



West Monkton Parish Council

ADOPTED

Minutes of the Meeting of West Monkton Parish Council held on Tuesday 14th November 2023 at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs Besley, Cavill, Ellis, Gage, Hall, Haskins, Hope and Munson.

In attendance: Mrs A Shepherd, Clerk, Mrs K Welsh, Assistant Clerk Community, Mr K Perry, Bathpool Flood Warden, Cllr David Fothergill, Somerset Council, Daniel Moncrieff, Homes and Horizons and two members of the public.

161/23 To receive any apologies (with reasons), introductions with responsibilities

Apologies were received from Cllr Tully.

162/23 To note

- a) Declarations of Interest: No change.
- b) Dispensation Requests: None
- c) Amendments to the Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest: None had been notified to the Clerk.

163/23 To adopt the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 24th October 2023

The minutes from the Meeting of the Parish Council on 24th October 2023, having been previously circulated, were taken as read. It was resolved to adopt the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 24th October, proposed by Cllr Hall, seconded by Cllr Ellis and agreed by show of hands.

164/23 To consider applicant/s and co-opt into the Parish Councillor casual vacancy

One application was received for co-option into the Parish Councillor vacancy. The applicant, Noel Munson made a statement in support of his application.

Cllr Hall proposed that Noel Munson should fill the vacancy, this was seconded by Cllr Gage. The co-option of Noel Munson into the casual vacancy was agreed with all in favour.

Noel Munson was welcomed to the Parish Council and the declaration of acceptance of office form signed.

165/23 To receive a presentation regarding proposed modifications to residential home for children at Greenway, Monkton Heathfield.

Daniel Moncrieff, Homes and Horizons provided an update regarding the residential home for Children at Greenway and a summary of a proposal to erect a small unit to the rear of the home to provide independent accommodation similar to that which 16/17-year-olds would move to as part of their pathway to independence. The unit would provide a stepping stone for a young person to experience living independently for 6 months prior to leaving to go to independent accommodation. The planning requirements for the proposal are being explored at the moment and as part of the consultation with the community letters about the proposal will be sent to neighbouring properties. The Parish Council confirmed its support for the proposal.

166/23 To note Clerk's report and Assistant Clerk (Community) report

Clerk's Report:

- General Admin:
 - Website rebuild – work to populate new website has continued and is now complete.
 - Parish Councillor vacancy notices.
 - Path from Farriers Green to School Road – liaising with Somerset Council about possible transfer of land to the PC after Heathfield School becomes an academy.
 - Gathered availability and date set for PC Away Day – 11th December.
 - Reviewed letter received from Somerset Council regarding services / devolution of assets. Paper prepared with suggestions of how the PC may respond.
 - Booked Assistant Clerk Community and I onto upcoming training courses.
- Finance / Payroll:

- Making payments / placing orders.
- Managing / inputting Accounts using Scribe.
- November payroll and finance reports and grant spend records.
- Quotations obtained and included in the finance report.
- Account opened with Travis Perkins.
- Community Garden orders.
- Ordered Spital Hedging, delivered. To be planted by Lengthsman.
- Prepare paperwork for Audit Working Party meeting on 27th October.
- 2024/25 budget preparation.
- Researched PWLB application requirements should funding be required in the future.
- Wider Catchment Flooding Initiative
 - Meeting held on 20th October. Action of the meeting was to apply for NFM Government Funding.
 - Expression of Interest Application developed, feedback from Spark Somerset received and final EOI form submitted prior to deadline on 10th November.
- Planning:
 - Updating Planning Log with planning decisions / conditions weekly.
 - Preparation of PowerPoint presentation in respect of planning applications received for PC meeting and submission of agreed response to planning applications.
- Highways:
 - Made amendments to and finalised the Position Statement in relation to the A358 dualling scheme with National Highways.
 - Reported condition of road at Milton Hill.
 - Reported potholes on Dosters Lane.
 - Reported drainage issues at Dyers Lane.
 - Requested review of timetables on bus shelters.
 - Requested Lengthsman clear vegetation Hyde Lane pavement – work completed.
 - Requested meeting with Jon Fellingham at Somerset Council re Yallands Hill Crossing Point.
- Country Park
 - Meeting on 13th October, prepared agenda and notes.
 - Reviewed lease in preparation for discussion at the next meeting.
 - Liaised with Sally Stark about term of lease relating to planning permission in respect of Poppy of Honour Memorial.
- Sports Pitches
 - Meeting of the Sports Pitch Committee on 25th October.
 - Fencing quotation for dog walking area approved.
 - Dual waste / dog bin ordered. Temporary placement of the old Farriers Green Dog Bin.
 - Preparing paperwork for planning pre-app advice application.
 - Free Trees obtained from the Woodland Trust – to be delivered in March for planting.
 - Liaised with the Carden Group regarding land between sports pitches and canal that is being marketed.
- MH1
 - Public Meeting in respect of POS on Monday 30th October from 3pm until 7pm. Invitation for the public meeting printed and distribution arranged with Councillors / Volunteers. Slides prepared for the Public Meeting – meeting went well.
 - Meeting with Managing Agents to gather quotation for annual cost to maintain / manage the POS.
- MH2:
 - Meeting with Monkton Elm Garden Centre.
 - Meeting with John Fellingham and agreed action points.
 - Emailed National Highways about comments on planning website, response circulated.
 - Meeting with Rebecca Pow MP and following up agreed actions with Personal Secretary.
 - Meeting with Developer and Planning Officer on 8th November. Notes developed and circulated.
- BACH:
 - Invoices and accounts.
 - Defibrillator cabinet key pad fixed and no longer sticky.
 - Cleaning supplies obtained.
 - Additional savings account with Nationwide enquiries / application.
 - Next BACH Committee Meeting scheduled to take place on Thursday 8th February 2024 at 7pm.
- Meetings last month:

- 2nd October – Hestercombe LCN Meeting
- 3rd October – Agenda run through meeting
- 3rd October – BACH Committee Meeting
- 4th October – LGR Session
- 4th October – Meeting with Town Council re Northwalls POS / Man Co.
- 6th October – MH2 meeting
- 7th October – Festival of Cycling
- 9th October – 6th June Event Planning Meeting
- 10th October – Jon Fellingham meeting re MH2
- 10th October – PC Meeting
- 16th October – CP Prep Meeting
- 17th October – Agenda run through meeting
- 17th October – Joint Country Park meeting with CFPC
- 18th October – LGR Session
- 20th October – Wider Catchment Flooding Meeting
- 20th October – MH1 Update meeting
- 23rd October – Annual Leave
- 24th October – PC Meeting
- 25th October – Sports Pitch Committee Meeting
- 27th October – Audit Working Party Meeting
- 27th October – MH2 Meeting with Rebecca Pow MP
- 30th October – MH1 Public Meeting
- 31st October – PCC Autumn Councillor Forum
- Meetings this month:
 - 1st November – LGR Session
 - 1st November – MH1 Managing Agent Meeting
 - 7th November – Agenda run through
 - 7th November – Meeting with EA re Bathpool
 - 7th November – Meeting with Carden Group re Hyde Farm Development and land adjacent to sports pitches.
 - 8th November – MH2 Meeting with Planning Officer and Developer
 - 9th November – Meeting with Simon Fox re MH Developments
 - 14th November – PC Meeting
 - 15th November – LGR Session
 - 17th November – MH2 Teams Meeting
 - 21st November – Agenda run through
 - 21st November – Budget and Precept Meeting
 - 22nd November – NALC Making the Planning System work for Local Councils Training
 - 28th November – PC Meeting
 - 29th November – LGR Session

Assistant Clerk (Community) Report:

Community - General

- Monkton Matters – keeping MM up to date with new news and events as and when required. Sharing articles on Facebook pages – increase in articles created by us the Parish Council in recent months.
- Updated Community Matters article and shared on Monkton Matters, Facebook and noticeboards
- Responded to enquiries/requests via Facebook and by email to those in the community.
- Regular trips to Bookers to restock for the community café/stay and play and for events
- Liaised with litter picking volunteers about issues around the parish and passed onto appropriate service or reported to council as needed
- Managing Allotment List
- Liaison with PCSOs regarding graffiti and community resolution for young person involved in this graffiti
- Created write up for new websites with pictures for Community Pages
- Agenda and Minutes for BACH Committee Meeting
- Responding to messages on social media

Community Fridge

- Coordinating and managing volunteers, cleaning rotas and pick-ups.
- Keeping in touch with volunteers to keep them updated and involved.

- Responding to complaints and concerns about community fridge.
- Visited some of the local supermarkets to discuss donations.
- Purchase of Freezer, which is now housed in the BACH until we have the new unit in place
- Contacted Fareshare to enable collection of frozen food items
- Confirmation of funding from the Coop – Local Causes Fund (£2,300 plus)

Community Cafe

- Running a weekly Community Café at the BACH. Opportunity to meeting with the public to share concerns and to socialise.
- Started a Knit/Crochet Group which meet weekly at the BACH to make poppies – finalising decorations and now looking to make Christmas tree for Tree Festival at West Monkton Church
- Meeting place for potential and existing volunteers to support, recruit and get feedback about the volunteering.
- Promote community events
- Village Agent visit to the Stay and Play and Community Café on 4/10/23
- Run 'Repair Café' on third Wednesday of each month
- Delayed Start to Loss and Bereavement Group as Rev Jim Cox moving

Community Garden

- Community Garden group meet regularly at the BACH
- Met with Chris Scurle to discuss aims of the community garden going forward
- Purchase some items from the SALC Wellbeing Grant, benches, tools, a boards.
- Organised visit from the Community Service Team on the 18th November, Paul Elliston met with to support with work that needs doing.
- Promoting weekly meet at the Community Garden through Bethan, listing basic jobs that need doing regularly.

Community Events

- Liaising with Bethan Turner for promotion of Events
- D-day Event – Met with Alan Hall and am in the process of contacting local businesses for quotes for event to take to a meeting on the 14/11/23
- Event surveys, analysing and noting responses for next year's events.
- Planning Christmas Events on 15th December at the BACH – Carol Singing from 3.30pm and Volunteer Buffet Evening Event.
- Created invite and invited all volunteers, to the Volunteer Event on the 15/12/23 – keeping log of dietary requirements
- Prepare and organise quiz night 11/10/23
- Downloaded 'The Purple Guide' to help prepared, plan for events with health and safety in mind

Other Volunteering

- Touching base with Companion Volunteer, who is now meeting regularly with a number of clients via the village agent in the community.
- Ordered new Hi-Viz and gloves and distributed to volunteers
- Organised building of the new picnic benches at BACH garden with repair café volunteers
- Organised Volunteer Matt to deliver Village News to area in the parish

Meetings, Events and Groups

- 10/10/23 and 24/10/23 - Attended PC meetings
- 3/10/23 BACH Committee Meeting
- 3/10/23 and 17/10/23 - Attended agenda run through meetings
- Attended Stay and Play Groups every Wednesday and Thursday
- Attended Community Café every Wednesday
- 7/10/23 – Attended Family Festival of Cycling to run Community Café
- 17/10/23 Attended Joint Country Park Meeting
- 30/10/23 MH1 Public Meeting

167/23 Somerset Council Report

Cllr Fothergill reported on the following:

2023/4 Financial Position: As at the end of Month5 (September 2023) Somerset Council predicts an end of year overspend of £27.3 million including £14.9m in Adult's and £12m in Children's. Although these figures may be reduced the accepted position is that the budget cannot be achieved, and reserves will have to be used to plug the gap.

