

**Minutes of the Meeting of Meare Parish Council  
Held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022, 7.30pm in the Chapel**

**Public participation**

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

**In attendance:** 14 members of public

There was no public participation

**2022/ 128. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Field (holiday) and Gage (unwell) and County Cllr Ros Wyke.

**129. Minutes of the previous meeting.** The suggestion of an additional speed indicator device was not made by Cllr James. A sentence was added which informed of the historic value of the roadside hedge near the Fish House. The minutes were then considered accurate and were approved by the Council before being signed by the Chair.

**130. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest

**131. Summary of actions from the previous meeting**

- a. The clerk to purchase anti-virus software to protect the laptop. This has been completed.
- b. The Village Hall and Parish Councillors are encouraged to meet and discuss the conditions of releasing the loan. Cllr Hoskins informed the council of the suggested conditions for the release of the loan. In summary, there is a requirement for :
  - o The Village Hall and Playing Field Trust to agree the conditions for the repayment of the loan.
  - o To agree the anticipated timescales and financial balances.
  - o An acknowledgement that the new hall becomes an asset to the village for a minimum term (75 years)
  - o That the contract between the two organisations is legally prepared and formally agreed.
- c. The cctv detail prepared by Cllr James to be circulated. Item to be discussed later in the agenda.
- d. The paper detailing the appropriate IT support measures with input by Cllr Field to be circulated. Item to be discussed later in the agenda.
- e. The clerk to contact Towens to complain about inappropriate driving habits. Completed, no reply received.
- f. A training session to prioritise the actions of the council and to address the changes to the Code of Conduct is to be organised for Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October in the Community Church commencing at 7.30pm. Completed

### 132. County and District Councillor reports

Cllr Shearer provided an overview of actions of the County and District Council. A newsletter  
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has been prepared (and distributed) which informs of the challenges of bringing the different authorities together under a single unitary umbrella. Cllr Shearer has the SCC Portfolio for Adult Social Care, the largest expenditure of the council's budget. Information was provided by Cllr Shearer on the appropriate contacts for street naming and signage.

### 133. Highways

The clerk informed that Mr Neil Corp was soon to retire from his position at Somerset County Highways. The clerk was asked to write to Neil and thank him for his dedication and support over many years.

### 134. Parish Matters including:

#### a. To determine what youth facilities the clerk is to research.

Cllr James informed that the repair of the basketball hoops would be undertaken by parishioners and an offer to meet the costs has been made by the M&WFT. Councillors Bennetts, Foster and Wren volunteered to help and support Edwin Hoskins and other interested young people about ways forward to improve the facilities for them in the parish. It was suggested that they form a working party to consult with the young people. **b.**

#### Purchase of trees for the picnic area and school(s)

The clerk has spoken to Meare Primary School who have welcomed the idea of being given a tree to plant in the school grounds. They have suggested an Acer, as there are no berries and the leaves are both colourful and retained for most of the year (on some varieties). The clerk is to liaise with Mr Ray Adlam who will assist with the planting of an appropriate tree on the picnic area and report back to the next meeting of the council. Cllr Hoskins enquired if the same opportunity might be extended to Abbotts Way school. Further research is required to determine if the school would like a tree and if so, what variety.

#### C. Maintenance contract: To agree regular areas of the village that need attention, prior to inviting tenders.

The intention is to award a contract for three years maintenance of village areas commencing from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. In the preparation of information to invite tenders, the clerk provided a summary of the areas currently cleared. He enquired if there were additional places that should be regularly attended to. In response, a small area of verge opposite Porters Hatch Farm should be included. A discussion on the footpath between Bramble Close and the Playing Field concluded that additional works need to be undertaken to level the surface and the landowner will if asked to maintain the hedge which he owns. \* The clerk was asked to contact the current maintenance provider and ask that he cuts the area around the fencing in the playing field.

#### d. To consider cctv quotes for the playing field

Cllr James provided information on four quotes obtained from cctv camera installers. Quotes received from: AD Alarms - £995, Avon - £2,183, Taun Tech - £2,925, Sirius - £4,285. After much discussion, particularly understanding the level of technology to be provided and the reuse of previous equipment, Cllr T Foster proposed, seconded by Cllr Hoskins that Avon's quote be accepted. This was **AGREED** by majority 8-1-0.

