

**Minutes of the
Askerswell Parish Meeting
held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on 24th October 2018**

Present: Howard Atkinson Chair
Margaret Barrett Clerk

In attendance: 27 Electors

Item 19/18: Chair's Opening Remarks

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

Item 20/18: Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Cllr K Day	Cllr M Roberts	Mr David Atree
Mrs Lara Atree	Mr Laurie Deards	Mrs Romaine Deards
Mrs Gill Evans	Mrs Jenny Hemming	Mr Vincent Sheppard

Item 21/18: Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 25th April 2018, 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 Ian Russell. The Minutes were then duly signed by the Chair.

Item 22/18: Matters Arising

Item 16/18C: The Chair gave the following report on how the Asker River project had progressed since the last meeting. *"One intention is to monitor the riverflies such as mayflies as an indicator of its environmental quality. This is done for a wide range of rivers nationally. Maggie, Geoff and myself have been trained to do this. The intention is to monitor above the village and possibly behind Folly farm at monthly intervals beginning in early 2019. The river is classed as poor by The Environment Agency for its river plant and fish numbers. Shortly, the Dorset AONB Countryside Officer will produce the final report on the status of the river. He has reported runoff from agricultural land is being reduced with plans with the Environment Agency to limit this further in the future. A final report of the State of the Asker will be available soon together with options for improving its condition over this winter and beyond."*

Mr Ian Russell also reported that there had been a lot of silt coming down the small stream next to their property. This was probably due to the dams that were put in place further up to construct a couple of ponds being removed. Parishioners were reminded that it is illegal to add anything to the natural flow of the river e.g. silt and grass cuttings. The Chair agreed to follow this up with WDDC.

Item 17/18/1: The sewage blockage has been cleared and Wessex Water have sent each resident information on how to prevent a re-occurrence of the issue.

Item 17/18/2: The light in the telephone box is now functional.

Item 23/18: Correspondence and Electronic Communications

The Clerk said that any relevant correspondence received, that could either effect or inform members of the parish, is put up on the village notice board or distributed to those to whom it may be beneficial. This also includes notifications that are received informing of road closures and diversions that will affect traffic through the village.

Item 24/18: Planning Matters

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

APPLICATION NO: WD/D/18/000275 and 000276 (listed building) – ASKERSWELL HOUSE, NALLERS LANE, ASKERSWELL, DORCHESTER, DT2 9EJ – Conversion of the Coach House into a self contained residential unit & the conversion of the hay loft into a games room (Full) – approved on 30th May 2018

APPLICATION NO: WD/D/18/000092 – LAND SOUTH OF, SPYWAY ROAD, ASKERSWELL – Erect 1.No Dwelling House (Full) – refused on 23rd August 2018

APPLICATION NO: WD/D/18/001901 - CANDIDA COTTAGE, SCHOOL LANE, ASKERSWELL, DORCHESTER, DT2 9EW – Erection of extensions and alterations including a pitched roof to garage and raising dwelling roof. (Full) – a Parish Consultation meeting was held in the village hall on 8th October 2018 at 7:30pm with the two applicants and 6 other parishioners. No Parishioners present had any objection to the plans so the meeting was closed. – awaiting decision

Other matters

- The Chair reminded the electorate of the importance of attending planning meetings and felt that it should be a civic duty to attend. These meetings should not be to just raise objections. WDDC guidelines also include support. All comments should be based on 'material planning considerations'. It was agreed that these guidelines should be added to the village website.

Item 25/18: Highway Matters

Item 25/18/1: Salt bins – notification has been received from the County Council that the bins will be topped up shortly. If any further refills are required throughout the winter a charge of approx £38 per bin will be charged to the parish. It was also stressed that this salt is for use on the highways and not personal drives.

Item 25/18/2: Repair to finger post – Volunteers external to the Parish have been restoring finger posts in the area and are offering to refurbish the one at the junction of Hembury Rd and Spyway. They originally wanted to replace all 3 oak boards but are now saying only that pointing towards Askerswell is severely damaged. They would wish for us to pay for the oak board and paint etc; they would reuse the letters. The cost would be between £50 and £100. The meeting agreed to take up

this offer from the volunteers but would offer to provide materials we have to reduce the overall cost.

1. Item 25/18/3: Railings next to telephone box – The parts have been purchased and some of the preparation work has been done to replace the 2 rotten wooden railings supports, but to date this work has not been completed.