2024/5 Financial Position: The current expected budget gap for next year is £100m which represents 20% of the total budget. Of these over £70m is within Social Care. This situation has been described by the Finance Director as being 'stark and challenging'.

He wrote to the Government in September setting out the dire straight of the Council budget if no changes are made. With General Reserves at £48.9m some of which will be needed to plug 2023/24 then there is insufficient cover to meet the £100m shortfall. As a consequence and unless something drastic changes then a Section 114 notice will be issued. Whilst the Government may allow some capitalisation of revenue costs this will be at an additional 1% above loan rate and will require a comprehensive and approved plan for the future.

What has gone wrong? The loss of momentum, expertise and focus after the election in delivering the Unitary transformation by the new administration, has meant that costs have not been removed and duplication of roles continues. As of 1st October of the 330 planned redundancies 29 have been announced and significant numbers of employees remain on interim contracts. In addition rising costs in Adults and Children's Social Care plus the lack of delivery on cost savings planned as part of the budget means that a s114 is looking more and more likely.

What is a Section 114: Somerset Council is required by law to have balanced budgets – this means the council's income has to match its projected spending. If the council cannot find a way to finance its budget, then a section 114 notice must be issued. The issuing of a section 114 notice prohibits all new spending with the exception of protecting:

- vulnerable people
- statutory services (although some are left vague in definition)
- pre-existing spending commitments

If a section 114 notice is issued, it means Somerset Council has to stop spending, and cannot enter into new agreements. However all existing grant agreements will be honoured, and care packages will continue to be paid. Once a section 114 notice is issued, Somerset would have 21 days from the date of the notice to hold a meeting to consider the section 114 report, decide if it agrees with the views contained in the report, and what action to take in consequence of it. A final step would be the appointment by Government of 3 Commissioners at an annual cost of approx. £1m.

Highways Contract: Somerset Council has signed a new eight-year contract with Kier Transportation Ltd to deliver core maintenance across its road network. The £225m agreement covers key maintenance works – including road repairs, drainage, verge cutting and winter service, such as gritting and other emergency functions in adverse weather. The current contract with Milestone Infrastructure comes to an end at the end of March 2024. Three other multi-million-pound contracts covering resurfacing, surface dressing, and new assets will also be awarded in due course.

Demolition work at Priorswood recycling centre: Demolition work has started on the Taunton Recycling site following the major fire which has closed the site since early October. The Material Recovery Facility (MRF) adjacent to the public recycling area is beyond repair and the recycling site is not safe to open until it is demolished. It is not yet known how long it will take to complete the demolition, but it is likely to be up to two weeks. The site in Priorswood will remain closed until demolition is complete.

Recycling: Nearly half the content of the average Somerset bin could have been recycled, Somerset Council revealed. The 48% figure found this year is an impressive 11% decrease on 2018 – the last time the 'composition analysis' was carried out in the county. The contents of some 550 households refuse bins were emptied, sorted and weighed, with a representation from across the county. Of the contents that should have been recycled:

- 14% recyclable at the kerbside (e.g. cardboard or drinks cans)
- 21% food waste, recyclable in the food waste bin
- 7% garden waste and pet bedding
- 7% recyclable at a recycling site (e.g. wood and metal)

The 11% reduction on 2018 figure is thought to have been driven by the expanded Recycle More collections, with less plastic pots tubs and trays being put in the refuse. One of the benefits of becoming a Unitary Authority is that the recycling routes are being redefined without district boundaries. This will save money for the recycling company and new collection days (including soft plastics) will commence in February / March.

Somerset Gritters: Somerset's fleet of 23 gritters are ready to be mobilised across 900 miles of road as soon as the temperature drops below zero this winter. Last year the gritter fleet went out on 67 occasions when freezing temperatures were forecast.

Heathfield School – meeting with the Head at the School and it is clear that good plans are in place for improvement. An Ofsted inspection took place in September which reported an improvement. The school is keen on getting involved in the local community, exploring job opportunities for 15/16-year-olds and supporting the Somerset Wood / Country Park. The school expressed a concern about the £2m earmarked for canteen improvements will get lost with Somerset Council financial problems. Cllr Fothergill and Cavill are arguing the case.

Cllr Cavill also reported that flu and Covid cases are rising and encouraged people to get vaccinated.

The following questions were asked:

A discussion about S114 notice and the impact of it on Somerset, the notice will mean the delivery of statutory services only.

Options to avoid the notice include borrowing more but Somerset Council would need to sell all capital investments to be able to borrow money.

Cllr Hope asked if becoming a Unitary Authority was a mistake. Cllr Fothergill confirmed that if Unitary didn't happen, the financial emergency would have happened quicker. Savings from becoming a Unitary Authority have been realised but not the

redundancies. The Council is still running / staffing 6 council offices and tier 4 has not been appointed therefore not all savings have been realised.

Cllr Besley asked if Somerset Council are reliant on CIL money for balancing the budget? Cllrs Fothergill and Cavill confirmed that CIL money is for infrastructure / capital expenditure and won't be used as revenue.

168/23 Hestercombe Local Community Network Update

Cllr Haskins reported that the next meeting of the Hestercombe LCN is taking place on Monday 11th December at 7pm at the BACH. The agenda for the meeting has been set and includes items about Somerset Council finances and facilities for young people. Feedback from the meeting will be provided at the PC meeting on 12th December 2023.

Public Question Time

Gideon Amos, the parliamentary candidate for Liberal Democrats introduced himself and confirmed he was in attendance to observe the meeting and listen to the items / issues being discussed.

