**KENNET VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL 3 – 2023/24**

Minutes of the **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING** held on the 18th September 2023 at 6.30pm in the Kennet Valley Hall.

**Present:** Cllr J Drew, Cllr M Bates, Cllr D Woolley, Cllr J Turner, Cllr M Dissanayake, Cllr T Tolputt & Cllr V Hemery.

**In attendance:** S Roberts (Clerk) and one member of the public.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION –** One member of the public spoke with reference to tree felling at his property. The member of public then left the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received and approved from Cllr A Miller, Cllr R Richards, Cllr C Rogers and Unitary Cllr J Davies.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

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

None.

1. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of 26th June 2023 Parish Council Meeting were approved and signed as a true record.

1. **CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chair expressed sincere condolences on behalf of the Parish Council to the family of the Who’da Thought it public house in Lockeridge following the recent death of the Landlord, Ian Vardon. She gave praise for how helpful they had been during the Covid pandemic and hopes the pub which is a central part of the Lockeridge community continues to thrive.

Kate Mallinson has been appointed as the new Head of the Kennet Valley C of E Aided Primary School and the Parish Council looks forward to continuing to work closely with the school. A meeting between Kate Mallinson and two representatives of the Parish Council has been scheduled for 3rd October 2023.

1. **CLERKS REPORT**

Bins on The Dene & Peacock Field – communications with Idverde have been difficult. After numerous emails, some copied into Wiltshire Council the Clerk finally tracked down the correct person by telephone. A site meeting with Idverde should now take place in 2 weeks’ time.

Bobby Van Stay Safe Online Scheme training – a training course specifically aimed at the over 60’s and over 18’s with a registered disability. The Kennet Valley Hall have given their support to hold the training and the Clerk been in touch with the co-ordinator to explore possible dates.

Electoral Review response – the response was given to the Electoral Review Committee confirming our intention to withdraw from the possible merger with Preshute Parish Council.

West Overton Bus shelter light – the electrician is on holiday for the next two weeks but has agreed now the nesting season is over he will change the light fitting shortly after he returns.

Peacock Field – the new fencing and gate is in place and the Trust has been invoiced for the gate and post. The old fencing has been removed and relocated to Manor Farm for use on the fundraising bonfire for the Air Ambulance to be held in October. The Finance Committee will need to review expected essential expenditure for 2024/25 before deciding how much can be spent on the provision of goal posts and seating/picnic bench if funds allow.

1. **REPORTS & REPORT FROM UNITARY COUNCILLOR JANE DAVIES**

Solstice permits – due to a change in procedures by Wiltshire Council, Avebury Solstice Permits will now be issued by the Parish Council. It was noted these are not for attending the celebrations but for people using the shops and facilities or visits to residents. A notification will be added to the next edition of the Upper Kennet News asking if anybody requires a permit. **Action Clerk**

Unitary Councillor Jane Davies was not present at the meeting but advised Wiltshire Council has had the Q1 budget results and Wiltshire is in good financial order with a predicted overspend of c. £300,000 which represents less than 0.1% of their annual budget.  They are obligated to return a balanced budget and minor overspending is common in year but will be balanced by close of year.

This is reassuring for residents given the recent news about Birmingham Council.  Financial planning is strong in Wiltshire.

In further news, Cabinet has agreed to spend an additional £10 million on roads in addition to their annual budget, their £3.68 million share of additional national funding to repair potholes and additional funds for gully clearing, prosecution of fly tipping etc.  This is only possible because of careful financial management of public money.

1. **PARISH ASSETS (AM)**

Millenium Time Capsule – A plaque will be attached to the capsule stating it is a time capsule and not to be opened until the year 2200. The capsule will either be returned to the West Overton Bell Tower or be placed in the Clock room above. **Action Clerk**

Trees on the Dene – it was noted the commemorative tree recently planted on the Dene has Canker, this will need to be monitored for further deterioration.

