

Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 1st June 2022 at 7.30pm at Kingsbury Episcopi Primary School

Present – Cllr. David Hall (Chairman), Cllr. Nick Frost (Vice-Chair), Cllr. Clare Paul, Cllr. Peter Loxston, Cllr. Mac Harris, Cllr. Paul Carpenter, Cllr. Ginine Herridge, Cllr. Nick Pearce, Cllr. Matthew Miller, Cllr. Richard Wilkins (District Councillor)

In attendance – Kelly de Silva (Clerk), Sarah Potepa (Outgoing Clerk) and twelve members of the public

31. Preliminaries

Chairmans welcome

Cllr. Hall welcomes the Councillors and members of the public to the meeting with an explanation of Parish Council meeting etiquette, fire evacuation procedures and domestics.

Apologies for absence – Cllr. James Jefferey

Approve and sign minutes of the previous meeting – The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 11th May 2022 were agreed by all to be accurate and signed by the Chairman.

Declarations of Interests and Dispensations – None received.

Questions and Comments from the public – A member of the public wishes to acquire further information on Minute 43 - Location of future Parish Council meetings and would like to raise the issue of the current state of the verges; stating that they are becoming overgrown, presenting a road safety hazard and historically would have been cut by now. The Outgoing Clerk Sarah Potepa (SP) responds this was accidentally missed from the May agenda for approval, but the contractor is ready to commence with the verge cutting with special attention paid to the Broadmead verge to protect the wildflowers. Cllr. Hall approves for the verge cutting to commence.

KdS to liaise with SP for verge cutting contractor contact details

A member of the public introduces themselves as a Speedwatch co-ordinator. They have recently met with another local Speedwatch co-ordinator who is providing a similar service at the opposite end of the Parish. They question why the same data was being sent to both parties for analysis. SP responds the SID data had only recently been requested and she was not aware the two parties were duplicating the analysis. SP informs she is happy to continue moving the SID and analysing the data once leaving her post as Clerk.

The member of the public refers to a recent article in the Parrett Talk (Issue 168). They inform there is a high volume of vehicles travelling at speeds above the 30mph speed limit and this is against the law. The Speedwatch representatives wish to support the PC in efforts to implement a 20mph speed limit from East Lambrook. They explain it is not only the speed of the vehicles that is an issue; there is the noise and pollution, farm machinery is larger and road conditions are deteriorating – it is a major issue. If the PC, SSDC and the Police Commissioner are in support of a 20mph, then the Speedwatch wish to assist with the implementation citing current signage, Speedwatch and PCSO visits are insufficient.

Cllr. Hall thanks the Speedwatch representatives for their contributions and advises this should be added to the next meeting agenda for further discussion.

Councillor Hall requested that Councillor Paul, our previous County Councillor, provide a short briefing note for the next meeting detailing previous investigations and follow up actions by the Parish Council regarding perceived speeding issues in the Parish. This note would assist and inform Parish Councillors discussions at the July meeting.

Clerk to add the item to the next agenda

CP to produce written report on current data and circulate prior to the meeting

A member of the public requests for the publication of information of the newly elected and co-opted members of the PC.

The Clerk informs she is currently working towards this by devising a poster to be displayed on the noticeboard and published on the website.

The member of the public would like to raise awareness of the issues of road safety in West Lambrook. They inform with more younger people in the area, there is no place for people to walk safely – especially children.

(One member of the public leaves)

32. Planning – Section 73A application to amend condition 3 (approved plans), condition 4 (ecology) and condition 10 (landscaping scheme) of approval 20/00433/FUL: Demolition of an existing agricultural barn and replace it with a new build dwelling at Bowhay. Newcross, South Petherton. TA13 5HD.

Cllr. Frost proposes no comment, Cllr. Carpenter seconds the motion; all in favour.

33. County Councillor report – Richard Wilkins

Cllr. Richard Wilkins reads a report explaining post-election activity and the content of the Annual General Meeting of Somerset County Council (SCC).

Cllr. Wilkins informs the newly appointed Leader will be Bill Revans, with Liz Leyshon appointed as Deputy Leader.

