



West Monkton Parish Council

DRAFT

Minutes of the Meeting of West Monkton Parish Council held on Tuesday 25th June 2024 at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllrs Cavill (from 7.05pm), Haskins, Munson, Besley, and Tully (from 7.05pm).

In attendance: Mrs A Shepherd, Clerk, Mrs K Welsh, Assistant Clerk Community, and 7 members of the public, including the applicants representatives in respect of planning application number 48/24/0015.

55/24 To receive any apologies (with reasons), introductions with responsibilities.

Apologies were received from Cllrs Hall, Chapman, Ellis and Gage.

56/24 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.

57/24 To adopt the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 11th June 2024

The minutes from the Meeting of the Parish Council on 11th June 2024, having been previously circulated, were taken as read. It was resolved to adopt the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on 11th June, proposed by Cllr Munson, seconded by Cllr Besley, and agreed by show of hands.

58/24 Chairman's Report

The Chairman's report was deferred.

Public Question Time

Clerk reported that a member of the public had raised concerns about a van parking on the kerb on Bridgwater Road near the bus gate.

Clerk to report issue to PCSO.

Cllr Haskins raised the bird mouth fencing near Aginhills that is damaged.

Clerk to report to Aginhills Management Company

Cllr Cavill and Tully joined the meeting at 7.05pm.

Cllr Haskins raised the steel plate that has been placed over the sink hole on Gotton Lane, the plate now rocks a lot when a vehicle drives over it.

Clerk to report to Somerset Council Highways.

Cllr Cavill reported that the Langaller Farm application had been approved by the Somerset Council Planning Committee. Cllr Cavill raised the need for a public right of way connection. This has been agreed and incorporated.

Cllr Cavill also reported that the PV panel application at Ham had also been approved by the Planning Committee.

Cllr Tully raised the block gullies and condition of the pavements along Bridgwater Road.

Clerk to report to Somerset Council Highways.

59/24 Planning

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

Cllr Cavill, as a member of the Somerset West Planning Committee did not take part in discussions of the planning applications to avoid fettering his discretion.

48/24/0015: Change of use from classes B1, B2 and B8 to classes B1, B2, B8 to include use as an MOT Centre and vehicle servicing unit at Unit A, The Orchards, Blundells Lane, West Monkton. (Applicants attending meeting).

The Parish Council supports the granting of permission for the following reasons:

- The proposal relates to a small family run business and enables the diversification of the business.
- The proposal will enable the provision of additional local services for which there is a local need and will reduce vehicle movements.
- The proposal will create an additional local employment opportunity.

48/23/0036 Application for approval of reserved matters following outline application 48/16/0033 for the erection of 90 No. dwellings and associated works on land at Hartnells Farm, Monkton Heathfield. Consider further comments.

It was agreed to make no further comments in respect of the planning application.

48/24/0027: Application for Outline Planning with all matters reserved except for access for erection of up to 7 No. residential dwellings on land north of Cheddon Fitzpaine, Gotton.

The Parish Council objects to the granting of permission for the following reasons:

Environment

- The proposed erection of 7 residential dwelling at this location will have a detrimental and harmful impact on the environment. The proposal is not in compliance with Core Strategy Policy CP 8 that states that 'the Council will conserve and enhance the natural and historic environment and will not permit development proposals that would harm these interests...'
- The Quantock Hills AONB / National Landscape Area borders the proposed site.
- The proposed site is within a Landscape Character Area.
- The answers provided to the biodiversity questions in the application form indicate that the proposal will have no impact on protected and priority species which is incorrect.
- The site is within the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) at Hestercombe House. Core Strategy Policy CP8 states that 'Planning applications for development on sites within the Bat Consultation Zone will require a 'test of significance' under the Habitat Regulations to be carried out. Applicants must provide all necessary information to enable such a test to be conducted, including any necessary survey work, reports and avoidance / mitigation measures within the application'. Required surveys and reports have not been provided with this application.

