

**Minutes of the Meeting of Meare Parish Council
Held on Monday 17th July 2023, 7.30pm in the Chapel**

Public participation

Edwin Hoskins presented an update on the fund raising activities of the youth group. He informed that two grants had been obtained to the value of £1,250. The total amount raised now is in excess of £5,000. There is now a Youth Committee formed with more than half of the committee members being youths.

Present: Cllrs Bennetts (Chair), Field, C Foster, T Foster, Hoskins, James, Lee, Neale, Richards, Winter, Wren and the Clerk Lisa Newby

In attendance:

Cllr Heather Shearer and 8 members of public

55. Apologies

All present

56. Minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes of the meeting held on 19th June 2023 were Signed by the chair as a true and correct account of the meeting.

Proposed C Foster, Seconded Cllr T Foster (9-0-2)

57. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made

58. Summary of actions from the previous meeting – all completed, with the exception of the final point – which is on-going.

- Cllr Shearer to circulate information on 20MPH zones and limits
- Contact Highways and request an onsite meeting to discuss highways issues in Westhay
- Cllr Neale to visit the owner of 54, St Mary's Road to request the hedge is reduced
- Contact Malcolm Sweet and enquire what the cost would be to undertake this work.
- Cllr C Foster to contact an electrician and obtain a quote for replacing three junction boxes.
- Cllr Hoskins to discuss with the youths the idea of their involvement with painting the containers. *Additional note - To be painted this weekend*
- The clerk to obtain quotes for anti-climb paint. *Additional note Agreed 11-0-0 to purchase paint as required, pallets between containers to be removed.*
- Cllr Hoskins to obtain the cost and identify the preferred supplier of safety matting.
- The clerk to share the council's thoughts with the editor of the Parish Magazine.
- The clerk to research the appropriate way to sub-divide the original lease for the Village Hall, with a view of separating the playing field from responsibilities.
 - *The clerk reported that he is struggling with this action. This is possibly a role for a solicitor to guide and recommend. Others with experience in such matters may be better placed to drive this forward.*

59. County Councillors Report

Cllr Shearer reported that Tesco in Glastonbury are closing their pharmacy, which has raised a concern locally as there is no Sunday chemist open in Glastonbury. There has been a pharmaceutical needs analysis conducted at Somerset Council, to establish gaps. There is a similar gap in Chard. This has now been raised by public health director, and is awaiting a response. Local chemists in street will take turns on a rota. Boots Glastonbury also closing, and means the town and surrounding area under served.

The previously raised concern regarding the absence of refuse collections at the Church Graveyard has been raised again by Cllr Shearer again

The first Avalon and Polden Hills Local Community Network meeting will be held on Wednesday evening and held in Crispin School, Street.

The two posts that have mysteriously appeared at Porters Hatch are still unresolved

60. War Memorial railings – maintenance

Cllr Wren has obtained three quotes for the restoration and painting of the railings on the war memorial – The railings were last painted just a few years ago, yet it transpired that they had not been properly prepared and therefore need doing again.

To comply with GDPR, the quotes received were identified by letter. The preferred quote of those received was Quote C. Cllr Wren recommended to accept, works as listed on agenda. A discussion followed Cllr Hosksins suggestion questioning if the youth group, under supervision could undertake the work for a donation to their fund raising. It was pointed out that the Parish Council could not donate money set aside in the budget for War Memorial maintenance.

It was also noted that Cllr James had asked whether the contractor would guarantee the work. Some Councillors were surprised that these works have been tendered prior, without previous discussion by the Council..

Proposed by Cllr James, Seconded by Cllr Neale and unanimously **AGREED** [11-0-0] to accept Quote C and for the works to go ahead. Quote C was received from Ben Parsons to the value of £983.60 + VAT

61. Highways

- a. Details on pending road closures have been previously circulated to Members and placed on Social Media and the parish website
- b. Response from Highways to previous concerns raised.
 - i. Consideration for investing in a 20MPH restricted area (anticipated cost £10,000). The discussion relating to this item concluded that justification for spending this amount of money needs to be evidence led. Proposed by Cllr Neale, Seconded by Cllr James and resolved by majority, not to invest in 20MPH speed restrictions throughout the villages. (10-0-1)

Other Highways related matters raised included a request to install white lining in the narrow part as recently identified at a site visit.

The inappropriately parked car at the junction with Ashcott Road has received a parking enforcement ticket from the Police. Residents are encouraged to continue reporting violations to the Police as they occur.

Cllr Shearer confirmed that the additional funding received from Government is for resurfacing and not speed reduction campaigns. The suggestion of introducing a 20MPH limit near to Abbots Way School is to be pursued.

An additional speed survey is to be requested in a few months to compare any changes that may occur.

62. Parish Matters including:

- a. Playing Field update
 - i. Installing a new gate from the play area & replacing the existing 12' gate – date for a working party required. It was **RESOLVED** that a working party to

install the gates would be organised by the end of August. To consist of Cllrs Neale, Bennetts, Gage, Foster C, Foster T and Winters. The clerk to arrange with Roger Stacey the use of his post hole borer

- ii. Anti climb paint on containers – response from an approach to youths to undertake. This item had been previously covered under Actions from the previous meeting. Anti climb paint signs need to be purchased. A couple of recent incidents requiring the cctv camera footage to be reviewed. Any known incidents are to be shared as soon as possible. The cameras may need to be realigned to capture more of the containers

Action: Purchase anti-climb paint signs

b. Playing Field sub-committee

- i. Summary of discussion with Sports facility consultant. Cllrs Bennetts and Hoskins attended a Zoom meeting with a sports equipment installation consultant. His advice and guidance had been previously circulated. The new Village Hall Committee have been approached and asked for their support for a hard standing ball games area. It was further suggested that the Community Council for Somerset be approached for their guidance and input.