Cllr. Wilkins reports the executive team (formerly known as the cabinet) will consist of eight additional roles all with different areas of responsibility.

The newly appointed SCC chair will be Mike Best, with Hazel Prior-Sankey appointed as Deputy Chair.

Cllr. Wilkins continues the AGM was mostly uncontroversial. There was a strong leader's speech and healthy opposition with some debate over whether Exmoor's National Parks governing body should include Councillors from as far away as Wells. It was agreed the opposition groups could select a local representative.

Cllr. Wilkins concludes he and Cllr. Stanton looks forward to serving the Parishioners, implementing the party manifesto, and assisting with local issues over the next 5-year term.

Cllr. Paul asks Cllr. Wilkins to address local speeding issues citing anything above the speed limit is against the law and should be dealt with as a Police matter. Cllr. Paul requests the newly appointed Somerset Councillors stay abreast with the small application speeding process and rural transport issues.

Cllr. Wilkins responds with a reference to the 20mph speed limit in Langport stating it is not enforced; but more policing of this area is an issue that is being addressed. Cllr. Wilkins advises exercising caution introducing speed limits that are not enforceable citing personal perception and the natural speed of a road will influence a road user. Cllr. Wilkins suggests village gateways may be a better option than speed limits. Cllr. Wilkins confirms traffic and transport will remain a priority focus for SCC.

Cllr. Hall requests Cllr. Wilkins to obtain clarification for the next meeting of SCC Highways position on implementing 20/30mph speed limits moving forward.

Cllr. Miller also requests information on grant funding and subsidiary schemes available to implement road safety measures.

(Cllr. Wilkins leaves the meeting)

34. Policies

Reaffirm General Power of Competence

Adopt the new Somerset Code of Conduct

Adopt the statement of internal control, financial regulations, and risk management policy

The Clerk informs these policies are adequate and ready to adopt, with the financial regulations requiring amendments with a new review once online banking is set up.

Cllr. Frost proposes the above policies are adopted Cllr. Paul seconds the motion; all in favour – MOTION CARRIED.

The Clerk and Cllr. Miller both recommend the Standing Orders require further updating before adopting.

Clerk to review the Standing Orders and circulate prior to the next meeting

Clerk to add the item to the next agenda

Cllr. Miller suggests a new grant policy is devised.

Clerk to write a Grant policy and circulate

Clerk to add the item to the next agenda

35. Casual Vacancy / Co-option process

The Clerk reports that fourteen working days must lapse between notifying the Electoral Officer of the vacancy. In this time, if ten electors or more request an election – then an election is called. This period has not expired yet – so a co-option cannot yet be considered.

Cllr. Miller questions the process for the next co-option of a Parish Councillor requesting candidates complete an application form that can be circulated prior to the co-option, and that the Casual Vacancy is publicised throughout the Parish.

Clerk to circulate SALC co-option guidance document and application form.

Clerk to publicise the casual vacancy once the Electoral Officer confirms an election has not been called

36. East Lambrook school room community project

The Chair of the East Lambrook school room management committee – Mark Harvey is invited to speak.

Mr. Harvey reports since fund raising began on 16th June 2022 - £2,950 had already been raised. Mr. Harvey explains SSDC is prepared to consider supporting the project by match funding 50% of any figure raised up to a maximum of £12,500.

Mr. Harvey hopes the PC will support the application and assist with a grant towards funding the project.

Mr. Harvey explains the current heating system at the school rooms is antiquated, windows require maintenance to provide energy efficiency, with access and amenities all requiring modification.

Cllr. Miller asks for a timeline on the project.

Mr. Harvey responds the deadline to apply for match funding from SCC is September 2022, but as there is a limited fund of £22K in the area North pot – timing will be critical.

Cllr. Miller informs he has visited the site in a personal capacity stating it is an amazing space and confirms the issues of the building raised by Mr. Harvey.

Cllr. Miller recommends a vote to allocate funding for a grant should be considered today with the possibility of re-visiting the application to improve the community facilities when the next budget and precept is set.

Cllr. Hall thanks Mr. Harvey and asks for a figure the East Lambrook school rooms management committee were hoping to receive from the PC.