Item 26/18: Financial Reports

Item 26/18/1: Financial Returns for 2017/18 – Since the last meeting, the Parish Annual Return has been reviewed by Mr Nigel Guard, our Internal Auditor and has been forwarded to the accounting group PKF Littlejohn LLP. As the parish does not have either an income or expenditure exceeding £25000 it has been registered as exempt from a limited assurance review. This return is now available for anyone from the parish who wishes to see it.

Item 26/18/2: Interim Financial Report 2018/18 – The clerk reviewed the accounts to date with the meeting (as set out below), giving more details of the income and expenditure that had been made so far.

<u>Askerswell Parish Meeting</u>		
Receipts and Payments Accounts		
1st April 2018- 24th October 2018		
<u>Receipts</u>	£	£
April Precept		900.00
September Precept		900.00
Total Receipts		1800.00
<u>Payments</u>		
Contributions		
Askerswell PCC		
Askerswell Village Hall		0.00
Insurance		160.65
DAPTC		32.59
Repairs & Maintenance		
Washingpool	175.18	
Parish	123.60	298.78
Hire of Hall for meetings		24.00
Administration		0.00
Total Payments		516.02
Excess of Receipts over Payments		
for this period		1283.98
Cash in Bank at 1st April 2018		1137.30
+ Receipts		1800.00
		2937.30
- Payments		516.02
Cash in Bank at 24th October 2018		2421.28

Item 26/18/3: Precept 2019/20 – This year, 2018/19, the parish set a precept of £1800. It was proposed by Mrs Barbara Roberts and seconded by Mr Nigel Guard that the meeting maintains the precept at £1800 for another year to ensure that the

churchyard, village hall, Washingpool and areas around the village are maintained and enhanced. This was carried unanimously.

Item 26/18/4: Payments to Church and Village Hall – the meeting was in agreement that payments should again be made to the Church and the Village Hall to help pay for the upkeep of the churchyard and facilities respectively. After some discussion it was decided that it should be maintained that an equal amount should be given to each. It was proposed by Mr Ian Russell and seconded by Mr Frank Hemming that £500 be given to both the Church and the Village Hall. This was carried unanimously.

Item 27/18: DCC & WDDC matters

Unfortunately Cllr Roberts was unable to attend the meeting, but had sent the following report that was read by the Chair.

“District and County council notes

- 1 *Neighbourhood Plan referendum – I look forward to a good majority in favour after so much hard work – and welcome the advent of high speed broadband to the village*
- 2 *The new unitary for our area is to be called the “Dorset Council” and it comes into being on 1st April 2019. There is currently the shadow authority with all the elected councillors from the 5 districts and the county council (176) – should be 206 but 30 of us are on county and a district – which will reduce to 82 in the election to be held on 2nd May 2019. The new councillors will serve a five year term, followed by a second 5 yr term then it reverts to the normal 4 yr term of office*
- 3 *The boundary commission has yet to finalise the new areas for the Dorset Council but it is likely the ward will be called Eggardon and run from Netherbury in the NW to Toller Porcorum and even possibly Maiden Newton in the east. This ward will elect one councillor*
- 4 *Matt Prosser, the new chief executive for the Dorset Council has been appointed (he was until 1st October the chief exec of West Dorset DC)*
- 5 *Huge amount of work going on to transition from 5 councils to one eg approx 15,000 TUPE arrangements for staff. There will be around 250 redundancies mainly senior and managerial level (we still need same number of social workers or teaching assistants but we don't need 5 heads of planning, only 1)*
- 6 *It is calculated that the merger into the Dorset Council Unitary will save circa £12 million per annum; transition costs will be around “12 million – so there is a huge saving every year after year one. This saving is vital in order to protect and deliver services like adult social care which currently costs the county council over 60% of its entire budget.*
- 7 *The transfer of assets to towns and parishes is on hold for legal reasons – this may need to wait until the new council is in place.*
- 8 *The District is busy with the consultation over the 5 year review to the local plan. Contrary to many press reports, the local plan is in place and legal. The land supply figure (which should be at 5% of total houses in plan had The inspectorate recommended we carry out a 5 yr review to ascertain where we could boost the land*

supply figure – which is what we have done and there has been an opportunity for all to comment.

- 9 I sit on various outside bodies for the county council, mostly to do with the coast and flood protection, and I am now a trustee of the county pension fund. I find this more interesting than I originally imagined, overseeing the investment of many millions of £. The pension currently pays pensions to 44,000 people which includes former police, fire service, non teaching staff in schools as well as local authority pensioners.”

Item 28/18: Re-organisation & Changes to Parish & Town Council Planning.

