

MONKSILVER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Open Meeting held on Monday 13th May 2024 at 7.00 in the EMN Hall.

Councillors Present:

Mervyn Orchard-Lisle – Chairman

Andrew Howe – Vice-Chairman

MPC Councillors:

Katherine Adams – Retiring Councillor

Dan Cotterill

Christopher Hill

Somerset Councillor Christine Lawrence

Public Gallery:

Lydia Appleton

Paul Appleton

Michelle Gough

In attendance:

Mary Jacobs (clerk)

- 1, Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Stace and Sue Westbury (Retiring). Cllr. Lawrence submitted apologies from Marcus Kravis. (Christine is attending the Monksilver PC meeting and Marcus is attending Dunster PC meeting).
- 2, The minutes of the annual open meeting held on 13th May 2023 were approved and signed by the chairman.
3. There were no matters arising.
4. The chairman opened the meeting to the public.

Michelle Gough asked to raise a question about the water quality in the Monksilver river, as on occasion she has noticed that there is sewage seeping into the water course.

Dan had also observed that over a period of about three days in February, sewage had been discharging into the river. He showed the meeting a video recording of this event.

Dan reported that the pumps were old. It may be possible to install new and improved pumps. Back in the 19th century rain water and sewage drained into the same system. It maybe that this continues in some of the older properties drainage systems. This creates problems during heavy and continuous rainfall.

Mervyn confirmed that he and some of the parish councillors were meeting with the Environment Agency on Monday. The stream becomes a main river by the bridge at Liz Price's house. The Environment Agency is responsible for rivers. Wessex water can install new pumps. Michelle confirmed that a member of her family will attend the meeting with the Environment Agency.

The Nettlecombe Field Study Centre monitors the river and has confirmed that it is one of the cleanest rivers locally.

Andrew confirmed that the Environment Agency has been monitoring by lifting the sewer covers and checking the sewage flows. The covers were last replaced about 15 years ago. He also stated that any cracks will attract rainwater seepage.

The councillors noted that drainage is a low priority for planning applications. This is not consistent with the increased volumes from new development into existing drains. If a water course is not nearby then a soakaway must be installed, so that only sewage discharges into the sewers.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.