Mr. Harvey suggests a sum of £6,000 to demonstrate to SSDC the management committee is serious in improving the community space – but a decision in principle would be required almost immediately.

Cllr. Frost suggests a decision in principle could be made this evening with a decision on the allocation of a grant decided in July once the PC has visited the site. Cllr. Frost enquires about the parking

facilities at the school rooms. Mr. Harvey responds East Lambrook gardens allows patrons of the school rooms to use their parking facilities.

Cllr. Paul offers support to the project by assisting with identifying grant funding sources through the SALC reopening communities fund, SCC Spark foundation and crowdfunding citing it is imperative to have support for the project from SSDC.

Cllr. Paul asks SP if the PC would be able to assist with funding the project. SP responds as the PC has adopted the General Power of Competence; Section 137 could not be used so any funding would need to be allocated from the PC general account.

Cllr. Frost asks for the timeframe in which the school rooms management committee would hope to receive the grant. Mr. Harvey informs 4 weeks for the purpose of moving ahead with a survey.

Cllr. Carpenter enquires about the current usage of the community space.

Mr. Harvey responds the site is currently used for classes such as Pilates and coffee mornings, but due to the inadequate heating, usage does fall throughout the winter months.

Cllr. Paul proposes the PC support the project in principle with no sum figure agreed at this time and a decision will be discussed at the next PC meeting once the PC has visited the site. Cllr. Frost seconds the motion; all in favour -MOTION CARRIED.

Clerk to co-ordinate a site visit

Clerk to write a letter in principle to the school room management committee

Clerk to add the item to the next agenda

37. SALC training update

The Clerk asks the members of the PC who have attended SALC training to inform her so a record of training can be updated.

38. Commissioners crime prevention fund grants

The Clerk informs this item was deferred from the May PC meeting, but the deadline has now passed for submissions. The next available grant scheme for this fund will open in September 2022.

Clerk to add the item to the agenda once the next round of funding is available

39. Parish milestone update

Cllr. Loxston reports all three milestones are now in place and offers to monitor and upkeep the milestones in the future.

Cllr. Hall thanks Cllr. Loxston citing the milestones are a wonderful feature within the Parish. Cllr. Hall enquires if more milestones can be acquired through the heritage regeneration project and what cost this would incur.

SP responds the total sum for the milestones was £150 with a donation received from New Cross Farmhouse.

Cllr. Hall suggests more could be acquired to compliment the ones in place.

Clerk to liaise with SP on the project to ascertain if more can be purchased

40. 2023 May Festival overview

Cllr. Carpenter reports he has been on the May Festival committee for 15 years. It is a community event that has been going for 25 years to celebrate the start of Spring.

The event is attended by approximately 5000-6000 people with the last event held in 2019 due to the pandemic.

Cllr. Carpenter informs the committee are already meeting and fundraising for the 2023 event which costs in the region of £30,000 with a reserve kept of £21,000. Cllr. Carpenter continues the event always receives good feedback and any recommendations are considered by the committee.

Cllr. Paul informs she has met with committee members, and they are always looking for people to volunteer, support and assist with the event.

Cllr. Frost reports the Kingsbury May Festival has been featured in the national press as one of the top ten May Day celebration events in the country. Later in the year, there is an expected request to the PC for funding the toilets – with this being the only cost incurred by the PC and that all road closure notices have already been addressed.

41. Digital Communications

Cllr. Miller states that in this day and age digital format needs to be up to date and relevant. Cllr. Miller asks who is currently responsible for the website. The Clerk responds this is maintained on a voluntary

basis by a member of the community.

Cllr. Miller informs local company has offered to build and maintain a Parish Website at no cost. Cllr. Miller proposes this offer is accepted with Cllrs. Herridge and Pearce assisting by means of a working group or Forward Strategy Group to liaise with Cllr. Miller and the local company on content, maintenance, and management.

Cllr. Loxston informs the current site has been maintained on a voluntary basis for several years by a member of the community who wishes to contribute to the Parish and the project should be discussed with them prior to any decisions being made.

