

**Minutes of the Meeting of Meare Parish Council
Held on Monday 21st November 2022, 7.30pm in the Chapel**

Public participation

Present: Cllrs Bennetts (Chair), Field, C. Foster, T Foster, Gage, Hoskins, James, Neale, Richards, Winters, Wren and the Clerk Gerard Tucker

In attendance: 15 members of public

Mrs Janet Westover spoke about the need to renovate the war memorial and the difficulties in obtaining quotes due to the specialist work involved.

2022/

140. Apologies

Apologies were received from County Cllr Ros Wyke.

141. Minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes were then considered accurate and were approved by the Council before being signed by the Chair.

142. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Wren declared an interest in agenda item 7g, Village Hall draw down loan agreement.

143. Summary of actions from the previous meeting

- a. The clerk reported that the reason why the parish council has not been consulted on the pending Rose Farm application, is that it was a pre-application, not a validated full application.
- b. The clerk has formally thanked Cllr Field for her research into the appropriate IT solutions.
- c. The clerk has met with Mr Adlam to discuss the most appropriate trees for planting at both the school and picnic area and the item is on the agenda for discussion.
- d. The clerk has prepared a draft tender document for the maintenance of areas throughout the parish, which is included on the agenda for discussion.
- e. Three councillors met with younger members of the community to discuss improved youth facilities. A presentation is to be made later.
- f. The clerk has written to Neil Corp from County Highways to thank him for his services to the community over many years and wish him a long and happy retirement.

144. County and District Councillor reports

Cllr Shearer had previously submitted a written statement which has been circulated to all Councillors. The key points are details on:

1. *the support to mitigate impact of the cost of living crisis this winter.*
2. *Taunton to have its own Town Council again after 50 years*
3. *Launch of an awareness campaign on suicide*
4. *National recognition for SCC Social Workers*
5. *National award for work on Health and Wellbeing work.*
6. *Language tuition available from Somerset libraries.*

145. Highways

The clerk informed that he has received correspondence from a parishioner raising concerns about blocked drains in St Mary's Road, opposite Abbots Way school. This problem has been reported on many occasions and the support of Cllr Shearer was sought to help resolve the problem.

The provision of signage at both Farriers Close and Wheelwrights Terrace was discussed. The clerk produced a plan of the location and sought councillors' input to where the signs should be placed.

Cllr Field informed that the replacement fingerpost on Shapwick Road (pointing towards Burtle) will be installed very soon. A sign in the centre of Westhay which has been hit and removed following an accident is still waiting to be replaced.

146. Parish Matters including:

a. Trees and benches for picnic area. The clerk has met with Mr Adlam who has offered to make a picnic bench from a large piece of bog oak. He also has connections and will seek guidance on the two appropriate trees to plant in the area. A resident has offered to provide a bench for the area. This is all work in progress. Meanwhile, the clerk has purchased a lock and chain for the large gate and shared the code with appropriate people.

b. Planting of trees on verges. A parishioner has raised a concern about the planting of two fruit trees on the verge near Kirlegate. Guidance has been obtained from the Tree Officer at Mendip DC who informed that he has a concern about the location, effect of falling fruit and potential impact on the sub surface utilities. The concerns were acknowledged by those who planted the trees who offered to relocate them to a more suitable location.

C. Outcomes from discussions on youth facilities, including a presentation from Edwin Hoskins. A questionnaire has been devised, which will be conducted by Google. In the presentation by Edwin Hoskins, he informed that a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) would be the optimum ambition for the young people of the parish.

The clerk has contacted the council's insurance company and sought their guidance on the use of a car park area for young people to play games. In response, they informed that providing a full risk assessment is undertaken, that the surface is appropriately maintained and vehicles are kept away when young people are using the facilities, then they are comfortable that the area can have a dual purpose, although not at the same time.

Cllr Bennetts proposed, seconded by Cllr Gage and unanimously supported by councillors that quotes are obtained to purchase fencing to be placed behind the two goals and fencing and gate to separate the car park area. Progress on this is to be reported to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

d. Cctv update, including disposal of redundant equipment. The new equipment has now been installed and signage provided. There is a need to add contact details to the signage, yet with a pending change of email address for the council, the signage informing of cctv coverage is to be installed and upgraded when the new contact details are operational. The previous equipment has been removed and is partly damaged by water ingress. Cllr Hoskins offered to take the camera and equipment to a local repair café to see if it might be possible to repair and reuse the equipment. If it is possible to repair the camera, on completion, it is to be advertised in the parish magazine.