Tractor needs servicing and clutch needs repairing – this has been arranged.

Cllr Neale was thanked for replacing the bushes on the swings

- ii. Location for a hard standing sports facility. It was noted that almost £6,000 has been raised by the youths of the parish, which is commendable. A meeting with the landowner of the ransom strip near the pétanque area was positive. He offered to involve his developer with continued discussions. This may take a while and identifying an alternative location may be the best way to proceed. Once a location has been agreed, then a detailed budget can be prepared. A feasibility study would be helpful to establish a long term plan.

A youth group from Glastonbury has been invited to participate with preparing appropriate policies, as required, to future proof the youth group.

An alternative location to be considered is between the proposed car park and the existing car park.

Action: That the playing field subcommittee meet with the village hall committee, to discuss further.

Fund raising will continue. Once a preferred site has been identified, then applications to external funders can commence.

c. Village Hall update.

- i. First fundraiser conducted at the weekend, many people attended.
- ii. The VH Committee are now able to rejoin the Community Council for Somerset village hall organisation.
- iii. Bank account has now almost sorted out
- iv. Cancelled VAT registration for the foreseeable future.
- v. Consideration is being given to another questionnaire, this would be more up to date and simplified questions. Also another public meeting to view the plans and to engage on how to move forward

- d. Cemetery signage – Priority parking for cemetery users. Councillors understand that it is both residents and school staff who regularly park near the cemetery. The Clerk is to pursue the purchase of appropriate signage and to contact the Head Teacher of the school to inform of the problem of parking. 11-0-0

Action: The clerk to explore appropriate signage and to liaise with the school

Other parish items raised: Poor access on the footpath along the banks of the River Brue. Cllr Wren and the clerk to work through a strategy of identifying land owners and making an approach in an attempt to resolve the problem.

63. Parish Magazine

Unfortunately, Caroline Sanderson was unable to attend the meeting. An approach has been made to the printers to try and identify a more cost effective way to proceed and reduce costs. Ideas to explore include having a paper-based newsletter printed in the parish on a parish copier. There is enough money in the Village News Account to cover the costs for August/September edition. Cllr Bennetts is to investigate further. It was suggested that this is an item for the next meeting to be discussed further.

Action: To revisit the cost of producing a magazine/newsletter at the next meeting

64. Finances

a. Presentation of annual accounts including income and expenditure

The clerk had previously circulated the accounts to all members. There has been very little movement on the account since the last meeting. Proposed Cllr T Foster, seconded Cllr Gage and unanimously **RESOLVED** to accept the accounts as presented.

Questions were raised about the loan obtained to support the building of a new village hall. Cllr T Foster detailed the terms and conditions of the PWLB.

Action: To include on the next agenda an item to discuss the detail of the loan and the conditions of its release to the VH Committee

b. Invoices Paid/Received since last meeting

Name	Details	Income	Expend £
Gerard Tucker	Salary (June)		861.31
Ripple Accounts	Payroll		10.00
HMRC	PAYE and NI		661.15

c. Invoices to be paid.

SPFA	Annual subscription	15.00

The clerk had enquired prior to the meeting if any councillor knew of the terms for hiring the Playing Field to Abbots Way School. Cllr Hoskins informed that the school regularly uses the field on a Wednesday. She further enquired if the Council considered the field fit for purpose, as many walkers exercise their dogs at this location. Cllrs T Foster and C Foster confirmed that they regularly cleared dog mess from the field before they mowed it. It was noted that wild animals also use the field

Action: To include an item on Playing Field charging on the September agenda and review the new revised Booking Form and Conditions

65. Correspondence

LCN meeting information – as previously discussed
Traffic speed in Westhay – as previously discussed
Pending road closures as previously circulated
Planning appeal – The Willows, Glastonbury Road, Meare as previously circulated
Unauthorised use of Shepherds Hut as an Air BNB, Station Road, Ashcott – continued dialogue with the Enforcement Planning team.

66. Actions arising from this meeting

- To approach Highways and enquire if additional white lines at the junction with Station Road and St Mary's Road could be considered.
- Organise a working party to install the Playing Field gates
- Arrange a date for the VH, and PC to meet at the Playing Field to discuss possible sites for a hard standing area.
- Write to the school (and others as identified) to ask parents to be reminded not to park cars and block the cemetery usage
- Investigate signage wording 'for cemetery use only' as at Glastonbury cemetery, with a view to installing at cemetery in Meare.
- Magazine/newsletter item to be an item for the September meeting
- To revisit the conditions of the loan prior to release in support of a new village hall at the next meeting in September.
- Review of revised Booking Form and Terms and Conditions for the Playing Field to be an agenda item for the next meeting in September

54. Next meeting; will be held on Monday 18th September 2023, 7.30pm in the Chapel.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.23pm.