Cllr. Paul agrees citing there will be other factors to consider such as SEO (Search Engine Optimisation), plug ins, service, and maintenance. Cllr. Paul recommends terms of reference should be written for both the PC and the provider to map out and effectively manage the site with the assistance of the current website administrator. Cllr. Paul suggests an element of caution is required with moving this initiative forward.

Cllr. Hall proposes engaging with the current webpage provider to discuss moving digital communications forward prior to any conversation to investigate the proposal from the local company with Cllrs. Miller, Pearce and Herridge.

Cllr. Paul states websites are only as good as the people who feed the information into them. Cllr. Hall agrees citing there will be limits and aspirations, but it is something that needs to be done right.

Cllr. Herridge enquires if there is a digital communications policy. The Clerk responds this is something the PC would need to adopt.

Cllr. Hall to engage with the current webpage provider

Cllrs. Miller, Herridge and Pearce to liaise with the local company to compile a report for the September PC meeting

Clerk to add the item to the September agenda

If you have any information or input for content to keep the PC's digital communications up to date and relevant, please email the Clerk on Kingsbury-episcopi.pc@hotmail.com

42. Parrett Talk

Ms. Annie White who is part of the team that compiles the Parrett Talk is in attendance.

Cllr. Miller asks Ms. White about the processes, content, publishing and how the newsletter represents the community.

Ms. White informs the publication started just after the first May Festival 25 years ago as a source for local information. The newsletter is produced every 2 months by a team of six dedicated volunteers who live in various locations of the Parish. In the last 25 years it has changed in format and developed into what it is today full of content provided by the community for the community.

Ms. White continues current printing costs are £201.91 for 660 copies of the 12-page A5 publication. In 2021 the newsletter cost £1034.00 with sponsorship and donations totalling £835. The recent PC grant to the publication covers the shortfall in sponsorship to produce the newsletter. It is published by a company specialising in Parish magazines and distributed by a team of volunteers to every house in the Parish.

Cllr. Paul comments it is a brilliant publication and integral to the community. We are extremely fortunate to have the newsletter as not everyone is digitally savvy and at the right time in the future, the Parrett Talk and a Parish Website could collaborate and be published together.

Cllr. Hall states the community is proud of the Parrett Talk and the PC fully support it. Cllr. Hall hopes to offer better PC communications to the community via the publication.

Cllr. Frost states he is in support of a Parish website, but the Parrett Talk is - and should remain - an independent publication.

Cllr. Hall thanks Ms. White for attending this evening and for the information provided.

43. Location of future Parish Council meetings.

Cllr. Hall informs although he is new to the PC, he has heard concerns over the current location (Kingsbury Episcopi school).

The Clerk informs that PC meetings are public meetings and public accessibility is particularly important. The Clerk refers to public question time 11-05-21 when a member of the public wished to ascertain why the agenda was not in the noticeboard. The Clerk could only conclude it had been removed. If that member of the community had not known the location – they would not have been able to access the public meeting. The Clerk suggests that if the PC meetings were to change location,

an itinerary of dates and locations would need to be published months in advance to maintain accessibility. The Clerk informs the use of the school for the meetings comes at no charge to the PC. Cllr. Frost states the school is not a suitable location with child size chairs and the public on small benches citing there may be an opportunity to use other locations. Cllr. Loxston expresses he would prefer continuity by having an established venue location.
(four members of the public leave)

Cllr. Paul agrees citing issues changing the location of the meeting had in area North. Cllr. Miller agrees but states the Standing Orders should not stipulate the location. Cllr. Miller also agrees with Cllr. Frost on the furniture aspect stating it is degrading for the public to be sat on child benches at the PC meetings. Cllr. Miller informs he has spoken to a PCC representative who has offered use of the Church rooms at a flat fee of £200 per year. Cllr. Pearce has also made enquiries with the community centre representative who could offer use of space on an adhoc basis at no charge. Cllr. Loxston expresses the location should be free and central to the Parish. Cllr. Paul states she likes the Church rooms but not at a fee of £200 of the taxpayer's money. Cllr Paul also refers to the Local government act 1972 pt3 s14(5) which states the following;
"A parish meeting shall not be held in premises which at the time of the meeting may, by virtue of a premises licence or temporary event notice under the Licensing Act 2003, be used for the supply of alcohol (within the meaning of section 14 of that Act) except in cases where no other suitable room is available for such a meeting either free of charge or at a reasonable cost."
Cllr. Hall summarises - the cost of the location being free, and consistency are prime requirements. No snap decisions should be taken on the matter. Cllr. Hall requests those that wish to change the location of the PC meeting provide proposals for the next meeting. Cllr. Pearce asks if the date of the meeting can be changed. The Clerk responds the PC meetings can be held on any date to PC agree. Cllr. Miller requests the Standing Orders are amended to remove the specified date to allow for flexibility. Cllr. Hall explains the Standing Orders is a living, working document that can be changed as and when required.

