

**Minutes of the  
Askerswell Parish Meeting  
held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

**Present:** Howard Atkinson Chair  
Margaret Barrett Clerk

**In attendance:** 25 Electors  
Cllr M Roberts WDDC/DCC

**Item 1/18: Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, reminded people of the fire exit should the need arise.

**Item 2/18: Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Cllr K Day	Mrs Gillian Fowler	Mr Graham Fowler
Mr Graham Hall	Mrs Mandy Hall	Mr John Mahoney
Mr Vincent Sheppard		

**Item 3/18: Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017, were agreed by those present as being a representative record of that meeting.

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Mr Godfrey Lancashire and seconded by Mr Nigel Guard. The Minutes were then duly signed by the Chair.

**Item 4/18: Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising that were not being dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

**Item 5/18: Correspondence and Electronic Communications**

The Clerk said that there hadn't been any relevant correspondence received since the last meeting that needed to be reported.

The Chair stated that he and the Clerk are to attend a meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> May to assess the potential transfer of certain discretionary services to town and parish councils from the WDDC. It will be pointed out, when at the meeting, that the village volunteers already provide benefits in kind and are close to saturation. The issues that will need to be clarified are the limits on what a parish meeting is legally able to do relative to parish councils. Clearly the devolution of assets and services by the WDDC arises from a shortage of council funds and taking on responsibilities presumably may require a raise to the precept to meet the costs. When the situation has been clarified it will be reported in the 6 monthly update and then the October Parish Meeting.

## Item 6/18: Planning Matters

Planning Applications that have been received for consultation since the last Parish Meeting:

### Askerswell House:

i) 13-Nov-2017 – Internal & external alterations and demolish outbuildings (Full & Listed Building) – Approved by WDDC on 18-Jan-2018

ii) 01-Mar-2018 – Alterations to accommodate the conversion of the Coach House into a self-contained residential unit & the conversion of the hay loft into a games room (Full & Listed Building Consent) – still awaiting decision by WDDC.

Two Parish Consultation meetings about this dwelling were held at 7:30pm on 6/12/2017 and 28/03/2018 respectively with 7-11 parishioners. On both occasions, the agent (by invitation) brought plans, provided a presentation and then responded to questions from Parishioners. No Parishioners present wished to make a comment or raise any objection with WDDC Planning Department and so the meetings were closed without discussion by the Parishioners present.

**Land northwest of Eggardon Farm 24-Jan-2018** — Erection of timber framed barn (Agricultural Determination) - Approved 23-Feb-2018. No meeting held.

**Land South of Spyway Road 16-Mar-2018** — Erect 1.No Dwelling House (Full) – still awaiting decision

The Parish Consultation meeting was held at 7:30pm on 4/4/2018 with eight parishioners present plus the applicant (by invitation) and the landowners. The applicant brought plans, provided a presentation and then responded to questions from Parishioners. Parishioners had registered concerns before the meeting and so the Parishioners held a discussion. The discussion of the Parishioners led to the conclusion which is the document submitted to the Planning Department of WDDC. It was submitted with points in the chronological order developed in the discussion and was verified with the Parishioner attendees before submission to the WDDC planning website.

### Other matters

- The Chair reminded the electorate of the importance of attending planning meetings so that the views of the Parish are more precisely recorded for both in favour or against any application. The Clerk gets notification that a planning application has been submitted and then has to arrange an Open meeting to get the Parish views before a specific deadline. It was felt that not everyone sees the notice of the meeting that is posted on the village notice board. To make this clearer in future a different colour will be used to make it stand out and the notice will also be posted on the village website. Those wishing to receive notification of any imminent planning meeting have given their e-mail addresses to the Clerk. It was proposed by Mrs Barbara Roberts, seconded by Mr Ian Russell and unanimously agreed to continue as in the past by confirming discussions at planning meeting by oral summary at the end of the meeting. This summary will then be circulated, when necessary, to all those present at the meeting before submitting the views of the parish to the planning authority. This will then be reported in the following Parish Meeting, as at present, for inclusion in the minutes.



**Item 7/18: Highway Matters**

**Hembury Road.** Blair Turner of DCC Highways stated that structural repairs to neither Hembury Road nor Parsons Lane in Askerswell are currently a priority for DCC Highways. He was asked again about pothole repairs on Hembury Road which as a result have now been filled.

