

MINAL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Remote Meeting Held on 8 March 2021

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| 1. Present:
John Bevan – Chairman
Brian Devonshire – Vice Chair
Rob Bailey – Vice Chair
Anna Whitehead
Guy Gagen
Ruth Kolish | Apologies Accepted:
None

In Attendance:
Jane Davies (County Councillor)
Caroline Thomas (CC elect)
Lucy Kirkpatrick
Sue Hine Clerk/RFO |
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Declarations of Interest: Councillor Rob Bailey regarding item 10, PC contribution to village hall heating improvements.
This meeting was held remotely via Zoom in accordance with the Coronavirus Pandemic Regulations 2020.

- 2. Minutes of the meeting held on the 11 January 2021**
The Clerk had sent out the minutes and these were approved and will be signed at a later date by the Chairman.
- 3. Matters Arising –** These had been circulated. The actions that have been able to be carried out during the pandemic are transferred to Agenda items.
- 4. Questions from Members of the Public**
John Bevan welcomed Lucy Kirkpatrick, who has recently moved to Southfields, to the meeting. Lucy brought two traffic issues to the meeting. Firstly, the village footpath finishes before Lucy's house and the Leaze and Lucy commented that walking from her house could be dangerous due to speeding oncoming traffic and asked if the path could be extended. JB and RK explained that there had been a PC project to extend the footpath but this had to be abandoned due to the costs and availability of land (the plan had been to utilise the river bank side of the road). Lucy asked whether a virtual path could be considered and Jane Davies said that traffic calming measures had been introduced to many Wiltshire villages. There was a discussion about the traffic problem at the east end of the village where there is a bend and many motorists fail to slow down quickly enough. JD said the first step was to approach the Area Board and request an inspection from Highways Engineer Steve Hind. Councillors approved this motion. **Action: Clerk**

Lucy had also asked whether she could erect a mirror on the opposite side of the road to aid pulling out on to the road. She has pruned the hedge and shrubs as much as possible but visibility is still poor. The Clerk reported that she had contacted Martin Cook, Northern Area Highways engineer who stated that WCC policy was not to erect mirrors due to possible problems for other drivers. However, the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, permit this provided landowners agree. Lucy will approach Ramsbury Estates.

5. Planning Application 20/11055/PIP Land at Poulton Farm, Poulton Hill

This was refused by WCC but is likely to be resubmitted for two houses.

Planning Application 21/01779/TCA Glebelands. Work to Trees in a Conservation Area- approved.

BD also reported that the work on Fisherman's cottage has now been approved after some discussions with WCC. The PC had approved the application.

6. Playground and Grass Bins

The Clerk and BD are continuing to look at quotes for a new surface under the cableway. The Clerk showed Councillors a sample of Tigermulch which is a recommended surface which lasts 15+ years. This will be dealt with at a later meeting.

BD reported that Bob Barnett was now unable to empty the large bin in the playground but his wife had noticed it was not filling up and wondered if someone else was emptying it. GG said that he was keeping an eye on it and would liaise with the Barnett's regarding using their bin.

Grass Cutting

The Clerk and BD have carried out research into options. The Clerk reported that Marlborough Town Council mix their cuttings with other green matter to make compost and other local PC's do not own much land to have the ongoing problem Minal has. Golf courses mow twice a week so that the cuttings act as mulch but this would clearly not be cost effective for the PC. Our current contractor does not have a license to dispose of green waste. The problem is to remove the sludge currently in the bins from 5/6 years of mowing and then to look at a solution moving forward. BD suggested volunteers digging out the contents to load onto a trailer. The Clerk felt that this would be difficult due to the weight of the material and shape of the bins. The Clerk reported that WCC only collect domestic green waste and will get quotes from Grist and Hills. Councillors will continue to look at other local options for disposing and recycling the green waste. **Action: Clerk, BD, RK**

7. Trees

Church Lane Ash Trees

MH Tree services visited on 17 January but had to stop work due to the weather. This has been rebooked for 18/19 March and the delay is due to staffing problems. John Bevan reported that Mike Holmes had advised three of the trees are diseased and therefore need felling. The Ash trees in the neighbouring property The Old Rectory have been removed due to Ash die back disease and Ash die back is causing the felling of many more trees locally. Adam Slater has offered to pay for up to £500 for replacement flowering cherry trees. JB proposed felling three of the Ash trees and keeping the end one that has been pruned and to take up Adam Slater's offer. Councillors approved this motion. The Clerk will write to AS and thank him for the offer. **Action: Clerk**

Cherry Trees in the Playground

David Oliver has inspected these trees and will quote for a prune in late summer.

The Clerk reported that Clive Schofield had advised her that Sarah Thomas (professional name Sarah Duckworth) is a fully qualified arborist living in the village and has helped the Sports and Social Club with a few trees so would be a useful future contact regarding tree advice.

The Clerk thanked JB for his ongoing maintenance in the village and for turning out in Storm Christophe to remove a branch hanging near the speed indicators. Councillors agreed that such practical jobs were invaluable for in the Parish Council.

8. Annual Governance Review of Risk Register

The Clerk has added pandemic to this. Councillors approved the Risk Register.

9. Annual Governance Review of Asset Register

The Clerk will add the new gates to this. Councillors approved the Asset Register.

10. Contribution to Village Hall roof insulation

Councillor Rob Bailey, who is also Chair of the Village hall Committee, reported that work is being carried out to the village hall to improve the heating, insulation and running costs. The roof insulation dates back to the original build in 1978 and by improving it will significantly reduce bills and emissions. He is approaching the Area Board for a grant and requested the sum of £500 to match fund this. Councillors approved this unanimously (RB did not vote).

11. Responsible Finance Officer's Report

The financial statements and budget expenditure to date were approved. The Clerk's remuneration was approved. The Clerk explained that the large bills for tree maintenance and gates had not arrived yet and may carry over to next year. Councillors considered the revised budget for 2021-22. AW asked about the amount budgeted for paths and bridleways when the expenditure has been approx. 50% this year. The Clerk explained that historically path cutting and other maintenance have been budgeted separately because different contractors and equipment were required so she had continued this. BD suggested reducing the figure to £1000 for next year. Councillors approved the budget for 2021-22 and the Clerk will make the minor changes discussed. The Clerk is attending an online Zoom training session for this year's AGAR on 11 March 2021 and will prepare the Annual report and accounts and AGAR paperwork and the VAT return which had been delayed due to the email/website issues for the Clerk in January/February. **Action: Clerk**

12. Neighbourhood Plan update/Area Board

BD commented on the Crown Estates land in the Neighbourhood plan. The consultation closes on 8 March 2021.

13. PC Vacancy and Local Elections

Councillor Ruth Kolish is moving and will stand down from the PC in May. JB asked RK if she would consider attending the annual meeting in May and

thanked her for her contribution which will be missed. RK will hand Minal Emergency number to Rob Bailey. The PC therefore has two vacancies and no response to current advertising. The current lockdown situation makes it difficult to approach people. The Clerk will talk to Lucy Kirkpatrick about what is involved in becoming a Councillor and Councillors hoped she would consider joining as her experience would be an asset to the PC. Caroline Thomas explained that she was applying for the new east ward and, if successful, would be our County Councillor from May although she would work closely with Jane Davies. AW suggested thanking Jane Davies for her help to the PC and the Clerk will do this. **Action: Clerk**

14. Any Other Business - None

Meeting finished at 7.45pm – next meeting Monday 10 May 2021