Flooding

- Surface water flooding is an existing issue for properties along Cheddon Fitzpaine Road. Surface water from fields (including the proposed site) runs off onto the road and properties on the other side have experienced flooding of garages and gardens. Core Strategy Policy CP8 states that 'The Council will seek to direct development away from land at risk of fluvial or other causes of flooding..... Development sites will need to ensure that flood risk is not exacerbated from increased surface water flows by ensuring that existing greenfield rates and volumes are not increased off-site....' This proposal will exacerbate the flooding issues already being experienced in close proximity to the site.
- A combined sewer operates in this location. Residents are already experiencing issues with the capacity of the combined sewer; further development will exacerbate this issue.

Settlement Boundaries and Open Countryside

- The SADMP Policy SB1 Settlement Boundaries states that 'In order to maintain the quality of the rural environment and ensure a sustainable approach to development, proposals outside of the boundaries of settlements identified in the Core Strategy Policy SP1 will be treated as being within open countryside.' The site is outside of the settlement boundary and therefore open countryside.

- Furthermore, Core Strategy Policy CP8 states that 'Unallocated greenfield land outside of settlement boundaries will be protected and where possible enhanced. Development in such areas will be strictly controlled in order to conserve environmental assets and open character of the area'.
- Policy DM2 Development in the Countryside provides specific uses where proposed development in the Countryside would be supported. Residential properties are not one of the specified uses in the policy.

Quantock Hills

- The proposed dwellings will be viewable from the Quantock Hills and Hestercombe. Core Strategy SS1 includes a requirement that development ensures 'a well-defined green edge to the urban area that protects views from Hestercombe House and the Quantock Hills' and paragraph 5.16 of the Core Strategy states 'it is important to protect views southwards from the Quantock Hills AONB'.

Climate Change

- Strategic Objective 1 Climate Change of the Core Strategy states that 'Taunton Deane will be a leader in addressing the causes and impacts of climate change and adapting to its effects. Along with every organisation and individual, our carbon footprint will need to be reduced in order to reduce greenhouse emissions and generally promote a more sustainable environment. The overall Plan strategy will direct development to sustainable locations, reducing the need to travel. Proposals themselves will also be expected to consider and mitigate the effects of climate change. Avoiding development in floodplains, green infrastructure associated with urban extensions, Eco proposals for the Taunton urban extension, reductions in carbon emissions from new residential and non-residential development and using sustainable construction techniques will all help mitigate against and adapt to climate change within the Borough'. The site is not a sustainable location that reduces the need to travel; it is likely that residents of the proposed properties will rely on the car to travel as there are no public transport routes nearby and there are no amenities within close proximity to the site.
- The Core Strategy Policy CP1 Climate Change states that 'Development proposals should result in a sustainable environment, and will be required to demonstrate that the issue of climate change has been addressed by:
 - g. Their scale, form, design, materials and cumulative impacts can be satisfactorily assimilated into the landscape or built environment and would not harm the character of these areas and has no overriding adverse impact on the amenity of the area in respect of noise, dust, odour and traffic generation.

The proposal will have an adverse impact on the character of the area by permitting building on an existing agricultural field and amenity of the area through noise and traffic generation.

Traffic and Road Safety

- A Speed Indicator Device (SID) has been deployed several times in the last 18 months on Cheddon Fitzpaine Road, very close to the site of the proposal. The results are summarised below:

Date	Incoming vehicles (Cheddon Fitzpaine to Monkton Heathfield)	Outgoing vehicles (Monkton Heathfield to Cheddon Fitzpaine)	Total number of vehicles	Average number of vehicles per day	85th percentile speed
11th to 30th October 2022	9287	10684	19971	19 days: 1051 vehicles per day	29mph
27th May to 19th June 2023	12738	14168	26906	23 days: 1169 vehicles per day	31mph
8th to 28th May 2024	10212	14609	24821	20 days: 1241 vehicles per day	32mph

The results demonstrate a gradual increase in the average number of traffic movements and an increase in average vehicle speeds. Cheddon Fitzpaine Road is a country lane with sections of single

vehicle road widths and blind property and footpath entrances. The lane, which is often used by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders (from the local riding school for children) and large agricultural vehicles, cannot safely accommodate any further increase in traffic volumes which this proposal would undoubtedly bring. The proposal will discourage existing local residents from walking and cycling on the country lanes due to safety concerns from volumes and speed of traffic.

