

Kingsbury Episcopi Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 3rd April 2024 at 7.30pm at Kingsbury Episcopi Primary School.

154. Attendance and Apologies

Present: Cllrs Hall, Frost, Loxston, Carpenter, Herridge and Baldock.

In attendance – Kim Larsson (Clerk).

Apologies for absence – Cllrs Paul; Somerset Council Cllrs Wilkins; Mr Ian Stanton.

155. Approve and sign minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 6th March 2024 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting, and duly signed by the Chair.

156. Declarations of Interest – None.

157. Parish Council Vacancies

Following resolution to co-opt Mr Stanton to one vacancy at the previous meeting, it was further resolved to accept deferral of signature of his Acceptance of Declaration of Office to the next Parish Council Meeting.

An application was received from Mr Timothy Dommett, which was circulated to Councillors in advance of the meeting. It was resolved to co-opt Mr Dommett to the Council, who duly read and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

Notice of one further vacancy has been published and expires on the 17th April. If no request for election is received by the prescribed number of voters, the vacancy can be filled at the May Parish Council meeting.

158. Somerset Council Councillor Report

Cllr Stanton reported that re-organisation of the staff structure at Somerset Council is under way to remove duplicate roles and window for voluntary redundancy applications has now been closed. The new structure is expected to be in place in September.

There is progress with phosphate mitigation in terms of planning and applications which were on hold, although this is impacting the time for new applications to be dealt with.

Commenting on flooding, Cllr Stanton advised it has been noted that occurrences are in varied places from 2014. It is feared that incidents of flooding may not have been reported due to concerns over impact on insurance policies. Rainfall has been very heavy and over short timeframes and blocked culverts in many areas are stopping water from subsiding.

Creation of a new 'gigafactory' at the Gravity site in Bridgwater is expected to create around 4000 jobs and in turn have a positive effect on the local economy.

Cllr Stanton commented that residents should continue to report potholes on the roads as there is budget allocated for temporary repairs.

159. Questions and comments from the public

A resident enquired what arrangements would be for the Annual Parish Meeting. This was discussed later in the meeting.

160. Planning Applications

- a. 24/00580/LBC: West End Farm West End Kingsbury Episcopi Martock TA12 6AY - Conversion of a stable block for residential use.

The Council noted the application was as per application 23/03199/FUL considered in February 2024, and had no additional comments, hence SUPPORTED the application.

The response will be sent to Somerset Council Planning and will be available to view on the planning portal against the respective applications in due course. [Link to Planning Portal](#)

161. Financial Matters

a. Financial Report & Payments

The Clerk circulated a full financial report for the financial year, including details of all payments, receipts and reconciliation of the bank accounts. This report will be circulated as a regular item going forward.

The following payments were approved:

Somerset Council	Annual Premises Licence 2024	£70.00
K Larsson	Clerk Salary incl. PAYE (March)	£433.50
Wildlife Group	Pin Badges	£75.00

b. Appointment of Internal Auditor

The Clerk presented options of 2 alternative auditors with specific experience, noting that the internal audit had been carried out by the same party for several years previously and a change would be appropriate. The Council were in agreement and RESOLVED to appoint Joanna Simmonds as internal auditor.

162. Cemetery Management & Administration

a. Training

The Clerk presented cost for attendance on a cemetery administration course run by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management (ICCM) at a cost of £185. An option for membership of the Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management (ICCM) was discussed but the Clerk did not feel this was necessary at this stage, although could be revisited at a later date.

The Council RESOLVED that the Clerk should attend the proposed course via the ICCM.

b. Cemetery Administration Software

Quotes were not yet available. The item was deferred to a future meeting.

Cllr Frost left the meeting at 8.15pm.

163. Updates

a. Local Community Networks – The last LCN meeting was held on 25th March.

Unfortunately there was not a representative in attendance from Kingsbury Episcopi PC. It was noted that there are currently Wellbeing and Highways working groups running in addition to the main LCN meetings.

Further information on the LCN's can be found on the Somerset Council website at the following link <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/local-community-networks/>

b. Wildlife Group – The group are busy preparing for the May Festival, with a theme of “Year of the Insect”

c. Sensory Garden – A complimentary plan has been created by Rocketbox Design, incorporating 6 different areas to include habitat areas and different planting, as well as an area designed with the partially sighted in mind. The Wildlife Group and Council would like to thank all volunteers and Rocketbox Design for their efforts and input to the project so far.

d. Cemetery & Churchyard – A topple test was carried out on the memorials on the 23rd March. 1 memorial has been noted as requiring monitoring. Comment had been received regarding dog fouling in the churchyard and the Council want to remind all dog owners to ensure they are picking up after their dogs and observing any restrictions in place regarding access and/or on lead instructions. Cllr Frost agreed to liaise with the Church regarding dates of any events so that timing of grass cutting can be considered.

- e. **SID reports** –Recent data remains consistent with previous results. The Council extended thanks to Mrs Potepa for continuing to manage the SIDs and provide feedback on the data.
- f. **Lock-up** – No updates.
- g. **Defibrillator at the Rusty Axe** – The new defibrillator has been delivered and now requires installation to be organised by the Rusty Axe. Once up and running training will be organised.
- h. **Highways** – Repairs to pot holes continue to be made where reported, but these are not long lasting. Residents are encouraged to continue reporting any new issues directly to Somerset Council so they can be accurately recorded and dealt with as promptly as possible. The online reporting tool on the Somerset Council website can be found on the following link: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/report-a-problem-on-the-road/> or alternatively the Fix My Street website can be used <https://www.fixmystreet.com/>
Enquiry was made in relation to unmarked junctions in the parish. Where there are junctions with no markings there is no defined right of way and drivers should proceed with caution. Somerset Council has advised that only junctions where a justifiable need can be identified would be considered to be marked had they not been in the past.
- i. **Flooding** – Despite recent works by Wessex Water, Little Lane still is not clear of water. It was noted that there is also water across the road from Muchelney to Huish Episcopi again.
- j. **Footpaths and Bridleways** – Cllr Frost has been in contact with SC Rights of Way regarding part of the footpath at the Avenue appears that appears to be unadopted and is awaiting a response.

164. Items for the next meeting

None requested.

165. Date and time of upcoming meetings

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council: Wednesday 1st May 2024, 7.30pm

Annual Parish Meeting: Proposed for Wednesday 29th May 2024, to be confirmed

Both the be held at Kingsbury Episcopi Primary School

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.45pm.

Signed

Date

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