

MONKSILVER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the quarterly Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 25th November 2024
at 7.30 p.m.in the EMN Hall, Monksilver

Present:

Mervyn Orchard-Lisle, Chairman,

Andrew Howe, Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Paul Appleton, Dan Cotterill, Thomas Murray, John Stace

Izzy Sylvester, Village Agent

In attendance Mary Jacobs (clerk)

Public Gallery

Caroline Hayley, Mike Hayley, Frances Vere Hodge

- 1.0 **The Chairman** welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mervyn stated that the order of the agenda will differ from that published, so that the public could comment on No. 1 Pond Orchard and then leave .
- 1.1 There were no declarations of interest.
- 2.0 **Apologies were received from** Somerset Councillors Christine Lawrence and Marcus Kravis and MPC Councillor, Lydia Appleton.
- 3.0 **Village Agent**, Izzy Sylvester gave a briefing on the role of village agents, including the collaborative partnership working with GP surgeries. One to one home visits are available. Appointments can also be made to meet with Izzy at the West Somerset Healthcare surgery at Williton on a Wednesday morning. Izzy will provide Paul with an information leaflet to be included in the next MPC newsletter. Further information is available from the website <https://somersetagents.org/>. Telephone 01823 331222 to request a referral.
- 4.0 The Somerset Code of Conduct published July 2024 was adopted by the Councillors. It is available to view at <https://monksilver.org/>.
- 5.1 Thomas Murray had applied for the casual vacancy of Monksilver Parish Councillor. His application had previously been circulated to the Councillors for their consideration. No questions had been raised.
- 5.2 **John proposed** that Tom be appointed to fill the vacancy. This was **seconded by Paul**. All Councillors were in unanimous agreement and Tom was welcomed to the Council.
- 5.3 Tom signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and was handed a copy of the Somerset Code of Contact.
- 6.0. **The minutes of the quarterly meeting held on 12th August 2024** were approved and then signed by the Chairman. John requested that more detailed numbering be used for future minutes, for ease of referring to items.
- 7.0 **Matters arising:-**
- 7.1 **The issue regarding the Notley Inn** is ongoing.

7.2 **The communication strategy** has been deferred until February. The clerk is liaising with the NALC Micro Councils network before drafting a simple strategy with Paul.

8.0 **No. 1 Pond Orchard.**

8.1 Caroline Hayley outlined the historic position regarding the property. She had previously sent photographic evidence to the clerk.

8.2 The Councillors held a lengthy discussion. They expressed concern at the white goods etc. which had been dumped in the back garden and which had lain for a considerable time without being cleared. Reports of vermin running in the garden were noted.

8.3 The clerk was instructed to write to Magna Housing Association requesting a site visit with the Councillors to establish an action plan for the future.

9.0 **Somerset Councillors' Reports.** None had been submitted.

10.0 **Finance:-**

10.1 The following payments were approved and the cheques were signed by Andrew and Mervyn:-

SALC, Clerks Training re communication strategy	£35	
SALC, Councillor Essentials Training	<u>£50</u>	Total £85
Paul Appleton, reimbursement defibrillator pads	£71.94	
EMN Hall hire for 2024-25. The invoice had been Received after the agenda publication	£60	
Donation to EMN Hall refurbishment	<u>£150</u>	Total £210
Donation to Monksilver PCC re Church path	£150	
Donation to Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance	£150	

10.2. The Councillors also approved the following:-

Donation to Wiveliscombe First Responders re Defib training. £50

Proposed by Andrew and seconded by John. Unanimously agreed by all the Councillors.

Payee name to be provided

D. Sykes, Black Cat Computers re website management when the invoice is submitted.

10.3 The income and expenditure was reconciled with the bank statement on 30th September 2024 at £14,624.67. Of this £7,294.60 is held in fixed non-transferable reserves for the speed control and defibrillator and £4,035.50 in general transferable reserves. This leaves a working balance of £924.52. After payment of 10.1 and 10.2 above, totalling £716.94 the balance will be further reduced to £207.58. This is on-budget for the final fiscal quarter as parish councils should not have surplus funds at the year end.

10.4 **Agreeing the 2025-2026 budget and setting the Precept.** The clerk had previously circulated the first draft of the proposed budget, showing estimated expenditure for the year of £4,200. The defibrillator expenses are being included in the precept from April 2025, as the costs are no longer fundraised. The £4,200 is reduced by £900 saved from unclaimed clerk's salary. **The Councillors approved the £3,300 budget for 2025-2026.** Proposed by Andrew and seconded by John and agreed unanimously. The agreed budget will be published on the parish notice board and the website in accordance with the LGA regulations.

10.5 **The NatWest bank account.** Andrew had been unable to detach the bank account from the farm accounts. He confirmed that NatWest had linked the accounts without mandate. He had also been unable to secure a new cheque book for MPC. The matter is now urgent, as Andrew will be standing down as Vice-Chairman and a Councillor, as he has now moved from the village. It was agreed that Paul will replace Andrew as a signatory.

It was resolved that the clerk write to the bank, without prejudice, detailing the timeline of the letters, mandates, requests and contacts. If after one month the matter remains unresolved then the information will be sent to the Financial Services Ombudsman. A draft of the letter is to be approved by the councillors before being sent recorded delivery.

11.0 **The minutes from the Local community network update** had previously been circulated.

11.1 Mervyn stated that the Minehead and Watchet LCN is increasingly being used to disseminate information by Somerset Council and to make decisions. As no one was able to commit to regular attendance, Councillors will rotate attendance at the future meetings.

12.0 **Highways**

12.1 **Speed control update.** There is still quite a lot of work to do. John is in ongoing communication with Somerset Highways. The work is being undertaken by a sub-contractor on the Highway's behalf.

12.2 **Vehicles limited to 7.5 tons** through the village. Discussion with Highways is ongoing. It will probably take 12 months to finalise. The truck that couldn't get up the hill past the hall had a container on its deck fully laden with 24 tons! The owner of the haulage lorry which became stuck fully supports the ban, as it will be flagged on the sat-nav.

13.0 **Flooding and drainage.**

13.1 The drain further up Beech Tree Hill is still blocked. It was secured when installed, so that the flood monitoring team are unable to remove for emergency clearance. The lower drain, which has been cleared is taking the run-off.

13.2 Somerset Council will replace the drain in the equine yard at Birds Hill before Christmas.

13.3 John attended the Flood User Group at Avalon Marshes on 11th November.

14.0 **Neighbourhood Watch**

14.1 Lydia posts on the MPC urgent messages WhatsApp and the emailer when Avon and Somerset Police issue an update.

15.0 No **planning applications** have been received.

16.0 **No matters relating to outside of Monksilver** have been received.

17.0 **Any other business:**

17.1 **Bleed Kit.** The clerk has requested more detailed information from Avon and Somerset Police. Paul will ask Caroline and Simon for permission to house in the Donkey House, along with the defibrillator. The cost for the stand will be £199 + VAT, which will be met from the Health and Wellbeing reserve. The clerk is to ascertain the size of the stand. If the installation goes ahead, Dr Tom Murray will support the training. Paul is hoping these

training sessions can be delivered at the same time as those run by the Wiveliscombe First Responders.

17.2 **BT Open Reach.** MPC has been notified that the contract to install fibre to all properties in the village has been postponed.

18.0 **The date of the next meeting** is 24th February 2025 at 7.30 at EMN Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 10.30