

MINAL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Held on 13 November 2023 At 6.45pm in the Village Hall

Draft for approval on 8 January 2024

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| 1. Present:
Anna Whitehead, Chair
Lucy Kirkpatrick
Brian Devonshire, Vice Deputy Chair
Rob Bailey, Vice Deputy Chair
Lesley Rowe
Adam Kebble
Guy Gagen | Apologies Accepted from:
Caroline Thomas, County Councillor

In Attendance
Sue Hine, Clerk/RFO |
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Declarations of Interest for Matters being discussed: None.

- 2. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023**
The Minutes were approved and signed.
- 3. Matters Arising** – These had been circulated and an updated Action sheet accompanies these minutes. The main actions have been transferred to Agenda items.
- 4. Questions from Members of the Public:** The Clerk received a funding request from Carer Support Wiltshire for the Marlborough Carer's Café. Councillors agreed to donate £100.
Action: Clerk.
- 5. Planning Applications**
PL/2022/09014 Appeal Planning inspectorate Eco House Werg Gardens AW noted that the owners of Werg gardens had won their appeal to the Planning Inspector subject to certain conditions being met. RB said that the building constraints would be quite difficult for a builder but LR stated that the owners have already engaged a builder with a start date of March 2024.
Wiltshire Local Plan to 2038 – The plan is now out for consultation and the Clerk advised that the Rural Housing Requirements paper supplementary to the Plan has been causing a lot of concern amongst bigger villages in Wiltshire who are subject to large developments but have few facilities. Mildenhall is not affected. Preshute PC who left the Marlborough Area Neighbourhood plan have asked for help from Marlborough residents regarding the large Barton Dene development. Access to this land is difficult as the valley is narrow and both Downs Lane and the College Fields/Barton Park estate feeder road are not wide enough to accommodate additional traffic.
- 6. Church Carpark Field**
The Clerk had advised Councillors that the Shetland ponies had been moved. The Clerk had spoken to Martin Gibson who said that he had a couple of calm heifers he could graze there and should the carpark be required for events he would be happy to move them and clear the field. Councillors approved this. **Action: AW to amend grazing licence and Clerk to issue.**
- 7. Church Hedge**
Bush Life have cut the large hedge to the side of the carpark but advised that this is now so

large they recommend a farmer use cutting equipment with a tractor. Councillors agreed and the Clerk will contact Andrew Ainsley and Martin Gibson to ask if they could do a winter cut and reduce by approx 3 feet. **Action: Clerk.**

John Bevan had contacted the Clerk regarding the box and yew hedge. The Clerk had not been aware that this was the PC's responsibility and being a specialist hedge requires more of a specialist gardener. **Action: LR to speak to PCC about the hedge and Clerk to find out gardener from Derek & Gill Moss.**

8. Code of Conduct

Lesley Rowe has conducted a review of the relevant Code of Conducts. Her recommendation is that the PC adopt the Wiltshire Code of Conduct which gives up to date advice on such issues as dealing with social media. She also recommended that all Councillors sign up to the Positive Conduct Positive Democracy Charter and that personal emails are no longer used for Council business. The Clerk stated that email addresses can be set up from our website and downloaded into Outlook or similar. Chair AW has already signed the Democracy Charter and proposed that Councillors have council emails for council business. This was approved by all Councillors. **Action: Clerk to ask Netwise to set up emails for Councillors, Re-issue link for Positive Conduct Charter and New code of Conduct.**

9. Playpark Roundabout

The rubber matting is badly split around the roundabout and AK with PH have put up safety fencing to take it out of action. Despite this GG has noticed children circumventing the fencing to play on the roundabout whilst being watched by their parents. The Clerk has obtained a quote for replacing with the sustainable, long-term solution of Tiger Mulch and or new rubber matting. Councillors discussed this at length as it was identified that the roundabout was fitted circa 2007 and there were concerns about spending money on surfacing when the lifespan of the roundabout might be limited. It was agreed that the Clerk will talk to the safety inspector about the longevity of the roundabout and contact suppliers regarding the cost of replacing it. AK and PH will remove the top to deter use. The Clerk is still awaiting the inspection and will chase this again. **Action: Clerk and AK.**

10. LHFIFG – Thicketts Road and Footpath Project

GG noted that speeding has improved along Thicketts road following the Clerk's email to the small businesses. However, Councillors discussed that this was a long-term problem and would like a 20mph sign to protect the playground and the narrow road in front of the residents. LK wished to clarify the issue request as several PC's have been seeking to extend the no restriction signs on rural village roads and this involves much legal work. Councillors approved a request for 20mph signs at both ends of Thicketts road but not extending the no restriction on speed sign and LK will take this forward to LHFIFG. This group have a large workload and the Clerk said that businesses in rural roads have increased traffic and road issues. **Action: LK to raise 20mph issue with LHFIFG.**

LK met with Mary Askew, Estates Manager for Ramsbury Estates. In principle RE would be happy to proceed. MA updated LK on work that Ramsbury Estates have done to the River Kennet through Marlborough including building up the gravel base and increasing the planting of reed beds. Some of the concerns raised by MA were the potential for litter being thrown into the river, people accessing the river from the pavement as it would be more open and currently some residents put garden waste on the banks which is not good for the river. There are also legal implications in that WCC would need to take over responsibility for the maintenance of the path. In the meantime, the Clerk has transferred £5k into designated

funds for this project.

11. Financial Reports

The Financial Statement and Expenditure against Budget were approved by Councillors and GG signed the statement and verified the balances which the Clerk showed via the online App.

12. Budget 2024-25

The Clerk met with Brian Devonshire to look at the budget for 2024-25 and presented this to Councillors. Current expenditure is broadly in line with that expected although Playpark expenditure has been less than expected subject to the roundabout repairs/purchase. The Clerk reported that both the Defibrillator and Speed Indicator Devices are coming to the end of their lifespan and may need replacing. RB said that printing costs for Minal News may decrease further as he has approx 100 people on the mailing list. Councillors discussed precept requirements and BD proposed that our Precept should remain the same. Councillors approved this and the budget subject to a few minor amendments to follow when Chair AW looks in more detail at some aspects. The Clerk will apply for the precept. **Action: AW and Clerk.**

13. Defibrillator

The Clerk has been advised that the defibrillator is currently showing fault readings and has been copied in on correspondence between Community Heart beat and Derek Moss. There seems to be a problem in identifying whether the battery requires replacing or there is a more fundamental fault requiring replacement. The Clerk updated Councillors with costs of a new battery or new machine and will contact Derek Moss by phone. GG said that as this is a Medical Device a condition of their licence will be maintaining the machine although the Clerk has been advised that as it is 8 years old it is out of guarantee. Councillors voted to keep a defibrillator in the village. **Action: Clerk**

14. Speed Indicator Devices

The Clerk has repeatedly chased MD Message maker for an engineer visit and is disappointed with the lack of service. Ramsbury SID's are also now failing. A visit has been planned for Monday 20 November which the Clerk will attend. Clerk to investigate alternative options and prices. AW asked whether it was possible to hire a temporary SID for Thicketts road. BD commented that the speed indicators in Marlborough move locations. The Clerk will contact Richard Spence at Marlborough for advice. **Action: Clerk.**

15. Any Other Business

15.1 Beating the Bounds LR would like to revive this village tradition and will liaise with RB regarding the contact details..

15.2 Village Hall Porch RB has not heard whether our grant from SSE has been successful for improvements to the porch and emergency planning equipment.

16. Dates of Next Meetings

Meeting closed at 8.40pm **Next meeting Monday 8 January 2023 6.45pm**