**KENNET VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL 5– 2022/23**

Minutes of the **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held on the 6th March 2023 at 6.30pm in the Kennet Valley Hall.

**Present:** Cllr J Drew, Cllr C Rogers, Cllr D Woolley, Cllr J Turner, Cllr M Dissanayake & Cllr R Richards.

**In attendance:** S Roberts (Clerk), Unitary Cllr Jane Davies & one member of the public.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION –** None.

The Council resolved due to an unavoidable delay in the Chair arriving for the start of the meeting and in the absence of the Vice-Chair for Councillor Christopher Rogers to temporarily Chair the meeting until her arrival.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr M Bates, Cllr V Hemery & Cllr A Miller.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

1. **ITEMS TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE SESSION**

Item 89 – Pension.

1. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the 9th January 2023 Parish Council meeting were approved and signed as a true record.

1. **REPORTS**

Unitary Cllr Jane Davies reported Wiltshire Council Budget set their Budget on 21st February with an increase of 4.99%. The increase was primarily to help with the provision for Adult Social Care. They are hopeful to be able to decrease the level of increase to 3.99% in 2024 and 2.99% in 2025.

Two new Special Schools will be opening in the Autumn as well as another Free School.

Councillor Jane Davies left the meeting.

1. **CLERKS REPORT**

The Chair and the Clerk attended an online meeting of the Executive Committee of WALC on 18th January which was shambolic. It was well attended by Clerks and Councillors across the County and many suggestions were made as to how to improve the organisation and a request for more Councillor training was requested.

Play area signage – awaiting installation.

The West Overton bus shelter light will be repaired but may have to wait until after the nesting season due to the proximity of a bird’s nest.

No further progress has been made on the provision of a bin on the Dene although several attempts have been made to contact Idverde to arrange an installation.

The Clerk’s contract will now need to be reviewed again by the Staffing Committee as the Clerk has been provided with a draft of the revised contract from another Council which has amendments to be considered and also the addition of the Pension provision.

Cllr Jane Drew took over from Councillor Christopher Rogers to Chair the remainder of the meeting.

1. **CORONATION**

The Council noted the Cricket Club currently have the Kennet Valley Hall booked on Sunday 7th May for a cricket match therefore the Hall field may not be available for a picnic. Given the lack of enthusiasm from parishioners for a whole community picnic it was agreed to leave it to the individual villages to organise their own picnics or get togethers. Marlborough News Online to be approached for a photo again but possibly to be taken of the village picnics if they take place.

1. **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Monday 24th April at 6.30pm. Cllr Jill Turner in her capacity as Chair of U3A Kennet will give a short talk. Posters will be put up around the villages to include the additional drop off point at the West Overton Church for food items for the Devizes Foodbank and a list of items they are currently in need of. A note will also go in the April edition of UKN.

Working Group and Committee Chairs were requested to provide a short report on achievements over the last 12 months. **Action Councillors**

1. **PARISH ASSETS (AM)**

Jubilee Tree – Reverend Maria Shepherdson has kindly agreed to do a short Blessing and Dedication on Sunday 7th May at 12 noon. A plaque with appropriate wording will need to be sourced before the blessing.

1. **PEACOCK FIELD (MD)**

The Council were pleased to report they are now officially the owners of the bottom part of Peacock Field in West Overton. The Council resolved to disband the Peacock Field Working Group and pass all further responsibilities to the Assets Working Group.

The Council resolved to pay for the erection of the new boundary stock fence using the VAT refund from the legal fees and the money saved by not having to cut the grass on the field over the last 12 months.

A list of suggestions from the Peacock Field Working Group has been passed to the Assets Working Group for consideration. The Council had previously approved the provision of new goal posts and a picnic bench. **Action PAG**

1. **RIGHTS OF WAY (VH)**

Following discussions with Alison Rasey, the new Countryside officer at Wiltshire Council working alongside Stephen Leonard, the track leading to Westwoods in Lockeridge has received some repairs. It is hoped a more permanent solution can be found at some point but there is currently insufficient funding.

The Parish Steward has kindly filled one of the larger potholes on the unadopted section of Knights Close – this was a one-off repair due to the pothole causing issues for a wheelchair user. Alison Rasey has written to Aster to ask for their help with further repairs but we are not hopeful any assistance will be forthcoming.

1. **OTHER BODIES**

**Kennet Valley Hall** – the memorial trees have now been moved. Replacement of some of the trees which have died, and the future care of the trees will be discussed at the May meeting. Cllr C Rogers reported bookings are healthy and the Hall is considering adding solar panels to the roof of the Hall.

The member of public thanked the Council for their support and assistance with the purchase of Peacock Field and then left the meeting.

**Avebury World Heritage Site Steering Group –** Cllr Jayne Drew attendeda recentmeeting.

An independent consultant was engaged to put forward a new Governance Structure and recommended an independent charity for the WHS to assist with funding needs to be established.

Much discussion took place as the recommendations for the Governance Structure were not deemed inclusive enough to represent the views of all parties involved and would significantly reduce the community representation.

Meanwhile, the WHS Co-ordination Unit (hosted by WC) has been unmanned for a prolonged period.  Wiltshire Council who supports the new proposed Governance Structure have indicated they wish to reconsider their position as funders of the unit from 2024 without a Governance Structure they can agree with, being put in place. Initial work on setting up a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) has begun. Once set up this will enable a review of the financial contributions made by the various members involved.

A Partnership Panel meeting was held on 20th February 2023 to discuss WC’s viewpoint, the minutes of this meeting are not yet available.

A Steering Committee meeting is scheduled for 22nd March 2023 which Cllr Jayne Drew will be attending on behalf of KVPC.

The Chair temporarily closed the meeting to discuss in closed session the following item:

Clerk’s Pension – resolved to approve a pension contribution of 5%. Clerk to set up payroll with HMRC and meeting to be arranged with Staffing Committee in April or early May. **Action Clerk**

The Chair re-opened the meeting.

1. **FINANCE (DW)**

The accounts for the year to March 6th 2023:

Balance carried forward from last year: £22707.43

Total receipts for the year to March 2023: £47893.52

Total payments for year to March 2023: £40320.12

The available (cash book) balance at 6 March 2023: £30280.83

The Council approved retrospective and current BACS payments:

Retrospective:

Phil Duckett – repositioning of memorial trees at KVH £175.00

SLCC – membership 2023 £123.90

Current:

S Roberts – Clerk’s salary March – post-dated

S Roberts – Clerk expenses Feb/March 2023

Friends of The Ridgeway – subscription 2023 £15.00

WALC – Finance for councillors training £72.00

Wiltshire LGPS – if organised in time – pension contribution 5% salary

1. **COMMUNICATIONS**

Items to be added to the next edition of UKN:

1. Coronation
2. Councillor vacancies
3. Annual Parish Meeting
4. Defibrillator Training – 11th June 2023
5. **AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

The following items will be added to the agenda for the March meeting:

1. Standing Orders review
2. Clerk’s contract
3. Memorial trees
4. Policy document review
5. Climate Emergency
6. Peacock Field
7. Climate Emergency meeting update

The meeting closed at 7.52 pm.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Monday 15th May at 6.30pm in the Kennet Valley Hall.

This is the last page of the minutes.