**Uploders repair in progress.** Loders PC has no updates on projected completion date, but Cllr Roberts did state that the works were progressing quite well.

**Item 8/18: Financial Reports for 2017/18.**

The Clerk informed the meeting that there were some formalities that need to be completed at this meeting

**Item 8/18/1. Internal Control & Annual Governance Statement.**

The Clerk stated that as Financial Officer she had:-

- prepared accounting statements in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- had used 'Proper Practices' as required
- and that the Parish Officers had dealt with the monies entrusted to them in an appropriate manner.

The Clerk then asked the Chair to call a vote for the Statement to be approved, this was proposed by Mr Ian Russell and seconded by Mrs Veronica Sheppard, and was passed unanimously.

**Item 8/18/2. Approval of the Statement of Accounts**

The Clerk had prepared the 'Accounts and Financial Statements' for the year 2017/18 and these figures had been subjected to an Internal Audit by Mr Nigel Guard, our examiner, and they will now be sent for an External audit with PKF Littlejohn LLP.

The clerk then proceeded to review the accounts with the meeting (as set out below), giving more details of the expenditure that had been made throughout the year.

At the October meeting, it was mentioned that if the Parish Meeting account still had a 'healthy' balance then further payments could be made to the Church for graveyard maintenance and village hall for its up-keep. However it was decided that funds will be retained until further information on the devolution of assets and services by the WDDC is gained. An update will be given at the next Parish Meeting at which time there may be sufficient clarity to consider any distribution of funds.

The Clerk then asked the Chair to call a vote for the Statement of Accounts to be approved, this was proposed by Mr Godfrey Lancashire and seconded by Mrs Barbara Roberts, and was passed unanimously.

In conclusion the Clerk said that this approved information has already been placed on the Parish's Annual Returns. The Return will now be passed to the Internal Auditor Mr Nigel Guard, together with the Parish's 'Financial Records' for his final review before being sent to the External Auditor.



Askerswell Parish Meeting							
Financial Report 2017 - 2018							
31 March '17		31 March '18		31 March '17		31 March '18	
£	Receipts	£	£	£	Expenditure	£	£
639.32	Balance b/f		1012.52	150.78	Insurance		157.78
108.00	DCC - Cllr Coatsworth			31.32	DAPTC		31.95
	Neighbourhood Forum		30.00				
	Environmental Award		75.00				
1800.00	Annual Precept			425.79	Repairs & Maintenance		
	- April	900.00			- Washingpool	237.94	
	- September	900.00	1800.00		- Parish	173.96	411.90
					Administration		
				16.00	- Hire of hall for meeting	24.00	
				110.91	- ICT resources	38.69	
					- Stationery	15.90	78.59
					Contributions		
				400.00	- Askerswell PCC	550.00	
				400.00	- Askerswell Village Hall	550.00	1100.00
				1012.52	Balance c/f		1137.30
2547.32			2917.52	2547.32			2917.52

**Item 8/18/3. Period of 'Exercise of Public Rights'.**

The Clerk reminded the Parish of their 'Legal Right' of access to the Parish's 'Financial Records' and made them aware that officially they have 30 days in which to make their request for access, which will officially end on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

**Item 8/18/4. Appointment of an Internal Auditor.**

The Clerk thanked Mr Nigel Guard for his help and advice with the audit and reported that he is happy to continue to act as Internal Auditor so he was proposed by Mrs Margaret Barrett, seconded by Mrs Gill Foot and was passed unanimously.

**Item 9/18: Election of Officers**

The Chair announced that Mr John Mahoney had decided that, due to other commitments, he wished to stand down as Deputy Chair. The Chair also said that he only wished to serve one more year having then served for 5 years, and that the Clerk also only wished to serve one more year. He reminded those present that if a Parish Chair was not found the village will probably have to merge with Loders Parish Council and would need a Parish Councillor to represent it. The Chair outlined the duties that the Chair has to undertake and stressed that they could be limited to these essential responsibilities. As nobody in the room came forward to stand for any of the officers Mr Ian Russell proposed that Prof Howard Atkinson (Chair) and Mrs Margaret Barrett (Clerk) be elected for another year, and that he with the help of Mr John Mahoney will seek to find members willing to stand as officers from the Parish meeting in April 2019. This proposal was seconded by Mr Richard Hobbs and all voted in favour.