Assistant Clerk Community reported that the volunteer litter pickers had reported fly tipping on the roundabout on the ERR but that although Somerset Council had previously collected fly tipped waste from the location, they are now refusing to collect the rubbish because the highway is private / unadopted.

Clerk to report the fly tipping to Persimmon and request that it is removed.

Cllr Hope requested an update regarding the land between Farriers Green and School Road. Cllr Cavill and the Clerk confirmed that correspondence has taken place with Somerset Council about the land being transferred to the Parish Council after Heathfield School becomes an academy.

169/23 Planning

a) To consider any planning applications (listed on the Somerset Council website)

Cllr Cavill did not comment on any of the planning applications to avoid fettering his discretion as a member of the Somerset Council Planning Committee.

48/23/0042 Formation of dropped kerb and pavement crossing for off road parking at 1 Thornash Close, Monkton Heathfield (resubmission of 48/22/0080)

The Parish Council supports the granting of permission.

48/23/0039 Replacement of dwelling and garage including erection of workshop and alterations to entrance at Roughwood, Coombe Lane, West Monkton.

The Parish Council supports the granting of permission and made the following comments in respect of the proposal:

- Construction traffic and deliveries to the site should not go through Coombe Lane but instead from the east through Church Hill.
- To comply with the WM & CF Neighbourhood Plan policies, measures for rainwater capture should be included and any lighting should be downlit and LED.
- The proposal should incorporate bird boxes and bee bricks.

b) To note that Planning decisions made are available on Somerset Council website filed under the application number Noted

170/23 Community

Clerk outlined that Community Council for Somerset Community Review Project. The CCS are requesting Expressions of Interest from Parish Council who would like to undertake a Community Review. The Review, which is supported and funded by the CCS, will include a community survey which gathers the needs, opinions and ambitions of the community. An evidence-based plan will be produced and an action plan to inform the PCs work. It was agreed that the Parish Council would submit an expression of interest.

a) Events update

Assistant Clerk Community provided an update on the Tug of War event which is being planned by CSM, WM, North Curry and Ruishton Parish Councils. A date for the event has been set as 29th June 2024. The Country Park has been suggested as a possible location. Councillors were supportive of the event taking place at the Country Park but not over the pond – Allens Brook suggested instead. A £200.00 contribution has been requested from each PC towards the cost of the event. The contribution was

agreed in principle. Assistant Clerk Community suggested coinciding the Party in the Park (previously planned for 8th June) with the Tug of War event to take place into the evening with a bar and some entertainment. This approach was agreed. Assistant Clerk Community provided an update on the Christmas Carol event on 15th December. Christmas Trees for the Parish were discussed. Cllr Gage to obtain three Christmas Trees. One for outside the BACH, one for the Street and a smaller one for the BACH lobby.

b) Fridge expansion

Cllr Haskins reported that Simon Fox, Somerset Council had confirmed that planning permission would be required for the fridge expansion. A discussion followed about alternative locations and Heathfield Drive Community Centre as an option was discussed. Cllr Cavill to raise with Somerset Council to see if the building can be obtained. Assistant Clerk Community to check the time limits on the grant money received to ensure there is no deadline for spend. Shed options for the Community Garden to be considered at the next PC meeting.

171/23 MH1 Update; POS transfer update. Feedback from Public Meeting on 30th October. Managing Agents update.

Clerk and Cllr Haskins provided feedback from the MH1 public meeting on 30th October. The meeting was positive but one key question that emerged was the likely cost to homeowners. A meeting has since taken place with Blenheims / First Port who are putting together a quotation to act as managing agent for the Management Company and a budget for maintenance of the POS. Alternative Management Companies have also been contacted to request the same.

Once an estimated figure of the annual cost per household is available an update will be provided on Monkton Matters.

Clerk confirmed that enquiries had been made about the Canal View Management Company to see who the Managing Agent is for the Company. The Company is quite small and the agent appears to be an Estate and Lettings Agent. Cllr Hope expressed concern about the condition of the play equipment. Clerk to make contact with the Management Company to relay the concerns.

172/23 Hartnells Development; Update. Phase 4 planning application; concerns expressed by neighbouring residents on Greenway.

Cllr Haskins relayed some concerns expressed to him by a resident who lives in one of the bungalows that will back on to the development. Plans originally developed by the Strategic Land Partnership included a ditch to gather water run-off from the field / arboretum to the north west of the Development. The phase 4 application doesn't make reference to the ditch and there is concern that run off will impact on properties in Greenway. Clerk to write to the Planning Officer to express these additional concerns as part of consideration of the phase 4 planning application.

Clerk reported that there are no dog or other waste bins in the Hartnells development. Clerk to make contact with Persimmon about locating a bin near to the pathway from the development to Monkton Heathfield Road.

Clerk raised the Monkton Heathfield Road pedestrian crossing that Persimmon were obliged to deliver as part of the Hartnells Development near the Milton Hill junction. Persimmon have confirmed that the crossing point will not be delivered due to there not being a safe location for its installation. Clerk to write to the Planning Officer and copy in Andy Coupe and Jon Fellingham from Somerset Highways about moving the crossing point requirement to Yallands Hill instead.

173/23 Sports Pitches; Update; feedback from the Sports Pitch Committee Meeting on 25th October.

Cllr Hall reported that the combination lock on main gate isn't working. Clerk to liaise with Persimmon about whether the combination on the lock has been changed.

Cllr Hall reported that the trench that has been dug around the perimeter is full with water. It was agreed to erect some warning signs near to the trench to alert anyone to the deep water.

Cllr Hall reported that the dog walking perimeter fence work is commencing during week commencing 27th November.

Cllr Hall reported that an updated quote for the groundworks had been received which included, as expected, some increases. The costing spreadsheet for the Sports Pitches has been updated and was shared on the screen.

