

Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 1st February 2023 at 7.30pm at Kingsbury Episcopi Primary School

Present – Cllr. David Hall (Chairman), Cllr. Nick Frost (Vice-Chair), Cllr. Peter Loxston, Cllr. Ginine Herridge, Cllr. Nick Pearce, Cllr. Matthew Miller, Cllr. Carol Mason, Cllr. Richard Wilkins, (County Councillor), Cllr. Mike Stanton (District Councillor)

In attendance – Kelly de Silva (Clerk) and three members of the public

184. 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. Clare Paul, Cllr. Paul Carpenter, Cllr. Dale Spree

Approve and sign minutes of the previous meeting – The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 4th January 2022 were agreed by all to be accurate and signed by the Chairman.

Declarations of interests and dispensations – Cllr. Miller declares an interest in planning applications 23/00115/LBC & 23/00114/HOU and will abstain from any vote.

Questions and comments from the public – A member of the public wishes to express gratitude to the PC for the recent attempts to resolve issues with the Gawbridge culvert. They inform the culvert is currently working - as water levels up stream have subsided, but it is hoped recent visits to the site attended by Parish, District and County representatives highlight that the culvert is too small. Cllr. Stanton responds the culvert does require remedial action due to the road also being damaged as a result of the water flow. Cllr. Frost informs the culvert has been recently cleared.

The member of the public informs the recent New Cross road closure diversion directed traffic through flooded roads. When this was reported to SCC Highways via the website, they were given an unsatisfactory response.

Cllr. Stanton informs there appears to be issues with the current SCC reporting system and communications which is being addressed.

Cllr. Hall reports the current state of the potholes and road surface on Burrow Hill/Lower Burrow is in a terrible state after the recent weather.

Cllr. Hall recommends a correspondence is drafted to SCC Highways to address the pothole and road surface issues throughout the Parish.

Cllr. Loxton informs he and a neighbour have reported numerous potholes near Burrow Hill on several occasions. The contractors attend; fix one pothole, then return weeks later to repair another – by which time the original pothole has deteriorated again – it is a most unsatisfactory situation.

Clerk to draft a correspondence to SCC Highways to escalate the current pothole and road surface issues.

185. Planning

23/00115/LBC & 23/00114/HOU New Cross Farmhouse, New Cross, South Petherton

TA13 5HD – Installation of post mounted electric vehicle charging point.

The PC agreed unanimously to support the application with no comment

1 Signed by the Chair

Date.....

186. District and County Councillor reports

Cllr. Stanton reports he and Cllr. Wilkins attended a briefing with the County Crime Commissioner who informed there is a planned reinvigoration for community Speedwatch initiatives. Two PCSO's have also been newly appointed for our area. Cllr. Stanton notifies there appears to be a serious attempt to improve community policing - but this may take time.

Cllr. Stanton informs there are debates and discussions ongoing with the planning committee and how the process will change and develop once the Unitary Authority comes into power.

Cllr. Stanton continues the latest proposed LCN (Local Community Networks) outcomes have been met with positive comments.

Cllr. Wilkins reports the Council have responded to the consultation on LCN's; proposing 18 LCNs with KE being a part of the Levels and Moors. This proposed LCN / area consists of engaged Parishes and Towns, which could provide success for the LCN. The police have also committed to engage with LCNs.

Cllr. Stanton reports the central budget is in the process of being set – the budget is currently with the scrutiny committee before being presented to the executive and full council on 22nd February 2023.

The Chair requests item 200 – Floods is moved up the agenda and discussed whilst the District and County Councillors are present. All agree.

186. Floods

Cllr. Hall reports recent flooding came close to being a very difficult situation. Cllr. Hall asks if there are any comments on the performance of the associated authorities and what issues have been identified that may have arisen.

Cllr. Stanton responds although water levels came close to the 2014 floods, there was considerably less total rainfall than during the floods of 2014. The river Tone levels were high before the rain, influencing the river Parrett and moor storage. The work completed by the SRA over the last nine years has played dividends to prevent flooding of properties.. A huge amount of work has been done since 2014 to improve and mitigate the impact of flooding in the area.

Cllr. Hall informs the reported broken flood gates towards Muchelney have been replaced.

Cllr. Hall makes an observation that the general consensus is the EA (Environment Agency) were caught up in far too much bureaucracy when the pumps should have been deployed.

Cllr. Hall suggests trigger points and break points should be reviewed and requests the PC is kept informed of any outcomes from the post flood analysis.

