

Minutes of the Askerswell Parish Meeting held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on 17th October 2019

Present: John Mahoney Chair
Margaret Barrett Clerk

In attendance: 18 Electors and 1 Observer

Item 19/19: Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and introducing himself and the clerk.

Item 20/19: Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Cllr A Alford	Mrs Gill Foot	Mr Graham Foot
Mrs Liz Guard	Mr Nigel Guard	Mr Frank Hemmings
Mr Richard Hobbs	Mrs Alison Lancashire	Ms Maya Pieris
Mr Chris Roberts	Mrs Barbara Roberts	Mrs Mary Russell

Item 21/19: Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 2nd May 2019, were agreed by those present as being a representative record of that meeting.

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Mrs Mia Lewis and seconded by Mrs Mandy Hall. The Minutes were then duly signed by the Chair.

Item 22/19: Matters Arising

Item 4/18 (25/18/2): The posts along the stream – Prof Atkinson aims to get these replaced in the near future.

Item 4/18 (34/18/1): Prof Atkinson said that now he is retired he hopefully will have more time to start collating the Millennium File into a booklet.

Item 23/19: Correspondence and Electronic Communications

The Clerk said that any relevant correspondence received, that could either effect or be information for members of the parish, is put up on the village notice board or distributed to those to whom it may be beneficial. None required discussion at this meeting.

Item 24/19: Planning Matters

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

Application for FOLLY FARM, UPLODERS, BRIDPORT, DT6 4PH - WD/D/19/000866 – Use existing self- contained unit of holiday accommodation as a permanent residential dwelling – no decision as yet been received

The Application for the LAND SOUTH OF SPYWAY ROAD, ASKERSWELL - WD/D/18/000092 – Erect 1.No Dwelling House (Full) – this was refused on 23rd August 2018, but an appeal had been lodged. On 15th August 2019 the Planning Inspectorate dismissed the appeal. The Chair summarised the reason for refusal as it was 'contrary to the Local Plan for West Dorset and the given Askerswell Neighbourhood Plan, and unacceptably harmful to the AONB'.

Application received for consultation – BT, AT VARIOUS SITES IN WDDC AREA – WD/D/19/002394 – notification of intention to remove 68 public payphones. The meeting had a discussion and agreed to strongly oppose the proposal to remove the public phone. The main grounds of objection were identified as:

1. The volume of use in a small community like this is not a reliable indicator of the importance of the public phone box, particularly for emergencies.
2. The public phone box is essential for emergency use because much of the village has no or at best unreliable mobile phone signal.
3. The nearest alternative public phone - even assuming it continues in service - is nearly 2 miles distant. By car the journey takes at least 5 minutes. By foot it takes more than 30 minutes on dangerous non-pavement unlighted roads. This is clearly unacceptable in emergency situations and highly undesirable for other uses.
4. A further specific concern is the need for access to a confidential phone outside the home for anyone needing to call a helpline for child support or for a vulnerable adult. A landline or mobile phone that could be monitored by others is clearly unsuitable. It is unreasonable to expect people in such difficulties to make a dangerous 4 mile round trip (see point 3 above) to the nearest alternative public phone, even assuming it continues in service.

The chair and clerk will lodge the necessary objection (Action: completed 18 October). It was noted that if, despite these objections, the phone is removed then the parish would wish to consider adopting the box as a community asset.

Item 25/19: Highway Matters

Item 25/19/1: Hembury Road – The Chair had chased the Dorset Council Highways Department and it now appears that a work order has been raised to resurface the road.

Item 25/19/2: Repair to finger post – This has now been replaced. Unfortunately, the cost was slightly more than first anticipated so the cost to the parish was £36.90.

Item 25/19/4: Railings on bridge at the bottom of Spyway Road – it had been brought to the clerk's attention that the railings had fallen down. This was reported to Highways at Dorset Council and they have since been replaced.

Item 25/19/5: Salt Bins – notification 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. £40 per bin will be charged to the parish. The Council had also stressed that

this salt is for use on the highways and not personal drives.

Item 26/19: Financial Reports

Item 26/19/1: Financial Returns for 2018/19 – The Certificate of Exemption was submitted to pkj-littlejohn, the auditors, on 30th May 2019.