Clerk provided an overview of the updated quote provided by WT and RJ Jones. It was proposed by Cllr Cavill, seconded by Cllr Besley and agreed with all in favour to accept the updated quotation. It was noted that 25% of the quote will need to be paid at commencement of the works which is expected in April / May.

Cllr Hall reported that a quotation has been requested from the floodlighting contractor for the underground tubing so that it can go in now as part of the ground works. Quote to be shared / approved when it is obtained.

174/23 To discuss land currently being marketed between the sports pitch land and the canal and agree how to proceed

Clerk provided a summary of the discussion that had taken place with the Carden Group regarding the land that is being marketed between the sports pitch land and the canal. The Carden Group have confirmed that the agent, Greenslade Taylor Hunt, have received two offers in excess of the asking price.

A discussion took place whereby the Carden Group had indicated, during the meeting with the Parish Council, that they intended to purchase the land to fulfil the POS obligations for the proposed Hyde Farm Development. It was agreed to not take any further action in respect of the land purchase for the moment.

175/23 MH2 Update; Feedback from meeting Rebecca Pow MP on 27th October and Developer, Planning Officer and CSM PC on 8th November.

Feedback from the meeting with Rebecca Pow MP on 27th October and the Developers, Planning Officer and CSM PC on 8th November was provided and a discussion took place.

The responses received by Rebecca Pow MP from Somerset Council were discussed and Cllr Besley suggested that the Parish Council should do more to fight the highways proposals included in the MH2 masterplan.

It was agreed that Cllr Cavill would again request a meeting with Somerset Cllr Mike Rigby, the Executive Member for Highways and Cllr Bill Revans, Leader of Somerset Council to discuss the PCs concerns prior to the updated proposals being submitted as part of the ongoing planning application. Clerk to update CSM PC.

176/23 Permanent pump at Bathpool; update and land acquisition

Cllr Haskins provided a summary of the meeting with the Environment Agency about progress in relation to installing a permanent pump in Bathpool on the Old River Tone. The Environment Agency have confirmed that the matter that is delaying progress is the need to purchase a parcel of land for ongoing access to the pumps. It is unclear whether the S106 money can be used to enable the purchase of land. Cllr Haskins outlined a suggestion that the Parish Council could instead purchase the land to enable the delivery of the permanent pump to progress. The position of the parcel of land was shared. It was noted that in addition to the land (approximately 1 acre) being used for pump access, the ditch to the north along the boundary with the railway could be reinstated to help with water flow in flood conditions and tree planting could take place on the land.

Clerk confirmed that if the land was purchased by the Parish Council, the Environment Agency would cover the reasonable costs of any agreement for setting up any easement or rights of access for the Environment Agency.

Although the parcel of land is just outside the Parish boundary, the PC has the power to acquire land whether inside or outside the parish for the benefit, improvement or development of the Parish area (Section 124 of the Local Government Act 1972).

The land is expected to have a value of approximately £10,000.00.

It was resolved to pursue negotiations to purchase the land, the purchase price of the land to be approved by the Parish Council, proposed by Cllr Ellis, seconded by Cllr Hall and agreed by show of hands. Cllrs Besley and Cavill declared interests and abstained from voting.

177/23 Reports, including recent developments, matters to consider and decisions to be made:

a) Bathpool Flood Warden: Mr Kevin Perry

Mr Perry reported that after a wet summer and the wettest September and October on record, two thirds of the expected November rainfall has already been recorded. On the 1st and 2nd November a flood alert was issued, the Old River Tone level rose quicker than the River Tone. At 4.30am Mr Perry asked for the pump to be turned on, it was at 5.30am. The pump was turned on when the Old River Tone levels were higher than they would normally be when the pump is turned on. Despite the pump being switched on the levels rose by a further 0.8m which indicates that an 8-inch pump is not sufficient. The Old River Tone levels were the highest recorded at nearly 11 metres. The River Tone was also discharging into the land behind Bridgwater Road properties.

A flood warning was issued at 13.35 and water entered Mr Perry's property a very short time after.

The Environment Agency provided sand bags. Yew Tree Lane properties stayed dry apart from garages. Sewer discharges occurred in Acacia Gardens and Swingbridge.

The storm impacted the Environment Agency equipment which meant that reporting was not being updated for up to 8 hours.

A second flood alert was issued on 10th November; this was just precautionary and no issues were experienced.

Mr Perry asked if the PC could make enquiries as to the ownership of the land behind the Bridgwater Road properties which has been sold by BIFFA and remind the land owner of their obligations regarding maintaining the attenuation pond and ditches on the land. Clerk to make enquiries.

b) Councillors with roles of responsibility (not all Councillors will have a report to make)

Footpaths

Cllr Gage reported that a number of people from Taunton are driving out to walk the footpaths, the new gates enable better accessibility to the footpaths by walkers.

Cllr Cavill reported that some stone is needed in the Country Park at the gateway with Yallands Hill stone. Cllr Besley confirmed that he had some stone available. Cllr Besley to liaise with Cllr Hall about delivery of the stone.

BACH

Cllr Gage reported that the Taunton Bridge Club are starting to hire the hall on Friday evenings from December providing extra income for the BACH.

Highways;

Cllr Besley confirmed that he had nothing to report.

Cllr Haskins raised the culvert under Red Hill and the brook between Red Hill and the pub and work needed to clear them. Clerk to add an item to the agenda for the next meeting to discuss. Post meeting note – Airband are planning a road closure of Red Hill which may present an opportunity to carry out any required works.

Safe Routes to School;

In Cllr Tully's absence there was nothing to report.

Public Open Spaces/ Children's Play Areas and Recreation;

Cllr Hope expressed his concern that delays with the MH1 POS transfer would mean that another year of planting trees has been lost.

Cllr Munson raised the broken fencing along the ERR. Clerk to report to Persimmon.

Transportation;

Nothing to report.