A resident of Lockeridge has kindly offered to buy a tree to be planted permanently on the Dene for use at Christmas to decorate. The Council were in favour of the proposal but thought will need to be given to the type of tree as it was not thought to be an appropriate location for a Pine tree. **Action Cllr J Drew**

1. **HOUSING NEEDS**

 A landowner is exploring the possibility of some new housing on a portion of their land and the Council have been asked to consider local housing needs, in particular social housing. The Council agreed they would be open to discussion with the landowner but would like to have another Rural Housing Survey carried out to ascertain what housing is required to be able to give an informed opinion. The last Rural Housing Survey took place in 2014. **Action Clerk**

1. **POLICY DOCUMENTS**

The following policy documents were reviewed with some minor amendments:

Press and Media, Email, Filming, Photography, Audio Recording and Social Media.

1. **TRAFFIC/ROAD SAFETY/POLICE & EMERGENCY RESPONSE (JT)**

The Council supported the purchase of a Speed Indicator Device by the Lockeridge Traffic Group at the last meeting and a contribution from the Council towards the cost subject to receipt of the full costings. Cllr Jill Turner provided the indicative cost which does not include installation and requested a contribution of £659.30. The Council note there is a requirement for the devices to be moved every 14 days to which Highways suggest leaving it in situ and turn it in the opposite direction. The Council considered this not to be good practice as it would need to cover both ends of the village and the practicalities of moving it every 14 days would need to be explored further. The Council agreed in principle to the funding request but subject to the moving practicalities being resolved and the locations of any additional posts required being provided. **Action Cllr J Turner**

Defibrillators – Southwest Ambulance Services have been unable to provide an indicative quote for the renewal of the 4-year contract due in August 2024. The Council supported the renewal of the contract but agreed Kennet Valley Hall would be asked for a contribution towards the one located at the Hall if the costs are increased substantially.

1. **PLANNING**

Wiltshire Local Plan – Cllr D Woolley was asked if he would do a draft response to be discussed and considered at the next Planning Meeting scheduled for 27th September 2023. **Action Cllr D Woolley**

1. **FINANCE (DW)**

The accounts for the year to September 18th, 2023:

Balance carried forward from last year: £29892.86

Total receipts for the year to September 2023: £14883.47

Total payments for year to September 2023: £4787.74

The available (cash book) balance on 18th September 2023: £34289.96

The External Audit of the AGAR is now complete with no advisories.

Once the full extent is known of expenses for Peacock Field and the Speed Indicator Device the Committee will meet to discuss allocations for the budget on either 18th or 19th October 2023.

payments:

**Retrospective BACS to be approved:**

WALC – Councillor Finance JT £36.00

W R Rammage – Grass cutting Fyf & WO £420.00

H J Construction – Peacock Field fence & gate £2943.91

S Roberts – Clerk salary July 2023

Bruce Thomas – litter pick & moss spray £108.00

Wicksteed – Play area inspections £356.40

WALC – Councillor Training TT £54.00

W R Rammage – Grass cutting Fyf & WO & footpaths £476.99

S Roberts – Clerk salary August 2023

**Current BACS to be approved:**

S Roberts – Clerk’s expenses Aug/Sept 2023

PKF Littlejohn – External audit of AGAR £252.00

S Roberts – Clerk salary September 2023

1. **COMMUNICATIONS**

Items to be added to the next edition of UKN:

1. Solstice permits
2. Hedge Trimming
3. Hi viz jackets
4. Emergency tips
5. **AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

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

1. Mobile phone coverage
2. Review budget for 2024/25 & set the Precept
3. Annual Parish Meeting
4. BT usage of telegraph posts for broadband
5. Asset of Community value
6. Co-option
7. Rights of Way – funding requests

The meeting closed at 8 pm.

**The next Parish Council meeting will take place on Monday 6th November at 6.30pm in the Kennet Valley Hall.**

This is the last page of the minutes.