**Item 10/18: Financial Projections for 2018/19**

The Chair showed the meeting a planned expenditure forecast for the coming year. This included £125 to be spent on the maintaining Washingpool Green and £25 towards the cost of the website hosting. It is also anticipated that £400 each will be given to the Village Hall towards their general upkeep and the Church towards the upkeep of the churchyard.



The Clerk also reported that money from the annual calendar sales, over the past few years have been kept separately from the Parish Meeting Funds to be spent on Washingpool. This now stands at £545.90 and that this money would be used to enhance the eastern area at the Green and to purchase a small storage container to house the mower that is used to cut the grass.

**Item 11/18: DCC & WDDC matters**

Unfortunately Cllr Day was unable to attend the meeting. Cllr Roberts represents the parish on County and District Councils. He reported that he will hold office until May 2019 when the Unitary Council comes into effect. To date they do not know where this council will be based. It is expected that the £12 million pounds it is going to cost to change to a Unitary Council should be saved over the first year. One of the main areas will be the equalisation of council taxation, at present West Dorset has low taxation, so it is likely that this will rise in the future. He also reported that adult care in Dorset accounts for 50% of their annual budget. He also confirmed that local parishes may be asked to contribute towards the cost of town services e.g. Arts Centre, museum which the WDDC have supported in the past. They may also be looking to dispose of surplus buildings.

**Item 12/18: Local Reports.**

**Item 12/18/1 Homewatch**

A couple of incidents had occurred in the village, but Mrs Veronica Sheppard said that she was not able to let other members of the community know because she hadn't been informed of them herself. Therefore do not assume somebody else will update her. Mrs Barbara Roberts volunteered to be the second point of contact if needed. Please inform the Homewatch correspondents if any suspicious activity in the village is noticed and remember to keep doors locked especially if out in the garden.

**Item 12/18/2 Washingpool Green**

The Chair gave a report on the Green - Bluebells provided by the Dorset Community Action award had been planted. Other improvements have been the planting of the butterfly and bee friendly plants. Thanks to Mrs Dinks Boden and Mrs Liz Guard for helping germinate the seeds. An insect hotel has been constructed from pallets which Mr Nigel Guard managed to obtain. Mr Geoff Barrett is going to clear some of the hazels from just west of the footbridge. The Chair is going to sow shade tolerant grass seed and Meadow/Wildflower mixture to the right of the path next to the Boden's in hope of generating a sitting down area surrounded by wild plants. A wood seat is to be remodelled by Mr Peter Harrison near the pond. Mr Peter Boden is removing a few dead alders along the north bank of the Asker and Mr & Mrs Graham Fowler have tidied up the area on the north-east border of the land. A strimming and grass cutting rota has been compiled for the year.

**Item 12/18/3 Rights of Way**

Mr Anthony Wilsdon sent in the following report:

*"Since the last meeting I reported to the County Council's Greenspaces Team that repairs were needed to the footbridge over the Asker to Washingpool Green, and was pleased to note that this work was carried out quickly by DCC. I have checked all our footpaths and bridlepaths during March and have no particular issues to report, other than*



*recommending the use of welly boots in the boggy parts of the network! Please keep me informed of any problems that you spot as you walk on the footpaths, such as broken or missing marker discs, or growth of vegetation making passage difficult."*

Item 12/18/4 Eggardon OPEC

Mr John Mahoney sent in the following report:

*"I joined the committee, replacing Gill Evans, in March 2017. The only full meeting since that time – in December 2017 - discussed the group's aims.*

*I reported to that meeting the results of the small survey taken at the October 2017 Askerswell Parish Meeting. The survey indicated that the priority aims of customers here are, in order of importance*

- first: cheapest heating oil (48%);*
- second: optional budget account and regular top-up services (38%);*
- third: reduce road congestion by coordinated deliveries (14%).*