Country Park;

Cllr Hall reported that the Poppy of Honour Committee have assigned the Country Park / Somerset Wood as the permanent location for the Poppy of Honour. Reed and Holland have developed design options, with no charge, for a structure to house the Poppy of Honour. The Committee has approved a design. Planning Permission is required. Somerset Council, as required by the Maidenbrook Country Park Lease, have provided permission for the Parish Councils to apply for planning permission for the structure.

The Structure is expected to cost approximately £80,000. Funding for the structure is being explored, a combination of fundraising and grant funding applications will take place. Once erected the Poppy of Honour and the structure will have national memorial status, as such consideration is needed about car parking and crossing points to the Country Park. A possible location for a car park is the land on the opposite side of the WRR, the car park could have a dual purpose for the Country Park and the Waterleaze pitch area which Taunton Baseball are interested in using as a permanent home.

Full designs for the structure now need to be developed to enable planning permission to be applied for and for a tendering exercise to take place.

A quotation from Reed and Holland to develop designs and oversee the whole project, including the planning application was outlined. The total quotation was £7725.00 +VAT plus the planning application fee of up to £500.00. It was resolved to accept the quotation as the Parish Councils contribution to the project. Proposed by Cllr Besley, seconded by Cllr Gage and agreed with all in favour.

Cllr Cavill provided a summary of CFPC budget discussions that took place at a meeting the previous evening. CFPC is proposing to raise precept to enable sufficient funds to be allocated for the Country Park for next year.

Cllr Gage raised the Wildflower Meadow. It was agreed that costings would be discussed at the next PC meeting.

c) Communications Report

Parish Council Website

- Regular updates to Highways (including road closures), Planning, Finance and Parish Council carried out.
- New website being set up

Parish Council Facebook Page:

- Page likes / followers now at 1144
- 12.4 post reach
- Posts added sharing news items that are added to the website.

Monkton Matters

- Page likes / followers now at 374
- 49 new articles added in October
- Articles on Monkton Matters being shared on Monkton Matters Facebook page to pull users to the website.
- 3.8k post reach
- Business directory has details of 22 businesses so far.

Community Fridge Facebook Page:

- Page likes /followers 1038
- 3.1k post reach

Community Garden Facebook Page:

- Page likes/followers 136
- 1.8K post reach

Village News Contribution

- Developed by the Clerk's

Noticeboard Updates

- Updated noticeboards

d) GDPR

Nothing to report.

Representatives on outside bodies/Response to Consultations:

e) West Monkton Village Hall Management Committee

In Cllr Tully's absence there was nothing to report.

f) The Spital Trust

Cllr Ellis confirmed that there was nothing to report. It was noted that the hedging around the bench has been planted.

g) Any events at which WMPC was represented

Cllr Haskins reported that he attended a Police and Crime Commissioner Event on 31st October with Cllrs Gage and Hall and the Clerk. A number of Parish Councils in the area reported problems of anti-social behaviour during the summer. Clerk to make contact with the Somerset Council Officer about provision for young people in the area. Clerk to follow up the police offer of reviewing the POS and potential areas for improvement to avoid future illegal occupation of the areas.

178/23 Finance

a) Quotations and Updates:

Comet Trail

At least £600.00 requested as outlined at the last PC meeting for the areas of the Comet Trail in the Parish.

Community Infrastructure Levy expenditure.

Amount £600.00. Proposed by Cllr Hall, seconded by Cllr Ellis and agreed with all in favour.

Country Park Gabions

Quotation received from Travis Perkins for the Country Park

Gabions £1193.58

Stone £836.53

£2030.11 +VAT in total

To be funded from CIL and contribution from CFPC

Proposed by Cllr Besley, seconded by Cllr Hall and agreed with all in favour.

Monthly inspection of play park equipment at Farriers Green

Somerset Council - Inspect play area equipment on a monthly basis £22.44+VAT per inspection.

Response awaited from Somerset Council.

- Refurb of St Quintins play area agreed and scheduled to be done by DLO this financial year. Progress update requested.
- Insulate roof at Village Hall, under discussion, waiting for further info and description of grant chasing efforts from Village Hall Management committee. Info sent, with link to site, to VH committee from Rural Grants Directory section on Village Halls..
- Environmental
Quote for Farriers Green ramp by DLO accepted in April 2022, but M Davies no longer in role at SWT. Replacement for M Davies confirmed – Andrew Sollis. In contact with him, Andrew has stated that the quote previously approved is out of date. Andrew is going to meet with contractors to get a revised quote. Quote chased.

b) Receipts and Payments

Information relating to named, or otherwise identifiable, individuals is confidential and has been redacted in documents placed in the public domain.

Receipts

Interest

Lloyds	£22.95
Nationwide	£143.59
PSDF	£1132.67
Somerset West Lottery – Community Fridge	£32.50
Co-op Local Community Fund – Community Fridge	£2331.37