44. Wildlife group update

Cllr. Loxston reports a recent meeting of the Wildlife group was attended by Susan Irvine and progress is being made. Some nesting boxes have now been purchased with an invoice presented to the Clerk for inclusion on the payment schedule. Cllr. Paul thanks Cllr. Loxston for a recent brief circulated to the Pc on the work of the Wildlife group.
(One member of the public leave)

45. Sensory Garden update

Cllr. Carpenter reports he has sent Cllrs. Pearce and Miller the history of the project and recently met Cllr. Miller to discuss this.
(One member of the public leave)

Cllr. Miller suggests it would be appropriate to consider other options for the Sensory Garden incorporating this with the Wilder churchyards scheme set up by the Diocese of Bath and Wells especially as the PC could imminently take over the closed churchyard from the PCC. Cllr. Miller continues it could be an opportunity to regenerate and incorporate the churchyard into a community space. Kingsbury has a wealth of artists who could contribute to invoke a sensory and elevating churchyard experience. Cllr. Miller reports he has spoken to a PCC representative who appears positive about regenerating the space into a vibrant, accessible, dog friendly area. Cllr. Miller proposes the PC allow him to start formal discussions on providing an alternative to the current proposed sensory garden.

Cllr. Paul informs the discussions around this proposal have gone since 2018 which is far too long citing it is only a £2000 award of money to be spent. Cllr. Paul informs not everyone uses the amenities area or churchyard.

The Clerk asks SP if there is an update on the handover of the Churchyard to the PC. SP responds the situation is still at a current stalemate. The 3-month period to handover expires in July so it will need to be decided if the PC or District take over the land.

Cllr. Miller proposes he starts formal discussions to provide an alternative to the proposed current

sensory garden, Cllr. Carpenter seconds the motion; all in favour – MOTION CARRIED.
Cllr. Miller to report back with terms of reference to the next PC meeting.

46. SID update

SP agrees to forward the current analysed data to the PC.

47. Churchyard update

SP reports the PCC held a meeting last Friday and is awaiting any further update.

48. Lock-up update

Cllr. Hall reports Cllr. James has circulated a report on this matter. Cllr. Hall recommends this item is deferred in the absence of Cllr. Jeferey.

49. Footpaths and Bridleways

Nothing to report.

50. Highways Matters

SP asks the PC if they are happy to go ahead with the usual verge cutting – all agree.

51. Online banking update

The Clerk informs it is not expected for the transition to online to be easy. The Clerk will ascertain who wishes to be a signatory and their private information out of the public domain (GDPR).

Cheques

Mrs S Potepa	Clerks Salary 2 months	£983.32
Mrs K de Silva	Clerks Salary May 2022	£388.50
SN & CA Perrin	Internal audit	£120.00 inc VAT
The Nature Shop	Nesting Boxes	£299.76 inc VAT

Cllr. Paul proposes all payments are made, Cllr. Frost Seconds the motion; all in favour – MOTION CARRIED

52. Other items for discussion

The Clerk requests Parish Councillors to send a thumbnail picture and small bio for a poster informing the community of the newly formed PC members

53. Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 6th July 2022 at 7.30pm at Kingsbury Episcopi Primary School

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 9.32pm

Please e-mail any items for the agenda to the Clerk: kingsbury-episcopi.pc@hotmail.com by 28th June 2022.

Kelly de Silva
Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Clerk
10 Bay Hill, Ilminster, Somerset. TA19 0AT.
07701 053 903

7 Signed by the Chair

Date.....