187. Local Community Networks

Item discussed during Minute 185

188. Parish Council casual vacancy update

The Clerk informs the Electoral Officer has informed no election has been requested. The PC may now proceed with the co-option process.

Are you passionate about your community? Could you spare a few hours a week for the benefit of your village? If so, your council needs you! For further information or an application form please email the Clerk at: clerk@kingsburyepiscopi.org.uk

189. Review of PC meeting location change

Cllr. Hall enquires if there is a desire to move the current location of the PC meetings.

Cllr. Pearce reports the community centre have offered use of their facility, but the centre is unavailable on the current meeting dates.

Cllr. Miller expresses the PC should aim to convene in the best available space which is accessible and comfortable to all.

2 Signed by the Chair

Date.....

A discussion ensues on the financial implications to the community centre being able to offer a consistent, suitable, and available space at no cost to the PC. Cllr. Loxston informs in the current economic climate, the PC meeting location should only change if the location incurred no hire fees - like the current location.

It is agreed to contact the Community Centre to assess availability for a minimum of a 1-year tenure for Parish Council meetings.

Cllr. Hall states no immediate decision should be made until all tentative enquiries have been actioned properly.

Clerk to contact the community centre

Clerk to check with District and County Councillors availability for a possible change in date.

190. Annual Parish Meeting (Date, Location and Guest speaker)

The Clerk informs the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) is a statutory meeting which must be held between 1st March and 1st June. A date, location and meeting content should be agreed. The Clerk suggests the meeting date could be Tuesday 18th or Thursday 20th April. The meeting could comprise of a Chairmans report, presented reports from nominated local groups who have received PC grants, written reports from local groups which can be made available to the community, and a guest speaker followed by a glass of wine and a chance to speak to the Parish Councillors.

Cllr. Hall recommends the Community Centre could be an ideal location to assess the suitability as a long-term PC meeting location.

Clerk to liaise with the Community Centre on availability

Cllr. Hall enquires if a guest speaker should be considered.

Cllr. Miller suggests a representative from the EA who could offer an insight into the flood management – which is a concern for residents of the community.

Clerk to make enquiries for a guest speaker.

191. Kings Coronation

The Clerk informs there are no plans for a PC organised event. There is a small budget of £500 for local groups to apply for a grant for local public events. This will be publicised on the website and in the Parrett Talk.

Are you a considering holding a public event for the community to celebrate the Kings Coronation?

The PC has £500 worth of small grants available for community celebrations. For more information and a grant application form please contact the Clerk via email Clerk@kingsburyepiscopi.org.uk or kingsbury-episcopi.pc@hotmail.com

192. Digital Communications / Parish Council Website

Cllr. Hall commends the work completed by Cllr. Miller and Cllr. Herridge on the development of the new Parish Council website.

Cllr. Miller reports the site is now live. An article advertising the launch will be published in the next edition of the Parrett Talk with posters displayed in the noticeboards.

Cllr. Hall encourages PC members to activate the new email addresses and send profiles and pictures for inclusion on the site to Cllr. Herridge.

You can now visit the new PC website at <https://kingsburyepiscopi.org.uk/> to view minutes, agendas, and information relating to the Parish. If you are a local group, organising an event, or have information you wish to publish on the website please contact the Clerk at clerk@kingsburyepiscopi.org.uk or kingsbury-episcopi.pc@hotmail.com

193. Wildlife Group update

Cllr. Loxston reports the group held a nest box building and wildlife workshop 28/01/23 which was attended by over sixty people. The feedback of the event has been very positive, and it has created awareness for the wildlife and to ensure biodiversity within the Parish.

3 Signed by the Chair

Date.....

Donations were gratefully received at the event which will be utilised to assist with funding further events.

Cllr. Loxston informs the group are in the process of obtaining insurance quotes separate to the PC liability insurance. A meeting will be held in the coming weeks to discuss next steps and workshops.

194. St Martins Church / Exploratory Garden update

Cllr. Miller informs there is an upcoming PCC meeting.

Cllr. Miller reports the PCC have addressed the points raised by the PC with regards to transferral of the closed cemetery to the PC. The PCC have been clear on their position. The quinquennial report is outstanding, but the PCC assure this will have no impact on the curtilage or transferral. If the PC do not accept responsibility for the churchyard, then it could be handed to the District Council.

Cllr. Hall informs the PC have a duty of care on behalf of the Parish and there is a requirement the PC is convinced it has fulfilled this duty before transferring the churchyard.