Item 26/18/2: Interim Financial Report 2019/20 – 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 2019 - 16th October 2019		
<u>Receipts</u>	£	£
April Precept	900.00	
September Precept	900.00	1800.00
CPRE Grant		60.00
Total Receipts		1860.00
<u>Payments</u>		
Contributions		
Askerswell PCC		
Askerswell Village Hall		0.00
Insurance		160.65
DAPTC		33.67
Repairs & Maintenance		
Washingpool	0.00	
Parish	181.57	181.57
Hire of Hall for meetings		8.00
Administration		83.94
Total Payments		467.83
Excess of Receipts over Payments for this period		1392.17
Cash in Bank at 1st April 2019		1556.28
+ Receipts		1860.00
		3416.28
- Payments		467.83
Cash in Bank at 16th October 2019		2948.45

Item 26/19/3: Precept 2020/21

Before deciding on the precept, the Chair raised the question as to whether or not contingency funds should be kept in reserve. He explained the possible financial risks the Parish Meeting may have, namely maintenance at Washingpool especially with the trees, and for possible need to pay the excess on any claims against the Parish’s insurance. It was agreed that it would be prudent to keep money in reserve for these purposes. It was noted that the trees haven’t been inspected for a few years. The meeting discussed the need for and size of a contingency reserve, and examined alternative ways to fund it. The meeting also discussed the size and timing of the customary contributions to the churchyard and village hall.

The motion was raised that, looking at the financial risks of the Parish Meeting the aim is to have a contingency reserve of £1000. In the coming months a survey of the trees will be sought, and quotes obtained. Any work that needs to be done will be commissioned within a target budget of £1500 (action: Chair, Clerk, Deputy Chair). Further, that to provide funds for this work and to build towards the agreed reserve while continuing support for the churchyard and hall in this financial year, the Parish Meeting would expect

to give £400 to each of the village hall and the churchyard, being less than in recent years. To maximise the money available to the Parish for as long as possible in case of unforeseen issues, those payments will be made towards the end of March 2020.

The motion was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Mr Godfrey Lancashire and approved unanimously.

It was then proposed by Mr Ian Russell and seconded by Mr Graham Hall that the Parish maintains the precept at £1800 for another year. This was carried unanimously.

Item 26/19/4: Payments to Churchyard and Village Hall

As per motion above the Parish Meeting would expect to give £400, finances permitting, to both the village hall and the churchyard towards the end of March 2020 (action: Clerk).

Item 27/19: Dorset Council Matters

The Chair read the following report sent from Cllr Alford.

"We have recently published a draft Council Plan that sets out the Council's direction of travel from 2020 to 2024. It has 5 priorities – Economic growth; Unique environment; Staying safe and well; Strong, healthy communities; Suitable housing.

The Council Plan outlines proposed activity to achieve these priorities, all contributing towards making Dorset "a great place to live, work and visit".

Over the next two months we will be actively seeking views and feedback from the public and town and parish councils about our draft Council Plan.

Cutting across all of these priorities is the council's commitment to tackling climate change and reducing its carbon footprint – work on which is currently underway through a cross-party Executive Advisory Panel, chaired by Cllr Ray Bryan, Cabinet Member for Highways, Travel and Environment.

On November 19th there is the Dorset Town & Parish Council Climate Emergency Advice Seminar. A number of town and parish councils have declared a climate change emergency and this will be an opportunity for a good exchange of knowledge. It is designed for town and parish councils and should give information on – What needs to be considered when making a climate emergency plan; Obstacles and issues; Support and funding available to take action; Examples of town & parish carbon reduction projects already happening in Dorset

A similar panel has been established to guide the work on developing our relationship with town and parish councils and the activity planned for the workshops has met with their approval.

Where we are heading at the present time is, with the agreement of town and parish councils, to develop a framework (named as a Concordat or Charter) that describes the way that we will work together in the common interest of all our residents.

Due for consideration by Cabinet on 5th November – The Statement of Community Involvement was subject to consultation from Friday 21 June to Friday 2 August 2019. Town and Parish Councils, were notified about the consultation; Dorset

Council's policy position on the review of designated landscapes, as part of the Glover Review; Dorset Council's Transformation Plan

Leisure Development Fund – Funding is now available for cultural, sporting and community organisations to help finance one off or capital projects that benefit people living or working in Dorset. Funding is now available for not for profit organisations across the County. Organisations can apply for up to 20% of the total project cost to a maximum of £5,000. The closing date for applications is the 10th November 2019.”

Item 28/19: Local Reports.

Item 28/19/1 Homewatch

Mrs Veronica Sheppard reported that both telephone and internet fraud was constant and to be vigilant at all times. The chair thanked her for the very helpful work she has continued to do.