*The majority of the OPEC committee agreed the group's aims as "to reduce the number and size of oil tankers on our narrow country lanes for the benefit of our community and our environment through organised and scheduled deliveries and to obtain for our members the best possible customer service and competitive oil prices". In other words, the group's priority is reducing road congestion whereas the survey at the Askerswell meeting suggested the priority is to get the cheapest price.*

*The OPEC committee decided to review the performance of the group's designated supplier – Watsons - by meeting their representative. Some of the committee had that meeting in early April. No report has yet been issued. Watsons has been the supplier since the group began in 2006. There has been no competitive review involving other suppliers to ensure that oil users get the best deal. The majority of the committee prefer not to undertake a competitive review.*

*It seems likely that unless the situation changes, oil users may find they can get the best value for money by comparing the Watsons OPEC price and service with other suppliers, including online ordering".*

Item 12/18/5 Parish Lands

The Trustees met for the Annual meeting on Friday 13th April. The end of year bank balance in the Fuel Allotment is £250.10, and the Gravel Allotment £250.09. The Trustees will look at the constitution to see what the monies could be used for apart from distributing to the village hall and church, but in the meantime it was decided that no funds will be distributed at present as it was felt that a balance of approximately £250 should be held in each account in case any expenditure relating to the lands was needed in the future.

Mr John Mahoney wished to stand down as one of the Trustees. The Chair asked if anyone else wished to become Trustees. Mr Ian Russell agreed to stand as the other Trustee and the Clerk asked that the meeting approve that Prof Howard Atkinson, Mrs Margaret Barrett and Mr Ian Russell be the Trustees for the coming year. All voted in favour.

Item 12/18/6 Public Transportation

The Clerk reported that information of meetings are still received from WATAG (Western Area Transport Action Group) and if anyone is interested in representing the parish, then let



her know. Details of their meetings will be put on the village website.

**Item 12/18/7 Super-Fast Broadband**

Mr John Mahoney sent in the following report:

*The following update has been received from Colin Wood on 24<sup>th</sup> April: "The fibre spine has successfully been brought from the south in order to avoid the costly issues associated with the previous plan from the north. The fibre has now reached Uploders and the build in that community is due to be completed next week.*

*Next Tuesday (1 May) Openreach has a site meeting with Dorset County Council's Highways Team. Openreach would like to run fibre along poles from Uploders towards Spyway Road to the point where the Highways Team is working to resolve subsidence issues. The fibre would be diverted underground in new ducting potentially laid as part of the highway works, before popping back up and resuming its aerial route to Askerswell.*

*If this can be co-ordinated it would avoid a much longer underground route between Uploders and Askerswell involving silted ducts and along a narrow bridleway with no vehicle access.*

*Openreach intends to complete the build to Askerswell by the end of June."*

*May I please remind people that after Openreach have finished their installation there's likely to be a 4 to 6 week commissioning period before the new system is usable and orders can be placed. So if all goes according to the latest plan it may be mid to late August before those who wish to upgrade can order the improved service and I guess a couple of weeks after the order is placed before for an engineer visit to bring the new cable to the house.*

*In case anyone is concerned, there is no need to upgrade immediately or at all if people prefer not to do so.*

**Item 13/18: Askerswell Village Calendar 2019**

The Chair thanked all those that had bought the 2018 calendar. He suggested a number of possibilities for titles for next year's calendar. It was agreed that the 2019 calendar would be a mixture of views of the parish and the wildlife in it. Photos either digital or good quality prints need to be given to the Chair by the end of August.

**Item 14/18: Askerswell Neighbourhood Plan Report**

The Chair read the following report: *"The proposed plan was submitted to WDDC on the 12<sup>th</sup> February. I would like to thank the web designer for his hard work in generating a website that is accessible from search engines to replace the former one and then adding all the documentation the WDDC required for the process to proceed. WDDC agreed it was fit for examination and opened a consultation phase which closed on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. A summary of the representations made to the council will soon be on their website. The next step is for WDDC to offer a choice of examiner for the Forum to select the examiner. He/she will then produce a report possibly with a meeting in the village. The Forum will then be expected to respond to any alterations to the plan the examiner requests. Once the Forum's responses satisfy WDDC there will be a referendum held by WDDC election officers. Providing there is a simple majority on the day of election in favour of its adoption it is likely to be "made" shortly after that date by WDDC. It will then be considered alongside the Local Plan for any development in the neighbourhood area i.e. the Parish, for a period of 10 years. Terry Sneller of WDDC anticipates the process to completion will*



be about a year from submission in February 2018.”

