

MONKSILVER PARISH COUNCIL,

**Minutes of the quarterly Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 24th February 2025
at 7.30 p.m.in the EMN Hall, Monksilver**

Present:

Mervyn Orchard-Lisle (Chairman), Andrew Howe (Vice Chairman), Councillors Lydia Appleton, Paul Appleton, Dan Cottrell

Apologies:

John Stace, Tom Murray, Mary Jacobs (clerk), Somerset Councillors Christine Lawrence, Marcus Kravis

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Apologies:** As above.
3. The **minutes of the meeting of the 25th November 2024** were approved and signed by the chairman.
- 4a. **The Notley Arms:** Mervyn reported having had a meeting with Joe White, Exmoor's Chief Planning Officer, accompanied by Kevin Walker. Joe White advised that the planning designated use of the building was a public house together with the associated accommodation building; there are many pubs with rooms throughout the country.

This use will remain unless an application to change the use is approved. Any application to change the uses to residential is unlikely to be approved, but there is no suggestion that such an application is being considered.

Agreed no action by MPC.

- 4b. **No.1 Pond Orchard:** Magna Housing Association will have agreed the tenancy terms with the new tenants and will monitor them. Mary will talk to Magna about the river bank. **MEJ**
- 4c. **Bleed Kit:** Mary had reported the kind approval from Caroline that the Bleed Kit can be housed at the Notley Arms near the defibrillator.
5. There were no reports from the **Somerset County Councillors**.
6. **Local Community Network:** No-one had any comments re the appended LCN minutes. The next two LCN meetings are at 10.00am on 10th April and 16th July. Mervyn thought that we should take turns for one of us to attend all these meetings. Paul agreed to attend the one on the 10th April. **PA**

7. **Communication Strategy:** Paul has prepared a Communications Policy and this was distributed with the agenda. This was discussed and it was agreed to amend it to make the requirements of MPC less onerous and less time specific. Mervyn also suggested that whereas the best use of technology should be made, it should not disadvantage those residents who don't have technology skills. **PA**

8. **Councillor resignations and the reallocation of lead roles:** Lydia has resigned and she was thanked for her service to MPC. In addition, Andrew reported that he would be leaving the village and therefore standing down as vice chairman and councillor.

Paul will be taking on the responsibility for flooding issues; John will continue with Highways. With the added role of flooding, Paul will understandably be giving up his role with communications. It was agreed that at the next meeting, the AGM, hopefully with new councillors, all roles will be discussed and someone else will need to take on communications. **PA**

Various names were put forward for approaching to see whether they would be interested in becoming a Parish Councillor. Mary will advertise the vacancies. **MEJ**

9. **Finance:** Mary had summarised the financial situation in the agenda for this meeting. With her being absent, the finance was not discussed but her summary is below. There were no contradictory comments.

The bank statement reconciled at £13,725.79 31st December 2024 of which £13,688.19 is held in reserve accounts, leaving a balance of + £37.60, less payments to be approved and paid: **MEJ**

- SALC, Councillor Training £28
- M E Jacobs, reimbursement of Black Cat invoice £75, and tracked postage to NatWest, totalling £80.30

Leaving a balance of - **£70.70**, with a further payment to Black Cat Computers due before year end 31st March 2025, resulting in a small deficit for 2024-2025.

Acknowledgements of donations received from Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance, EMN Community Hall and Wiveliscombe First Responders.

Confirmation of Precept £2,800 received from Somerset Council.
NatWest Bank update.

10. **Highways:** The 20mph change has taken place, although there are still a few matters to finalise from Somerset County. The Police have erected temporary speed indicator lights (SIDs) at each end of the village on the B3188 just outside the 20mph zone. Reports are coming in that they are slowing the traffic down. There have been several incidents of the signs being rotated by vandals; but several parishioners have put them back the correct way. Andrew said that

he believed the sign outside Burfords was in a dangerous position, particularly for cyclists and pedestrians. This was disputed and other councillors will inspect and make up their own minds.

Mary had earlier reported receiving a proposal from Highways, together with other clerks, that anyone working on the Highway should have mandatory training first. This would include helping to clear flooding debris, monitoring speed limits and trimming private hedges which border the highway. Any power tools would also be forbidden. This received almost universal disagreement from all clerks.

There has been no further progress with Somerset Council banning lorries of over 7.5 tonnes between Elworthy and Faircross.

11. **Flooding and Drainage update:** Paul reported cleaning away the leaves discharged from the Beech Tree Hill footpath. This had been a mammoth task and Monksilver residents should not be expected to do this work. Any future discharges would need to be cleared by Somerset County.
12. **Neighbourhood Watch update:** Lydia said that there was nothing new to report. However, another councillor will need to take on the role.
13. **Planning:** There have been no new planning applications. The only one awaiting a decision is Summerleigh. *Subsequent to the meeting it is noted that this application has been withdrawn.*
14. **Dog waste bins:** After a long discussion, it was decided that MPC would not pursue organizing waste bins and regular collections (proposed by Paul and seconded by Lydia).
15. **Matters outside Monksilver:** None discussed.
16. **Any other business:** Andrew announced that this would be his last parish council. Resulting from which, he was thanked for his many decades of service to the Parish Council.
17. **The dates of the next four meetings** which will be held at the EMN Hall are: **ALL**
 - 12th May at 7.00 p.m. (annual meeting)
 - 11th August at 7.30 p.m.
 - 24th November at 7.30 p.m.
 - 23rd February 2026 at 7.30 p.m

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.10 p.m..