Adopted - Redacted

Payments

Payee	Net	Vat	Total	How paid	Cost Centre	Cost Code
To authorise payment of:						
A Pritchard litter picking	56.00	No vat	56.00	d-d	Salaries and expenses	Pension (employee contribution)
Employee pension contributions	249.56	No vat	249.56	d-d	Salaries and expenses	Pension
Employer contributions	187.17	No vat	187.17	d-d	Salaries and expenses	Pension
A Shepherd Clerks salary SCP33 (including backpay for national pay increase)	3161.77	No vat	3161.77	bacs	Salaries and expenses	Salaries
K Welsh assistant clerk-community salary SCP 28 (127 hours) (including backpay for national pay increase)	2238.96	No vat	2238.96	Bacs	Salaries and expenses	Salaries
HMRC Tax and NI Contributions	2577.41	No vat	2577.41	bacs	Salaries and expenses	Salaries
A Shepherd homeworkers allowance	27.00	No vat	27.00	bacs	Salaries and expenses	Expenses
K Welsh homeworkers allowance	27.00	No vat	27.00	bacs	Salaries and expenses	Expenses
S Rolls Lengthsman services	412.90	No vat	412.90	bacs	Environmental and Open Spaces	Lengthsman
Business all about you Climate Initiative PR WMPC 33	200.00	No vat	200.00	bacs	Environmental and Open Spaces	Environment / Community
Business all about you Expenses	16.99	No vat	16.99	Bacs	Environmental and Open Spaces	Environment / Community
QSSIT regular maintenance / monthly sub	25.40	5.08	30.48	bacs	IT and Communications	IT and Communications
QSSIT Anti virus annual subscription for laptops	74.97	14.99	89.96	Bacs	IT and Communications	IT and Communications
Expenses claim A Shepherd – Travel	41.30	No vat	41.30	Bacs	Salary and expenses	Expenses
Expenses claim A Shepherd – BACH Cleaning items	4.02	No vat	4.02	Bacs	BACH	Cleaning Supplies
Expenses claim K Welsh (Travel)	162.00	No vat	162.00	Bacs	Salary and expenses	Expenses
Expenses claim K Welsh (Community Café sundries and BACH cleaning sundries)	80.21	No vat	80.21	Bacs	BACH	Community Events / Initiatives
Matravers Engineering Limited (Country Park steel tree protection)	333.33	66.67	400.00	Bacs	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
Glasdon UK Limited (Farriers Green dog bin)	293.12	58.62	351.74	Bacs	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
NALC (Training)	43.87	8.67	52.04	Bacs	General Administration	Training
NALC (Training)	43.87	8.67	52.04	Bacs	General Administration	Training
NALC (Training)	43.87	8.67	52.04	Bacs	General Administration	Training
NALC (Training)	43.87	8.67	52.04	Bacs	General Administration	Training
Jo Pearson (Reimbursement for Wreaths and wooden crosses for CP Memorial Service)	80.00 41.58	No vat	80.00 41.58	Bacs	Country Park	Country Park
SALC (Playground inspection training)	50.00	No vat	50.00	Bacs	General Administration	Training
RW Gale Limited (Country Park surfacing works)	5256.00	1051.20	6307.20	Bacs	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure.

Payee	Net	Vat	Total	How paid	Cost Centre	Cost Code
Mowgate Limited (Country Park Hedge Cutting)	495.00	99.00	594.00	Bacs	Country Park	Country Park
M Besley (Sports Pitch Clearance)	300.00	No vat	300.00	Bacs	Environmental and Open Spaces	Sports and General
Viking (Community Fridge Bin)	42.94	8.59	51.53	Bacs	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
Expenses claim N. Cavill (Country Park Tree Protection)	145.44	No vat	145.44	Bacs	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
Expenses claim S. Haskins (Marquee boxes) (Travel)	299.08	No vat	299.08	Bacs	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
	21.15	No vat	21.15	Bacs	Salaries and Expenses	Expenses
Expenses claim B. Gage (Fuel for grass cutting and lock for sports pitch gate)	11.98	No vat	11.98	Bacs	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
	34.16	No vat	34.16	Bacs	Environmental and Open Spaces	Grass cutting and dog bin emptying
Springfield Services (Grass cutting)	15.00	No vat	15.00	Bacs	Environmental and Open Spaces	Grass cutting and dog bin emptying
To note payment of:						
Direct Debit						
Invoice Tailored Auto Enrolment 10826 29/10/2023 (Pension administration)	12.00	2.40	14.40	DD PAID	Salary and Expenses	Pension
Invoice SWS 113445 2/11/2023 maintain gsuite	78.00	15.60	93.60	DD PAID	IT and Communications	IT and Communications
Invoice SWS 113390 web-lite hosting (MM) and standard mailbox 20/10/2023	30.00	6.00	36.00	DD PAID	IT and Communications	IT and Communications
BACS						
K Welsh – reimbursement for purple guide subscription.	25.00	5.00	30.00	Bacs Paid	Youth and Community	Youth and Community
A Shepherd – reimbursement for hi vis vests	52.36	10.46	62.76	Bacs Paid	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
A Shepherd – reimbursement for community freezer	654.14	130.83	784.97	Bacs Paid	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
A Shepherd – reimbursement for spital hedging plants	204.70	No vat	204.70	Bacs Paid	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
A Shepherd – reimbursement for Community Garden A Boards	89.84	17.97	107.81	Bacs Paid	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
Viking – Stationery	51.71	10.34	62.05	Bacs Paid	General Administration	Sundry Admin
Viking – Stationery	49.98	10.00	59.98	Bacs Paid	General Administration	Sundry Admin
Expenses claim P Elliston (Community Garden)	262.37	13.17	275.54	Bacs Paid	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
Expenses claim B Gage (Sports Pitch gate / posts) (Lock) (Travel) Diesel (Grass cutting)	295.69	No vat	295.69	Bacs	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
	17.79	No vat	17.79	Bacs	Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL Expenditure
	9.00	No vat	9.00	Bacs	Salaries and expenses	Expenses
	34.21	No vat	34.21	Bacs	Environmental and Open Spaces	Grass cutting and dog bin emptying

Thank you gift for Mr and Mrs Durham for the donation of a chest freezer for the Community Fridge shed.

Adopted - Redacted

Any other invoices received before the next meeting will be added. Payments by bacs wherever possible.

Resolution: to authorise payments and note payments made during the month described above:

Proposed by Cllr Hall, seconded by Cllr Ellis and agreed with all in favour.

Transfer between accounts

None.

c) Audit Working Party Notes

AUDIT WORKING PARTY

Meeting Friday 27th October 2023 at 10.30am via Zoom

NOTES

Supporting documents were circulated to all participants prior to the meeting.