- The supporting information submitted with the application indicates that there have been no reported road traffic accidents on Cheddon Fitzpaine Road. This is unfortunately not the case, there has in the past been a fatality on the road within half a mile of the proposed site and a stationary vehicle that was parked on Cheddon Fitzpaine Road was recently written off by a vehicle travelling at speed.

Evidence of need for Self-Build Plots

- The supporting information submitted with the application makes claims that there is a demand for self-build plots, but the evidence submitted does not justify the stated demand.

West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Development Plan

- The Neighbourhood Plan has the following Vision: 'To successfully accommodate the significant growth planned for the area. To ensure a high quality of design with the creation of sustainable places with excellent community facilities for local people to enjoy. During this period of growth, the historic settlements and surrounding countryside will be protected to maintain and enhance the locally distinctive characteristics of the area for future generations. Permitting 7 residential properties at the proposed site will not enable the protection and enhancement of the countryside but have an adverse impact on it.
- Although Housing Policy H4 Affordable Housing supports only affordable self-build housing to meet the local demand. It also supports self-build plots being provided within a development area. The proposal does not provide affordable self-build housing, nor does it provide them within a development area.

Planning History

- The supporting information submitted with this application states that there is no planning history that is relevant to this site. The Parish Council wishes to highlight the recent application in relation to Glebe Farm which was withdrawn (reference 08/22/0001).

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

Noted

It was noted that the Parish Council did not receive notification of the planning application relating to Langaller Farm from Somerset Council. Clerk to write to the Planning Department and raise the issue and confirm that if it did a request for an off-site S106 contribution towards the changing facilities at Waterleaze would have been requested.

60/24 Environment

a) Parks and Open Spaces Devolution; update

Cllr Cavill suggested including the devolution of the Country Park in the negotiations with Somerset Council about the devolution of parks and open spaces. The Somerset Council owned parks and open spaces in the parish if devolved will increase the Parish Councils costs / budget for open space management and the St Quintins play equipment needs to be replaced. The inclusion of the Country Park in the negotiations will balance the liability.

It was agreed to formally put forward the inclusion of the Country Park in the devolution discussion with Somerset Council.

61/24 Community

a) Tug of War Event update; approval of risk assessment and insurance liability

Clerk summarised the risk assessment for the Tug of War event that was circulated in advance of the meeting. It was resolved to approve the risk assessment and accept insurance liability for the event. Proposed by Cllr Besley, seconded by Cllr Munson and agreed with all in favour.

Assistant Clerk Community summarised the final arrangements that were taking place for the event, the fish and chips food vendor has pulled out at the last minute and alternative food vendors are trying to be arranged. Arrangements for setting up, the day of the event and tidying up were discussed and agreed.

b) Country Park Halloween Firework Event Proposal

Cllr Haskins summarised a proposal put forward by the Firework Company who did the fireworks for the D-Day Event to hold a Halloween Firework Event at the Country Park.

Clerk confirmed that the proposal was for the firework company to run the event, sell the tickets and that 50% of the profits from the event would be donated to the Parish Council.

Clerk reported some concerns about holding the event including car parking issues, the terms of the CP lease, VAT implications and also the capacity of the PC to organise the event for this year.

It was agreed to politely decline for proposal for 2024 but investigate the possibility of holding a firework event in 2025.

c) Community Review Project update

Cllr Munson reported that the topics for the Community Review survey have been selected, a further meeting of the Steering Group is scheduled to take place on Thursday 27th June to agree the questions for each of the topics to be included in the survey.

d) Summer Food Project update

Assistant Clerk Community provided an update on the Summer Food Project. Monkton Wood students are to be involved in the project which will run on Wednesdays and Thursdays through the school summer holidays.