Cllr. Hall continues the District and County Council would have comparable questions prior to transferral. Cllr. Frost states the PC have an obligation to take on the Churchyard from the PCC.

Cllr. Loxston requests an update on the water pipe citing implications which may arise from this could be important. Cllr. Frost informs if it is the responsibility of the PC, the PC would reserve the right to cut off the pipe.

Cllr. Hall proposes the paperwork is arranged with the PCC for the transferral of the Churchyard, Cllr. Miller seconds the motion; all in favour. MOTION CARRIED.

Clerk to liaise with Cllr. Miller and Reverend Fillery with regards to the paperwork required for the transferral.

195. Lock Up update

Cllr. Miller reports all the paperwork for the acquisition has been submitted to the land registry. There is no expected timeline response from the registry.

Cllr. Hall expresses gratitude to former Councillor James Jefferey for his work on this.

196. SID update

SP informs the SID recently had an issue with retrieving the data, but this has now been rectified. The SID has been placed on the Thorney Road recording a majority of vehicles travelling between 30-40mph.

197. Footpaths and Bridleways

The Clerk reports a communication was received from the SCC Rights of Way Bridge Warden informing works to upgrade the unsafe bridge and ramps on L17/44 was due to commence on 16th January with the landowner kindly allowing access to contractors. The Clerk is unsure if the recent flooding impacted the planned works schedule. The Clerk has received no update on the Bridge on 17/55.

Cllr. Hall refers to the proposed letter of concern discussed during the public questions regarding the pothole situation throughout the Parish and asks if all members agree to the Clerk raising the issue with Highways. All agree.

198. Highways matters

Cllr. Loxston reports the amount of ice and the treacherous condition of the road around Burrow Hill during the recent wintry weather was unacceptable. Cllr. Loxston informs there is a grit salt box at the top of the hill but another box should be considered half way along the hill. There is run off from the field and a underground spring which exasperates the situation with insufficient drainage at the bottom of the hill via official drainage and the ditch.

Cllr. Miller requests the issues raised with SCC contractors is included within the correspondence as the current repair works are not of an adequate standard.

Cllr. Herridge enquires if the Parish could be included on the grit spreading schedule. The Clerk informs the schedules for gritting are decided in June by SCC. The Clerk can request this - but there are central budget limitations with very few rural villages and bus routes being gritted sufficiently.

The Clerk informs the potholes on Lower Burrow have been reported – but no responses or updates on the reporting site have been received.

Clerk to include the issue raised by Cllr. Loxston and Cllr. Miller in the correspondence to SCC Highways.

199. Kingsbury May festival update

Nothing to report

200. Neighbourhood plan

Nothing to report

201. Financial matters

The Clerk reports there are still ongoing issues with Natwest regarding setting up on line banking and updating the mandate. This has been acknowledged by Natwest by offering the PC £200 by way of an apology for all the time, effort and frustration that has been invested into this over the past 8 months.

The Clerk has now made tentative enquiries with Lloyd’s bank to set up a treasurers account as the current situation is no longer tenable.

Cheques

Mrs K de Silva	Clerk salary - January	£418.50
Mrs K de Silva	Clerks’ expenses- Printer Ink, stamps, A4 postage	£25.05
Mrs S A Brooks Chq. 891 declined by the bank – possible misspell of name	Annual Burial Ground Maintenance (Authorised minute 159)	£1600.00
SSDC	Parish Ranger December	£103.82
B. White	Wildlife Group – re-imburement for materials	£23.04
	Total	£2170.41

202. Other items for discussion

Cllr. Mason enquires about the precept allocation to local groups. Cllr. Mason asks if the groups can be encouraged to lessen the requirement of the grants from the PC. The Clerk informs this has happened with certain grants which have decreased over the years.

Cllr. Hall informs the groups are required to apply via the PC grant policy with the submission of their financial details and how the grants will be used as part of the process.

Cllr. Hall states the PC has a duty to support as many services and facilities as possible whilst making the precept go as far as possible.

The Clerk informs those groups who have received PC grants will be requested to supply a report for the APM on how the grant has been used which will be available to the community.

203. Date and Time of the next meeting

Wednesday 1st March 2023 at 7.30 pm at Kingsbury Episcopi Primary School

With no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 9.04pm

Please e-mail any items for the agenda to the Clerk: kingsbury-episcopi.pc@hotmail.com or clerk@kingsburyepiscopi.org.uk

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

5 Signed by the Chair

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