone lines: John had been repeatedly chasing Open Reach Health and Safety department. They have agreed that a new pole is needed, but even though there is an urgency, there is no commitment regarding timing.

**17. Matters outside Monksilver**

The shop in Carhampton has now closed. However it was noted that Post Office Services would be available there every Thursday between 2:00pm and 3:30pm.

**18. Any Other Business**

It was reported that the proposed shop in the Notley would be opening, but only with limited merchandise.

Sue had reported that she would be issuing the next newsletter in early January. It was requested that a reminder about bonfires in the proximity of thatched roofs needs to be included.

Tina announced that, because she was moving house and would no longer be a Monksilver resident, she would be resigning as a councillor. She will wait until she has exchanged contracts. Mervyn thanked her for her valuable service as a councillor.

**SW**

Tina also reported that with her departure, a vacancy exists for administrator of Monksilver Movers. So far, she had not found any volunteers to take it on. They now had a new facility from BicWatch who had an electric vehicle which could accommodate wheelchair users.

**19. Dates of Next four meetings**

**ALL**

27<sup>th</sup> February 2023

15<sup>th</sup> May 2023

14<sup>th</sup> August 2023

27<sup>th</sup> November 2023

The Meeting closed at approximately 9.10 pm.