Cllr Haskins reported that he has a potential volunteer to help who is a chef / chocolatier. Cllr Haskins to pass on the details to Assistant Clerk Community.

Assistant Clerk Community confirmed that the intention is to build up a youth café through the summer, linked to the summer food project with a view to the youth café running after the community café on Wednesdays after the school holidays.

e) Somerset Council Chair Community Award and NALC Star Council Awards 2024; discuss nominations.

It was agreed to nominate Alan Hall for the Somerset Council Chair Community Award. Clerk to develop the nomination and submit prior to the 28th of June deadline.

Clerk confirmed the categories of the NALC Star Council Awards and suggested that a nomination be submitted for the Climate Response of the Year award. The deadline for the nomination is 6th September. Clerk to develop a draft nomination for discussion at a future PC meeting.

62/24 Projects

a) MH1 POS update; discussion of legal transfer document and resolution providing authority to sign the transfer document

Clerk summarised the legal transfer document that was circulated in advance of the meeting. The transfer document includes a requirement for the play park remedials to take place within 6 months of transfer. The transfer document does not include the required tree works.

A discussion followed and it was resolved to agree the legal transfer document and provide authority to Cllrs Haskins and Chapman to sign the document in the presence of the Clerk subject to the document being amended to include:

- A bond being included to cover the cost of the play park remedials if they are not completed within 6 months of legal transfer.
- Reference to the tree works being included and that they should be completed by the beginning of the next bird nesting season and a bond being included if they are not completed.

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

Clerk reported that an alternative Parish Council Director needed to be identified for the management company following the resignation of Geoff Hope from the Parish Council. It was agreed to add this to the agenda for the next meeting.

Clerk confirmed that the next MH1 catch up meeting is scheduled to take place on 27th June at 10am.

Cllr Besley raised the ragwort on the ERR and asked if Persimmon could be approached and asked if they would pay for the Parish Council to remove it at a cost of £500.00. Clerk to raise with Persimmon.

b) Sports Pitches

Cllr Haskins reported that the contractor will be back on site in mid-July. The gravel that is present on site needs to be moved to enable access. Cllr Besley agreed to move the gravel.

Clerk raised the electric / ducting and asked whether the surveyor should be asked to mark the locations of the ends so that they can be buried. It was agreed to instead metal at the ducting ends so they could be detected with a metal detector.

Clerk reported that Stone and Partners are continuing to develop the planning application. Further plans for the pavilion to be submitted with the planning application have been requested.

Clerk outlined the latest comments received from the FA about the sports pitch proposal. It was agreed to proceed with submitting the planning application on the advice of the planning officer.

Clerk raised the name of the sports pitches and logo for the gate design.

It was agreed to discuss the name further at the next meeting.

c) MH2 Update

Clerk reported that she is trying to arrange a catch up about the planning application with Simon Fox, the Planning Officer. Date to be confirmed in due course.

d) Poppy of Honour

Cllr Cavill reported that a response has been received from the Lord Lieutenant following a request for assistance with fundraising efforts confirming that they cannot help with promotion of fundraising.

Contacts for the Commonwealth have now been obtained and Cllr Cavill is putting together a document regarding the Poppy of Honour to send requesting support for funding / fundraising which will be sent as soon as possible.

e) Junior Football Pitch Provision Update; Consider Bridgwater Road Pitch Survey quotations

Clerk confirmed that negotiations with the FA are ongoing.

Cllr Cavill confirmed that he had not been able to obtain an update from Charlie Field at Somerset Council regarding the terms of transferring the land.

It was agreed to defer consideration of the survey quotes until the next meeting.

f) Allotment provision

Cllr Cavill to follow up the acquisition of the land between School Road and Farriers Green with Somerset Council.

g) Multi-Agency Approach to flood prevention update

Clerk provided an update in relation to the permanent pumps at Bathpool provided by the EA. The project is going through the development process within the EA and the specification and business case justification steps are being completed.

Somerset Council has also confirmed that the pumps do not require planning permission.