**Item 15/18: Askerswell Village Website**

It has had about 5700 page views since it began. The intention is for the Parish meeting to review its continuation in April 2019. Hopefully people find it useful. Mrs Mandy Hall and the web designer were thanked for making the website so effective.

**Item 16/18: Environmental improvements**

*The Chair gave the following report:*

**A) Heritage:** *Those of us who attended the inadequately advertised meeting found out that the Parish is included in the South Dorset Ridgeway landscape partnership scheme. As a result of the meeting the partnership is considering providing funding for a) cast iron roundel for the finger post b) digitising the millennium file c) providing the lime mortar to repair the stone wall in part of the Pound and d) funds to clear the horse trough on Nallers Lane. The meeting decided it would like to see a Roundel showing the name Askerswell.*

**B) Biodiversity.** *Two representatives of the South Dorset Ridgeway landscape partnership scheme met on 16<sup>th</sup> March. They produced a report giving the following key points:*

**at Washingpool:** *test water quality; manage margins to create diverse structure and absorb nitrogen; extend and seed wildflower area; replace bird boxes; install bat box; install bug hotel(s); install, create reptile/amphibian hibernacula*

**at The Pound:** *Replace some or all of the wood chipping and sow with native wildflower seed or introduce native plug plants around the edges to attract pollinators and provide cover for small mammals; Install bug/bee hotel; Install bird/bat box on trees*

**in the Churchyard:** *leave edges uncut as much/long as possible*

**at the Village Hall:** *leave edges or sections uncut as much/long as possible to encourage diverse flora and corridors for small mammals; install wildlife homes e.g. bird & bat boxes, hedgehog house, bug hotels*

**Funding requirements:** *all interventions must be completed on the ground by 30 September 2018. Agreed costs (exclusive of VAT) can be reclaimed from the project on completion of a grant claim form available from Jill Hearing.*

*Copies of the report were distributed to representatives of the Village Hall and the Church and a copy will also be left in the hall..*

**C) The Southwest farming and wildlife advisory group** *are interested in improving the riparian corridor and river channel of the Asker. Nick Gray a representative of DWT met with Graham Foot, Sean Webb and Geoff Barrett as landowners and Jessamy & Anthony Wilsdon and me with environmental interests at the end of January. Nick provided a report which is being left in the village hall. Subsequent meetings were held at Loders village hall and a draft report will be submitted presumably to the advisory group in June.*

*Likely activities are to identify and eradicate Himalayan balsam and to do a community-led fly survey along the river. The biodiversity of larger invertebrates (e.g. insects) is used to assess a river quality by evaluating water quality sensitive families, the proportion that are sediment-sensitive and those adversely affected by pesticides. The Environmental Agency has been monitoring at Yondover since 1993. Although not in the report, it has also been monitored at the wood just above Matravers. A national survey of headwaters has measured the water quality in the two headwater streams of the Asker in the Parish. One possibility is the river above the waterfall at Washingpool becoming an arc site for our native crayfish which is endangered nationally and very local in Dorset.*



**Item 17/18: Any Other Business**

Item 17/18/1 Letter in ECV re Sewerage

Mr Ian Russell mentioned the letter written in the ECV re the sewerage leakage at Matravers. The letter implied that this was due to Askerswell residents putting unsuitable materials into the sewer. The Chair will speak to the Chair of Loders Parish Council to see if a meeting can be held with Wessex Water to try and clarify what is causing this and whether there is a blockage further down the sewer which is causing waste to back up. People were reminded to ensure that only flushable waste is put down toilets.


Item 17/18/2 Light in phone box

Mr Russell mentioned the lack of light in the phone box. BT had been asked about this, but they said that due to health and safety they could not get someone to change it.

**Item 18/18: Date and time of next Parish Meetings**

The next Parish Meetings will take place on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October, 7.30pm in the village hall.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Chairman's signature .....   
Date ..... 24<sup>th</sup> October 2018