e. Trench and fencing in the Playing Field – obtaining tenders Cllr C Foster informed that he has now obtained two estimates for the work required to pipe the ditch and a separate estimate to fence the field. He offered to try and obtain additional estimates. Meanwhile, the hedge needs to be trimmed back and Cllr C foster offered to speak to Richard Baker who has cut the hedge in the past and enquire if he might undertake the job again.

f. Update on change of email addresses and website Cllr Field informed that the work to prepare a new website is well underway, although it will be the new year before the work has been completed. Councillors will have a dedicated email address and the parish council will have a permanent dedicated contact. Cllr Field suggested that a small working group is tasked with guiding this project through. Cllrs Field, Bennetts and Gage are to form the working party and will advise of the outcomes at the next meeting of the council in January.

g. Draw down agreement with Village Hall for Public Works Loan. The suggestion by the clerk to engage with an independent advisor to guide the parish council on the appropriate way to proceed was endorsed. It is hoped that the results of any input can be shared at the January meeting of the council.

147. To consider a draft maintenance contract

The Clerk has prepared a draft maintenance contract. He identified some key points for Council to consider, including the proposal is to have a four year contract commencing in April 2023. Some minor amendments are required to the suggested schedule of works, including clarification of the footpath between Magnolia Peat Works and Shapwick Road. Cllr Neale offered to check this footpath.

Cllr Gale proposed, seconded by Cllr Hoskins and unanimously **AGREED** to approve the distribution of a maintenance tender. The clerk was asked to produce a poster to inform of the opportunity to tender.

148. Budget recommendations of the Finance Committee for consideration

The Finance Committee had previously met and their recommendations for the budget were distributed to councillors prior to the meeting. Incorporated into the suggested budget are a number of items raised in recent months, including a contribution to youth equipment and a second speed indicator device (SID). The budget is to be reviewed at the January meeting by when it is anticipated information from the County Council will have been received informing of the precept rate.

149. Precept for 2023/2024

Having not yet received information from the County Council on the precept rates, this item was held over until the next meeting.

150. Finances

a. Summary of account. The clerk had previously circulated information on the transactions and balances of the council. No questions were raised, and Cllr Bennetts proposed, seconded by Cllr Neale and unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept the financial summary. 11-0-0

c. Invoices to be paid.

Payment	Amount £
Malcolm Sweet	70.00
Clerks November expenses	92.81
Meare and Westhay Ladies Group	300.00
Meare PCC (hall hire)	30.00

b. Invoices paid since last meeting

Voucher number	Name	Details	Income	Expend £
SO	Gerard Tucker	Clerks salary		837.75
48	Caroline Sanderson	Parish magazine editor		150.00
49	Community Church	Hire of church rooms for Oct and Nov meetings		70.00
50	Malcolm Sweet	Grounds maintenance		285.00
DD	EDF	Playing field supply		28.00
51	Gerard Tucker	Clerks expenses – October		34.98
52	SALC	Essential Clerk Finance – Training		30.00
53	Royal British Legion	Contribution for remembrance wreath		85.00
DD	Ripple Accounts	Payroll		10.00
54	Netwise/Jane Field	Setting up and annual licence for website/email		1,246.80
55	Avon Surveillance	CCTV – Recreation Field		2,532.00
56	M&WH Ladies Club	Contribution towards Warm Spaces		300.00
57	Gerard Tucker	Clerks expenses – November		92.81
SO	HMRC	NI & PAYE July - September		628.20
58	Malcolm Sweet	Grounds maintenance		70.00

151. Planning – No applications have been received since the last meeting. The clerk informed that application No 2022/0864/LBC and 2022/0920/HSE Ferlingmere House had been refused, despite the parish council registering their support for the applications.

152. Correspondence –

Mendip District Council have grants available up to £1,000 to support community projects. The warm spaces programme was encouraged to apply.

The National Association of Local Councils have prepared a Civility and Respect policy which councils have been encouraged to endorse. It was **AGREED** to support this policy.

153. Summary of Actions

- i. To inform Mendip DC of the locations for signs at Wheelwright Terrace a Farriers Close
- ii. Remove two fruit trees planted on the verge at Kirlegate
- iii. Obtain quotes for fencing the area behind each goal mouth at the playing field
- iv. The clerk to pursue guidance from SALC on the appropriate way to proceed with the Village Hall loan agreement.
- v. To produce a poster in support of a maintenance contract

Meeting closed at 9.20pm.

The next meeting will be on Monday 16th January 2023, 7.30pm in the Chapel

Signed Dated 16th January 2023

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