The Chair has attended one meeting since the April meeting and he gave the following report:

- *“The three councils have a common, new planning software, 400,000 past applications are being transferred to it. There may be a short delay in the uploading of planning documents when it is about to go live.*
- *The West Dorset Local Plan is under review and uptake of the revision depends on the view taken by the new combined council.*
- *A revised, National Planning Policy Framework published 24 July 2018 is pertinent to the Local Plan review. Key points relating to this village are that it sets revised new build targets for councils and consequences if they are not met. This has consequences for villages. Our Neighbourhood Plan delivers the number of new dwellings required and has a Defined Development Boundary (DDB) within which development can occur.*
- *No development is no longer an option which some in our community favoured. There will now be a required minimum of 2% growth over 20 years. Trevor Warwick, Spatial Policy and Implementation Manager stated that communities are at greater risk without a DDB if the council does not achieve growth targets. In that case, there would be no community control over building locality and level of growth could exceed that set out by a DBB.”*

Item 29/18: South Dorset Ridgeway Project.

The Chair gave the following report:

“This project became involved with Askerswell in two aspects of its objectives:

- 1) Heritage and*
- 2) Biodiversity in public spaces.*

Both of these arose as indirect benefits from staff at the council being aware of our neighbourhood plan. The Parish has benefitted by about £1,300.

The heritage component provided lime mortar to rebuild our collapsed pound wall which Geoff Barrett and I have rebuilt. Since then it has been decided to re-point the rest of the wall at the cost to the Parish given earlier. The heritage project also paid for the new roundel at the square. They paid these costs directly but they are in the order of £500. I have now recovered the wooden roundel Peter Harrison and I manufactured for possible use at the Hembury Road/Spyway road junction.

The biodiversity in public spaces aspect visited the Washingpool area and Parish lands and took considerable interest in our pristine environment. Consequently, they provided funding to prepare and sow the new meadow at the east of Washingpool, the new wildflower area and 23 bird boxes and 10 bat boxes to be erected on our public lands. The bird boxes have been erected with the exception of 3, 2 of which

are going into the fuel allotment area. 5 bat boxes remain to be erected 3 of which will be in the fuel allotment. The remaining 2 will be placed on the village hall. I thank Antony Wilsdon for being the main helper in setting up the boxes. The grant was for £825 but does not occur in the accounts as all costs were met from my personal bank account and that was repaid.

The project has now ended but before its completion it has organised volunteers from within Dorset to come and clear some of the fuel allotment area of thick brush and erect the remaining bird and bat boxes. This work is planned for November. It is possible that further funding will be offered to the Parish next year for further biodiversity improvements."

Item 30/18: Local Reports.

Item 30/18/1 Homewatch

Mrs Veronica Sheppard said that both telephone and internet fraud was constant and to be on guard at all times. The meeting was informed that BT had a system called 'Call Blocker' that enabled people to block certain numbers from their phone.

Item 30/18/2 Washingpool Green

The Chair thanked the 14 volunteers who cut the Washingpool green and village hall grass in 2018 and Graham Hall, Nigel Guard, Antony Wilsdon and Peter Harrison who, with him, took turns to brush cut at Washingpool. There is a need for one further volunteer for 2019. This requires someone with a brush cutter and takes about an hour per year per volunteer. Some activities which were volunteered at the April meeting are yet to be completed.

He has now donated the mower that was bought as a means to enable the parish to have a mower for the Washingpool green, but it now needs somewhere to be stored. It was agreed that a small shed will be purchased from money raised by the yearly calendars to be sited down on the green. Volunteers will be needed to help build the small shed this winter.

Item 30/18/3 Rights of Way

Mr Antony Wilsdon said that he regularly checks both the footpaths and bridleways around the village. He requested that he be kept informed of any problems that are spotted on the footpaths, such as broken or missing marker discs, or growth of vegetation making passage difficult.

Item 30/18/4 Parish Lands

The Trustees, Howard Atkinson, Ian Russell and Maggie Barrett, met for the Autumn meeting which was held on Monday 8th October. The Annual returns have been submitted to Charity Commission. The tenancy agreement expired in April this year and Mr Charlie Coutts is happy to renew them for another term with the same arrangements i.e. £40 for each parcel of land per year. The current bank balances remain the same as reported at the April meeting namely Fuel Allotment £250.10, and the Gravel Allotment £250.09. Although there is no planned expenditure at present, it was decided that funds will only be distributed, if a particular area arose, where it could be of benefit to the inhabitants of the parish. Also there may be a need for funds to be spent on gates/fencing etc on the allotments in the future.

