

MONKSILVER PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Quarterly Parish Council Meeting held at 7:30 pm on Monday, 27th February 2023 at the EMN Hall.

Present: Cllrs. Mervyn Orchard-Lisle (chair), Andrew Howe (vice-chair), Dan Cotterill, Kate Adams.

1. Apologies: Cllr. Sue Westbury and Cllr. John Stace. County Cllr. Christine Lawrence
Absent: County Cllr. Marcus Kravis, District Cllr. Stephen Griffiths

2. **The Minutes** of the Quarterly Meeting held on 28th November 2022 were approved.

3. **Declarations of interest:**
None.

4. **Matters arising:**

Sue has advised that she has not sent out a Newsletter as there was very little to write in it, except the advice that parishioners should not light bonfires in the proximity of thatched roofs. She requested items that would be usefully included in the next newsletter. SW

Kate reported that Monksilver Movers had been wound up, since firstly there were now only two people who used the facility, and there were other organizations who could provide a similar service, namely Wivey Link and Bicklifts. There is still a small amount left in the Monksilver Movers fund.

5. **Somerset West and Taunton Councillors' reports:**

Mervyn reported that he had still not received the reports for September and November, as offered by Marcus. With no county or district councillors present, there were no new reports.

6. **Vacancy for a new Parish Councillor:**

With Tina's resignation due to moving outside the village, it was agreed to advertise within the village for a new councillor. This will be done through the village WhatsApp and by a notice on the village noticeboard. If anyone knows of a potential councillor then they can be advised direct. MOL

7. **Vacancy for Parish Clerk:**

With Carol's resignation as Clerk resulting from an accident, it was agreed to advertise within the village for a new clerk. This will be done through the village WhatsApp and by a notice on the village noticeboard. If anyone knows of a potential clerk then they can be advised direct. MOL

In the meantime, until a new clerk is found, it will be necessary to divide the clerk's responsibilities for action by the parish councillors.

- Mervyn agreed to take the Minutes. **MOL**
- Kate agreed to monitor all incoming emails sent to the monksilverparishcouncil@gmail.com address and to distribute relevant ones as necessary. **KA**
- Mervyn will ask Sue if she is happy to take on her previous role as Responsible Finance Officer. **MOL SW**
- Other responsibilities as they arise can be offered to Andrew or Dan.

8. **Planning Applications:**

The Notley Arms: Noisy Extract Fan – matters are on-going with no update to report yet. **MOL**

3 Woodford Cottages, Woodford: It was agreed that the Council had no objections to the proposals. Mervyn will confirm to ENPA. **MOL**

9. **Flooding Issues and Updates**

Kate again reported again that the proposed installation of the telemetry device is moving very slowly. Emma Giffard has now left the Somerset Rivers Authority, and it is still not known who would take over. The option of an alternative site for the device has now been discarded, and it will be where originally planned near Kate's house.

Regarding the blocked drains, Beech Tree Hill had been cleared again. In answer to the Flood report prepared following the flooding problems of 16th August, the County Council is still to carry out a walk-about with Katherine Tyson, Christine Lawrence, Kevin Bridgwater 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. It was further noted that one drain was completely mudded over, this being on the straight section of Birchanger Lane leading up from Orchard House. Andrew agreed to follow this up. It seems that there is one particular telehandler which is causing the problems in Birchanger Lane. **AH**

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. It is understood that ENPA have someone in this role, a Richard Gay, but his contact details are not currently known.

Bryony continues to live in fear of future heavy rain-storms causing flash floods. There are measures that Bryony can initiate such as boards which would lessen the risk of water getting into her house.

Viv has a major concern in that flood water from the highway is not being collected by the drains in the road, but are being discharged down her driveway and flooding her yard and buildings, this regularly costing her large amounts of money; Mervyn believes

that there are measures which the council can carry out to collect their water before it does so much damage (such as a continuous drain across the whole width of the entrance). Kate reported that she would be attending a West Somerset Flood Group meeting in Sampford Brett on 1st March and she will raise the issue there. **KA**

The meeting was not sure how far Sue had progressed with the idea of a dedicated WhatsApp Group for the flood group. **SW**

Kate referred to a document which had been circulated in early January by the WWT entitled Natural Flood Management toolkit and Flood maps. She will circulate another link so that all can read it. **KA**
All

A road-sweep of Combe Cross Hill had taken place on 13th February. Whilst this had taken place, it was commented that it had not been particularly effective as the sweep had not been extended to the edge of the highway, thereby missing much of the mud, leaves and general detritus. Unfortunately the machinery used is more relevant to suburban roads than country lanes. The next road-sweeps are scheduled for 3rd July and 20th November.

10. Highways Report:

John and Mervyn have met Daniel Cox of the Avon and Somerset Police on 14th December and obtained his advice. Unless it can be shown that the traffic speed through the village is already lower than 20mph, it is unlikely that the council will agree to formal lowering of the speed limit. Dan will organise devices for monitoring the existing speeds.

One option of making the road safer for pedestrians is to delineate “pedestrian zones” by marking white lines down both sides of the road. 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 also still an option. Dan has agreed to come to the full Council meeting on 15th May.

John and Mervyn are meeting Katherine Tyson on 28th March to discuss the outcome of the monitoring and the future options. **JS**
MOL

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

John is also trying to arrange a meeting with Kevin Bridgewater and has suggested either the 17th or 18th April. No date has yet been confirmed. **JS**

Andrew noted that the central section of the upper part of Birchanger Lane was now so high that some cars were bottoming out. He will advise County Highways of this. **AH**

11. Pathways and Deer Management Group:

MOL commented that the Church are investigating the possibility of obtaining a grant from the Somerset Community Foundation for upgrading the Coleridge Way footpath through the churchyard so that it is accessible for wheelchair users. **MOL**

Dan reported that there are many deer infected by TB. A scientific survey is in progress.

Neighbourhood Watch:

With Tina having left the council, there is nothing to report. As earlier reported, the Neighbourhood Watch post below Orchard House has fallen down, and a new sign would be an 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

12. Finance:

MOL confirmed that a precept of £2,500 had been requested.

The change of address for statements and cheque book issues, plus the addressee details were being dealt with by Natwest. It was agreed to defer further chasing of NatWest until we have a new clerk when a new contact will be necessary.

A cheque for £60 was signed in settlement of the EMN Hall's invoice for the hiring of the meeting room.

13. Local Network: Nothing to report - still awaiting a decision on boundaries.

14. Village Defibrillator update:

A fund-raising event (Wreath making) was held on 4th December 2022. This raised £282, for which many thanks to all concerned. Kate is paying this into the Parish bank account. **KA**

The group organizing the Queen's Jubilee celebrations had voted that any excess funds should go into the Defibrillator fund. £250 has been paid in.

15. BT Openreach Update:

Fallen telephone lines: A new pole has now been erected. The cables have been re-hung, but there are still Health and Safety issues with the trees.

16. Matters outside Monksilver: Nothing to report.

17. Any Other Business:

It was not known when the proposed shop in the Notley would be opening.

18. Dates of the next four meetings:

15th May 2023 (including the annual parish meeting at 7:00pm)

14th August 2023, 27th November 2023 and 26th February 2024.

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