The EA during a telephone conversation confirmed that to install the pumps for this winter they would need to be on site by September due to the ground conditions, if this isn't possible the pumps would be installed as soon as ground conditions allow after winter.

h) Permanent Storage Solution

Clerk confirmed that this item had been added to the agenda on the request of Cllr Gage. A discussion took place about the storage container that is available at the Country Park which could be used for community event equipment once new storage containers are placed at the Country Park as part of the lottery application. It was also noted that an office for the PC wasn't really needed as the BACH office was suffice for now and a new Parish office could form part of MH2.

It was also noted that the legal transfer in respect of the MH1 public open space includes a restrictive covenant preventing buildings being erected on the POS.

It was agreed to take no further action in respect of a permanent storage solution.

63/24 Assets

a) Country Park and Somerset Wood; Hydrographic Office Archives visit, feedback from Joint Meeting with CFPC, Lottery grant application update, consider and approve Whistleblowing Policy.

The following Councillors expressed a wish to take part in Hydrographic office visit, Cllrs Besley, Gage, Haskins and Cavill. Clerk or Assistant Clerk Community to attend depending on space.

The Whistleblowing Policy was circulated in advance of the meeting. It was resolved to adopt the Policy, proposed by Cllr Munson, seconded by Cllr Besley and agreed with all in favour.

Clerk provided feedback on a meeting with Simon Fox about the required planning permission for items included in the lottery application. All elements require permission. Clerk to obtain planning consultant quotes for approval at the next meeting.

Clerk reported that the Clerks will be meeting with the lottery funding officer on Monday 1st July at 3.30pm.

Following Alan Hall's departure, Cllr Cavill agreed to be the Councillor lead for the Country Park and Somerset Wood.

b) BACH

Clerk provided feedback from the insurers on the liability claim following the fall in January in the car park.

An investigation has been carried out and it has concluded that there appears to be no evidence to suggest a breach of duty and/or negligence can be attributed to the Parish Council. A formal claim has not been received from the individual and the insurers have recommended keeping the claim open for the next couple of months to see if one is received.

c) Community Fridge; expansion update.

Clerk confirmed that the second fridge shed has arrived. An installation date is awaited.

The additional racking has been ordered. It is hoped that the shed will be installed prior to the second anniversary of the fridge on 12th July.

Flooring quotes to be obtained for approval at the next meeting.

d) Community Garden

Assistant Clerk Community reported that the gardeners have requested an external tap.

Clerk to liaise with the school to see if one can be added from the existing tap, alternatively quote to be obtained for installation of an external tap from the BACH kitchen.

64/24 Highways / Footpaths / Safe Routes to School; Cllrs Besley and Tully to report. To discuss latest SID results.

The results from the SID from when it was recently deployed on the WRR near the junction with Farriers Green were discussed. High speeds were noted. Clerk to send the results to the road safety department at Avon and Somerset Police and request enforcement.

Cllr Besley requested an update regarding the Yallands Hill crossing point. Clerk to request an update from Somerset Council on the feasibility study.

65/24 Other matters for report only – items for discussion - no decision

a) Items for next meeting agenda – by Monday 1st July or Monday 15th July

Noted

Assistant Clerk Community outlined a possible Graffiti Clearers Volunteers Group. A risk assessment / procedure is being developed for approval at a future meeting.

Cllr Besley reported that young people at breaking into Langaller Farmhouse and congregating. The police are aware and attended but took little action.

66/24 Dates of forthcoming meetings:

Parish Council:

Second Tuesday in the month (Business focused meeting)

2024: 9th Jul, 13th Aug, 10th Sep, 8th Oct, 12th Nov, 10th Dec.

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

2024: 23rd Jul, 24th Sep, 22nd Oct, 26th Nov.

Audit Working Party: 19th July 2024 at 9.30am

Annual Parish Meeting: TBC March 2025 at 7pm

BACH Committee 15th October 2024 at 7pm

Sports Pitch Committee TBC

Somerset Wood Joint Committee: TBC

There being no further business to discussed, the meeting ended at 9.30pm



Signed Chairman:

Date: 9th July 2024