Item 30/18/5 Super-Fast Broadband

BT has now installed the infrastructure for broadband and is available to many dwellings in the village. Most people are very content with the new service although there have been installation difficulties for a couple of houses. The Chair has thanked Oliver Letwin for his support during the campaign led by John Mahoney and himself with some assistance from Ian Russell over the last 2 to 3 years.

Item 30/18/6 Askerswell Village Calendar 2019

The calendars are now available. The cost is £8 each as in previous years. 50 copies have been printed. Any profit is used for enhancing areas in the parish that can not be met from the precept. The photographers who submitted images and the selection panel were thanked. A new volunteer is required to collect the images, set up the selection process and submit the calendar to the printers in time for the 2019 autumn parish meeting.

Item 31/18: Progress on Potential New Chair, Deputy Chair and Clerk.

Mr Ian Russell stated that to date nobody had stepped forward to take on the role of any of the officers from next April. He explained the importance of maintaining the status of a Parish Meeting, that there are two open meetings a year for the electorate to discuss various issues relating to the parish; it is able to set its own precept to pay for insurance and expenditure relating to the environment around the village. He also explained what the consequences may be if the Parish Meeting was dissolved - at the beginning a monitoring officer from the WDDC would take over on a temporary basis before the parish would probably be amalgamated with a neighbouring parish council. This could mean that to ensure the interests of the village were looked after a parish councillor would need to be elected. Costs and services such as drain clearance etc would then have to be met by that parish council. It could mean that householder precepts could rise quite considerably.

The range of duties of both the Chair and the Clerk were not too considerable. Howard did say he would be happy to continue overseeing environmental issues around the village including Washingpool and it was his intention to remain Chair of the Neighbourhood Forum until the end of its current mandate in February 2020.

If anyone is willing to put themselves forward for election for either roles please contact Ian as soon as possible.

Item 32/18: Askerswell Neighbourhood Plan Report

The Chair read the following report: *"The chronology of events since the last Parish meeting up to the start of the referendum period are as follows:*

- a) *I led an application for government money to complete the process and we were awarded £2,072. In June, the Forum accepted the very experienced external examiner offered to us by WDDC.*
- b) *They provided all our documentation to the examiner, Mr Hogger along with the responses they received from their consultation upon which we did not have the opportunity to comment.*
- c) *The examiner raised only very minor points for change to the neighbourhood plan. This is in contrast to some other neighbourhood plans submitted by parishes in West Dorset. This is an important issue as there is no real mechanism for doing other than accepting amendments that the examiners seek. The Forum was content*

to accept these changes with input from our consultant to ensure that our changes met all requirements. As a result West Dorset District Council progressed the neighbourhood plan to a referendum.

- d) A ballot is for all in the parish on the electoral register and I believe voting papers have been received. Voting will take place in Askerswell Village Hall in normal voting hours on Wednesday, 21 November.*
- e) The grant also enables us to have the Neighbourhood Plan printed by Creeds in Bridport. Each dwelling in the Parish will receive a copy and hand distribution will be carried out tomorrow. As this is within the referendum period it will be accompanied by an information statement produced by WDDC, both documents having previously been made publicly available. All other supporting documents are available on the Parish website, that of WDDC as well as being present at South Walks house and Bridport Town Council offices."*

Mr Godfrey Lancashire, on behalf of the whole meeting, expressed thanks to Howard and Pat for the enormous task they have completed and the exceptional number of hours that they have spent on getting the Neighbourhood Plan to this point.

Item 33/18: Askerswell Village Website

The Chair thanked Mandy for her role as an editor of the website and Dave for his skilled role in the IT aspects of the website which is now available to all the world. There have now been about 7800 visits to individual pages. This is an increase of about 2000 since reported in our last meeting which indicates that it is increasingly being consulted. He said that he had found the website very useful and essential as part of the neighbourhood plan process.

It was agreed that the website would run for 3 years before reviewing whether or not to continue with it. This review is therefore scheduled for the Parish meeting in April 2019.

Item 34/18: Any Other Business

Item 34/18/1 Millennium File

It was suggested that the existing Millennium File could perhaps be digitised and be put into a suitable state to be printed – this would be looked into.

Item 35/18: Date and time of next Parish Meetings

A provisional date of Wednesday 1st May 2019 at 7.30pm in Askerswell Village Hall was agreed. This date may need to be changed if somebody comes forward who is willing to stand as Chair is unable to attend on that date.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9:15pm

Chairman's signature

Date

J. H. H. H. H.

2nd May 2019