Present: Cllrs Haskins, Gage and Hall and Clerk A Shepherd.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Tully.

2. Report of the meeting in July to be approved.

The notes were approved. Clerk confirmed that the notes were included in the August Parish Council Finance Report and the recommendations of the Audit Working Party were accepted by the Parish Council.

3. To confirm second quarter bank reconciliation.

A detailed bank reconciliation for the second quarter was circulated in advance of the meeting and approved.

4. To review budgeting report and summary report for budget compliance.

The budgeting and summary report to the end of Quarter 2 were shared in advance of the meeting and considered in detail.

Each line of the report was discussed and reviewed for budget compliance. The following points were noted:

Cost Centre	Cost Code	Note
Income	Interest	Performing better than predicted. Amount of interest likely to increase further now that further money has been added to the CCLA PSDF account.
IT and Communications	IT and Communications	Only 20% of the budget allocated remains due to the cost of the required website rebuild. The Audit Working Party recommended that £500.00 is transferred from the grants and training budget lines to ensure there is sufficient funds on the budget line.
Environmental and Open Spaces	Environment / Community	Noted that £3000 is allocated in this budget line to support Priorswood Library. Audit Working Party recommended that consideration is given by the Parish Council as to whether to continue to commit this sum in future years now that the Taunton Town Council has been established. The Audit Working Party recommended reducing the amount by two thirds to £1000.00 per year.
Salaries and Expenses	Expenses	Only 23% of the budgeted amount remains. It was agreed to review the position again at the end of Quarter 3.

	Salaries	Budget line is fine at the moment but it was noted that a national pay award is pending for 2023/24. It was agreed to review the position again at the end of Quarter 3.
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Clerk confirmed that the intention remains, as previously discussed by the Audit Working Party and agreed by the Parish Council, that any underspend on budget lines at year end, apart from Youth and Community which would be rolled forward for events next year, should be added to the Parish Councils General Reserves.

5. To confirm second quarter VAT reclaim.

The VAT reclaimed in the second quarter was £941.99.

6. To review 2023/24 CIL spend review remaining funds

A document summarising CIL spend and the amount of CIL money remaining was circulated in advance of the meeting. The document was summarised, discussed and the current position noted.

It was recommended by the Audit Working Party that approved expenditure in relation to the sports pitches including the erection of a fence and gate around the dog walking area be CIL expenditure.

7. Grant Applications

It was noted that the window for grant applications was 1st September to 15th October 2023. Clerk advised that no grant applications were received during the window. The next grant window will open in the 2024/25 financial year.

**8. To review forecasted expenditure in relation to:
CIL**

The forecasted CIL expenditure was summarised. Projects include the Country Park, Tacchi Morris bar upgrade, sports pitch fencing / gates, community garden and fridge, canal comet trail, dog waste bins and grass cutting equipment are planned CIL expenditure.

Sports Pitches

In addition to the £10000.00 budget allocated, £467,794.36 was received from the developer with the transfer of the sports pitches.

It was recommended that the expenditure in relation to fencing and gates should be CIL expenditure.

The phase 1 (£220,260.28) and phase 2 (£793,878.90) estimates were noted. It was noted that there would be a shortfall and once planning permission is obtained grant applications will be made to cover the shortfall.

MH1

It was also noted that funds of £262,000.00 are expected with the transfer / adoption of the MH1 POS. Of this amount £54,529.94 would be allocated to Parish Council General Reserves as reimbursement for the amount spent by the Parish Council on MH1 tree planting. The remainder will be added to an MH1 POS Earmarked Reserve.

9. To consider any other financial matters brought to the attention of the RFO before the meeting.

Clerk summarised the queries raised by the External Auditor as part of the 2022/23 External Audit.

No other financial matters were brought to the attention of the RFO prior to the meeting.

10. Date of next meeting Friday 26th January 2024.

Meeting finished at 10.15am.

Resolution to accept the recommendations of the Audit Working Party. Proposed by Cllr Gage, seconded by Cllr Hope and agreed with all in favour.

d) Budgeting report

The budgeting reports to 31st October were shared in advance of the meeting and the contents of the reports was noted.

179/23 Other matters for report only – items for discussion - no decision

Cllr Gage reported that the mower service has been arranged with Bridgwater Mowers for 22nd November.
Cllr Haskins congratulated Assistant Clerk Community on the successful completion of the CILCA qualification.

a) Items for next meeting agenda - by Monday 20th November 2023 or Monday 4th December 2023

Noted

b) Dates to note over the next 14 days

Clerk confirmed that the following meetings are taking place in October:

- 21st November – Agenda run through meeting
- 21st November – Budget / Precept Meeting
- 23rd November – Joint CP Meeting
- 28th November – PC Meeting

180/23 Dates of forthcoming meetings:

Parish Council:

Second Tuesday in the month (Business focused meeting)

2023: 12th Dec

2024: 9th Jan, 13th Feb, 12th Mar, 9th Apr, 14th May, 11th Jun, 9th Jul, 13th Aug, 10th Sep, 8th Oct, 12th Nov, 10th Dec.

Fourth Tuesday in the month (Community / project focused meeting)

2023: 28th Nov.

2024: 23rd Jan, 27th Feb, 23rd Apr, 28th May, 25th Jun, 23rd Jul, 24th Sep, 22nd Oct, 26th Nov.

Audit Working Party: 26th January 2024 at 9.30am (Virtual)

Annual Parish Meeting: 26th March 2024 at 7pm

BACH committee 8th February 2024 at 7pm

Budget and Precept 21st November 2023 at 7pm

Sports Pitch Committee TBC at 7pm

There being no further business to discussed, the meeting ended at 10.30pm



Signed Chairman:

Date: 28th November 2023