Cllr James was asked to contact Avon and obtain a revised quote.

The Clerk would then officially place an order with Avon for the new CCTV provision.

Resident, Ray Adlam informed that he had spoken to Mr Wilcox who owns the land on which the picnic site is located. Mr Adlam has informed Mr Wilcox that as long as he is able, he will maintain the ditch, after which it may have to become the responsibility of the Parish Council. Mr Adlam also acknowledged that there is a new bin to install and the planting of a tree.

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**135. Complying with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations).**

Cllr Field had previously prepared and distributed a paper on the purpose of upgrading the methods used by the council when using IT technology. By investing in a dedicated system, a level of security will be the benefit for councillors, who are using personal email addresses at the moment. Five quotes have been obtained, which compares to our current system of doing nothing. The quotes received are from:

- Gmail - £864 per annum
- Microshade – Annual cost of £838.08
- DP Solutions One off cost £1,600 and an annual fee of £119.88 Netwise
- One off cost £599 plus an annual fee of £30.00
- Zonkey – Set up cost £1,995, plus £65.00 per hour support.

The clerk spoke to the paper and informed that Netwise were specialists in providing support for town and parish councils. Their quote also provided the opportunity for the Parish Council to have its own dedicated website.

Cllr T Foster proposed, seconded by Cllr James and unanimously **AGREED** that the quote received from Netwise be accepted. The clerk was asked to thank Cllr Field for her input to this which has been most helpful.

**136. 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. 9-0-0

**b. S137 Funding requests**

- i. Hire of Community church for October meeting                      £ 30.00 ii.
- Parish magazine                      September edition shortfall    £350.00                      iii.

**c. Invoices to be paid.**

Payment	Amount £
Malcolm Sweet	70.00

**d. Warm spaces** Cllr Richards enquired if the Parish Council would consider supporting an initiative to provide warm spaces for those struggling with affording high energy costs and possibly also feeling lonely or isolated. She sought a contribution of £30 per month for six months to cover the heating costs of the parish hall. The Parish Ladies Group are intending to host regular monthly sessions, possibly on a Wednesday between 10.00am and 2.00pm. This direct response to meeting the needs of those who may be struggling financially met with the unanimous support of the parish council. Cllr C Foster proposed, seconded by Cllr Neale and unanimously **RESOLVED** that a donation of £300 is provided to support the initiative 9-0-0

**137. Planning –**

**i. Application No 2022/1954/PPA** There have been no new planning applications to consider. Cllr Bennetts informed that she was aware of a new application at Rose Farm, Westhay, with

the above application number given to it. The clerk was asked to contact Mendip DC to enquire why the parish council has not been consulted. A date of Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October was reserved in the event that a site visit is required.

**138. Correspondence – Volunteer Driver Service.** Julie Tucker the co-ordinator for the voluntary service gave a short presentation. The purpose of the service is to provide transport for parishioners of villagers around the parish of Street to enable access to doctors' appointments, shopping, dentists etc. The service is not to be used for hospital appointments. Leaflets informing of the service and a request for more volunteer drivers was made. Mrs Tucker informed that Somerset Community Partnership has provided £7,000 to support the service and Street Parish Council has given £5,000. Walton Parish Council have approved a contribution of £200. Cllr Hoskins proposed, seconded by Cllr **Bennetts** and unanimously **AGREED** that Meare Parish Council supports the initiative to the value of £200.

**139. Summary of Actions**

- a. The clerk to explore the reasons why the parish council has not been consulted on the pending Rose Farm application.
- b. The clerk to formally thank Cllr Field for her research into the appropriate IT solutions.
- c. The clerk is to liaise with Mr Adlam to discuss the most appropriate trees for planting at both the school and picnic area.
- d. The clerk is to prepare a draft tender document for the maintenance of areas throughout the parish.
- e. Three councillors and some younger members of the community are to plan appropriate consultation for improved youth facilities.
- f. The clerk is to write to Neil Corp from County Highways to thank him for his services to the community over many years.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm.

The next meeting will be on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> November, 7.30pm in the Chapel

Signed ..... Dated ..... 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022  
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