

MINAL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Held on 13 March 2023 At 6.30pm in the Village Hall

Draft for approval on 3 May 2023

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| <p>1. Present:
John Bevan - Chairman
Rob Bailey
Brian Devonshire
Anna Whitehead
Guy Gagen</p> | <p>Apologies Accepted from:
Lucy Kirkpatrick, Adam Kebble</p> <p>In Attendance
Sue Hine, Clerk/RFO
Caroline Thomas, County Councillor</p> |
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Declarations of Interest for Matters being discussed: John Bevan announced his intention to resign in May at the AGM after 17 years of service to the PC. JB and his wife will be moving within the local area. RB led the comments acknowledging JB's contribution as Councillor and in the last 5 years as Chair. The Clerk said that this would result in a vacancy for a Councillor and Chair and asked the existing Councillors to consider if they would like to step up. Previous advertisements have not always been successful so Councillors were asked to approach individuals directly with a view to becoming a Parish Councillor. The Clerk will also draft an ad for Minal News. **Action: Clerk**

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2023

The Minutes were approved and signed.

3. Matters Arising – These had been circulated and an updated Action sheet accompanies these minutes. The main actions have been transferred to Agenda items.

4. Questions from Members of the Public

The Clerk has received a website enquiry from a BBC producer for former resident Chris Hurd. The Clerk will forward this to John Bevan who will get in touch with Chris Hurd.

5. Emergency Plan

The Clerk had circulated a draft for Councillors. The Clerk said that she had used the work done by Rob Bailey and former councillor Deirdre Watson and built on this to provide a practicable document for the PC to use. Building on the SSE presentation the type of emergencies likely to be experienced are severe weather events resulting in loss of power and the government is keen to ensure local communities are resilient in the event of emergency services being overwhelmed. During the Covid 19 pandemic many local people came forward to help and many have also offered to be on the Emergency planning list. The Plan includes a list of resources and volunteers which Guy Gagen, Emergency Plan Co-ordinator acknowledged would need to be kept updated. AW suggested a one-page summary for volunteers and will advise the Clerk of a few corrections. Rob Bailey reported that the village hall committee have approved the use of the village hall as a muster point in the event of an emergency. He is working with Jon Napper to apply for a £15,000 grant from SSE for a container to store emergency materials such as a generator, glow sticks, blankets etc and to build a porch for the village hall to reduce heat loss to the main room. He is working with Jon Napper on quotes from builders for the porch which are required before putting the grant application in. The Clerk said that any application for a generator has to be

backed by a plan to test the generator on a regular basis to ensure it is working in the event of an emergency. There was some discussion about communications in the event of an emergency as if the power goes off mobile phones may no longer work. GG noted that the newer phones (iphone 14 on are satellite enabled). For this reason the Clerk has suggested the default muster point would be the village hall at 10.00am for volunteers to gather in the event of an emergency weather event.

Actions: Clerk to write article for Minal News to communicate emergency planning work and ask for volunteers. Clerk to check all volunteers are happy for details to be stored by PC. Clerk and AW to work on one page summary and corrections. Clerk to look at snow plough and liaise with WCC.

6. Grass Cutting and No mow May

The Village Hall Committee has decided to follow no mow May for the area around the village hall to encourage nesting birds. The Parochial Church Council had also approached JB regarding the church yard and carpark. After some consideration of the extra work when the grass became long and difficulty for visitors to graves and events this suggestion has been shelved. The triangles were also considered but due to the risk for drivers this was considered not suitable.

RB reported that the village gardening club had recently had a talk about creating a wild flower garden and following advice the area has been cut back. The talk also acknowledged the difference between rewilding and wildflower gardens. Milly Carmichael is going to give a talk in the village hall open to all residents.

7. Planning Applications

Poulton Mill Equine Clinic PL/2021/04663 – no further action. CT said that Wiltshire Council is awaiting responses to their conditions from Mr Buthe. Highways have approved the entrance plans.

Werg Gardens PL/2022/09014 – This application was refused and the owners are now reported to be working with their architects on revised plans.

Greenway PL/2023/00156 – Dormer window extension. No objection

Homefarm tree application – JB acknowledged the loss of many trees in the parish but this is likely to be approved for safety reasons.

Rabley Equestrian Centre – Work has been carried out to cover the windows with timber louvered panels but CT reported that many of the hedgerows have been taken out and this has been reported to Enforcement.

CT advised councillors that planning changes will mean that future applications have to demonstrate a 10% bio-diversity gain (although this can include offsetting). Active Travel England will become a statutory consultee.

8. Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Clerk reported that the Referendum vote on the 23 March is being promoted on the village website and Minal Community Facebook Page.

9. LHFI Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group

A new no HGV sign has been erected at the top of Woodlands/Greenway. Martin Cook, Highways Officer, has confirmed that the patch job at the base of Woodlands Road is on Ringway's list. Request to paint No HGV with white lines therefore on hold. County Councillor Caroline Thomas reported that she now holds Cabinet position for Highways at

Wiltshire Council. There is a lot of work outstanding and WC is still awaiting the DoT budget for this year. There are recruitment problems for Highways engineers currently. Lucy Kirkpatrick was unable to attend the meeting but reported that she has submitted the improvement form for the footpath project which will be considered at the next LHFIG meeting.

10. King's Coronation Village Event

John asked if the village sports and social club were organising an event to celebrate the King's coronation in May. RB said that the committee were fully engaged with the village show. JB suggested that the pub might run a village barbecue and the PC could contribute. This was approved by Councillors. **Action: RB will talk to Clare the pub owner/manager.**

11. Clerk Responsible Finance Officer's report

The Clerk will be preparing the Annual Accounts and the Annual Governance and Accountancy Review (AGAR) shortly. The Finance Committee met in October and had recommended maintaining the current level of precept which meets the previous external audit recommendation of having twice precept as reserves and the designated funds for the footpath project. All Councillors had reviewed the budgetary expenditure for 2023-24 in November and approved this recommendation. Reviewing the year to date the Clerk noted that expenditure and income had exceeded other years due to grant applications, CIL money and burial fees and the projects we have completed. The playpark work has been completed and Councillors noted that how smart it looks. The clerk is grateful to Councillor Adam Keble for his continuing input. As we have exceeded the £25k limit the PC will be unable to apply for a Certificate of Exemption and will have an external audit this year. The clerk reported that invoices from Wiltshire Council for the No HGV sign and initial contribution to the footpath project have been received. The accounts were approved by Councillors and signed by Anna Whitehead. The Clerk had circulated the Financial Regulations and Risk Assessment. Subsequent to the meeting Councillors approved the Financial Regulations with no changes and two additions to the Risk Assessment.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Offer to plant a tree. Brian Devonshire has been approached by a resident to plant a tree in the village as we have lost so many recently. RB and AW will consider a position in the village. **Action: RB/AW**

12.2 Duke of Edinburgh Award Guy Gagen's sons are continuing their Duke of Edinburgh award and are offering to undertake ad hoc jobs. Treating the logs with deckstain and assisting Adam Keble with the mound steps were considered suitable jobs. **Action Clerk and AK**

13. Dates of Next Meetings

Meeting closed at 8.10pm **Next meeting WEDNESDAY 3 MAY at 6.30pm. Please note the change of day and date for the Annual meeting at 6.30pm and main PC meeting at 7.00pm.**