Item 28/19/2 Good Neighbours Scheme

Mr Godfrey Lancashire reported that the scheme continues to operate and that if anyone is in need of transport or assistance to get in touch with him. He also reminded the meeting that he has a list of 4x4 drivers who are willing to help out if there is thick snow or ice, either with emergency supplies or getting to medical appointments. The chair commended him and the other members of the scheme for their much-valued support to those in need of help.

Item 28/19/3 Washingpool Green & Environmental

Prof Howard Atkinson thanked everyone who had helped out with the grass cutting at both the Green and village hall and also with strimming. It would be useful to have a couple more volunteers for both grass cutting and strimming if possible.

He also reported that, weather permitting, he hopes to inspect the 23 bird boxes that were installed to ascertain which ones have been used. It is illegal to open any of the 10 bat boxes. The Riverfly monitoring on the river Asker, which is part of a national scheme, had continued over the summer. The results of this are indicating that the river is currently pollution-free. Dorset wildlife trust volunteers have been working on restricting the Asker's flow above the village with the dual aims of reducing flooding risk and enhancing biodiversity.

The chair endorsed Prof Atkinson's thanks to all involved and offered particular praise to Prof Atkinson for his own contribution.

Item 28/19/4 Rights of Way

Mr Antony Wilsdon apologised and said that due to the wet weather and other commitments he has been unable to do the regular patrols of both the footpaths and bridleways around the village and clear any restricting vegetation. He requested that he be kept informed of any problems. The Chair thanked Mr Wilsdon and also thanked villagers for their help in keeping the village clear from litter along the roads.

Item 28/19/5 Parish Lands

Prof Howard Atkinson reported that the Trustees had met on 29th August. The end of year bank balances in the Fuel Allotment was £290.10, and the Gravel Allotment £290.09. The accounts had been examined by Mr Richard Hobbs and the Annual Returns have been submitted to the Charity Commissioners. The Trustees decided to allow the balances to accumulate further before distributing any of its funds.

Trustees are appointed by the Parish Meeting for 4 years unless they resign. Election or re-election of both Mrs Maggie Barrett and Prof Howard Atkinson will be on the Agenda of the first meeting of the Parish in 2020. Mr Ian Russell became a trustee on a short-term basis as nobody came forward in April 2018, but would prefer to stand down.

Mr John Mahoney said he was prepared to stand as a trustee. He was proposed by Mr Godfrey Lancashire, seconded by Mrs Jessamy Wilsdon and voted in unanimously.

At its closure, Askerswell Neighbourhood Forum donated its full balance of £436 to the Parish Lands as the Parish Meeting cannot accept donations. The Trustees would welcome suggestions of usage that must benefit the community for it to consider. Possibilities include contributing to installing a defibrillator somewhere in the village contingent on the Parish raising the remainder of the funds.

Item 28/19/6 Askerswell Village Calendar 2020

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. It was agreed that the title for the 2021 calendar would be "Askerswell Parish".

Item 28/19/7 Transport

The meeting was reminded of the bus services that can be used from the village. Namely the school bus that leaves the village at 8am and returns at around 4pm; the Plus Bus which runs on a Friday morning to Bridport and the Axe Vale Plus Bus which goes to Dorchester once a week. All these services have a charge, bus passes cannot be used. Details will be posted on the notice board and on the parish website (Action: Chair).

Item 29/19: Askerswell Village Website

The Chair thanked both the Webmaster and Mrs Mandy Hall for their efforts with the site. Items added to the site get picked up from the ECV or by word of mouth, but only first names are used and no contact details are given.

Item 30/19: Any Other Business

Item 30/19/1 Standing Orders

Standing Orders – the officers have put together a document which states the organisation and regulations for the Parish Meeting. This document can either be viewed on the village website or a hard copy can be obtained from the Clerk.

Item 30/19/2 Washingpool Account

The need to have a bank account in the name of Washingpool was discussed. Mr Ian Russell and the Chair agreed to discuss this further, aiming to report to the next meeting. (Action: Ian Russell and Chair).

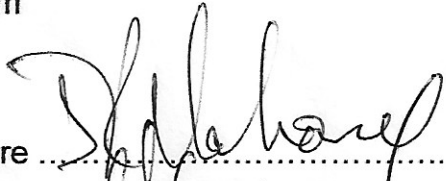
Item 31/19: Date and time of next Parish Meeting

A provisional date of Thursday 30th April 2020 at 7.30pm in Askerswell Village Hall was agreed. It was agreed that it would be beneficial if Cllr Alford could attend so this date may need to be changed (action: Clerk).

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9:05pm

Chairman's signature

Date


13/2/2020