

Musbury Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held Monday 25th April 2022 at 7.30pm in Musbury Village Hall Committee Room.

PRESENT:

Cllr Colin Corbett (Chair)

Cllr Janet Albano

Mrs Jo Boyce (Clerk)

Cllr Paul Smith

Cllr Matt Craker

5 Parishioners

Cllr Gary Knight

District Cllr Iain Chubb

- 1 **APOLOGIES** County Cllr Ian Hall, Cllr Ellis, Cllr Perryman
- 2 **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** held Monday 24TH May 2021 were accepted as a true record and duly signed by Cllr Corbett.
- 3 **MATTERS ARISING** There were none.
- 4 **POLICE REPORT** No report received.
- 5 **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - CLLR COLIN CORBETT**

Roads – As always, there seem to be more cars parked on the roads of Musbury. The Council has worked to improve this and will continue to request Parking Enforcement visits to monitor parking on the double yellow lines.

The installation of VASS (Vehicle Activated Speed Signs) in the village to try and raise awareness of speeding through the centre of the village occurred in 2021. Please do let the clerk or a councillor know if you notice the signs not working.

There have also been three new grit bins placed around the village – and of course we have had no real cold weather this winter!

Devon Air Ambulance Local Landing Site – This project has moved forward in the last year with the site at Musbury Primary School being agreed as the best location for the Night Landing Site, funding has been secured thanks to the Libor fund and the generosity of both local residents and businesses and the planning application was granted in April 2021.

However, some concerns have been raised by the new Safety Officer with the proximity of several fruit trees, which have the potential to grow into the 'sterile area' we use for night operations.

There is now another meeting with the school to talk to them about moving the trees a bit further back along the fence line. The idea would be to dig them up with a decent root ball to ensure they 'take' again. Toby, the DAAT representative is hoping that the school will agree to this.

Once that is agreed, everything can move forward pretty quickly.

Trees - Work has been carried out on the tree on the verge outside the garage and an English Oak has been planted in the allotment field to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

To round up his report The Chair gave his thanks to all Musbury Parish Councillors and to The Clerk for their help and assistance over the past year.

Questions from Parishioners:

There were none.

6 FINANCIAL REPORT AND INTERNAL AUDIT – Clerk

This year, it was decided that the Reading Room Trust was no longer required for its original intention as the groups it had previously supported no longer existed and the interest payments received were too small to be of any use to any other group of similar direction. The units were sold and the monies are held in a separate account (still called the Reading Room Trust) which the Council agreed to earmark for any works done to improve the Playing Field which they deemed the closest aligned option to the original intentions of the Trust.

The balance of the Treasurers Account as at 31st March was confirmed:

Lloyds Treasurers Account No 1063790

Balance brought forward as at 1 st April 2021		£ 14,376.10
Add receipts		£10,119.88
Precept Apr & Sept	£8,000.00	
P3	£1,100.00	
Allotments	£ 650.40	
VAT Reclaim	£ 369.48	
		£24,495.98
Less payments	£11,648.36	
Balance to carry forward to 1st April 2022		<u>£ 12,847.62</u>

The VAT reclaim was submitted on the 4th April for the past year: 2021/22 £875.94

Lloyds Reading Room Account No 7502761

Balance on the Deposit Account (investment sold and proceeds transferred to Lloyds)
As at 31st March 2022 - £1,336.03

We spent £11,648 this year – includes £3,100 on staff, £2,100 on playing field, £2,600 on P3, £350 on allotments, £285 on charities, £970 on benches and noticeboards, £360 on tree work. The chair thanked Martin Minter for his work as internal auditor of the Parish Accounts.

Questions from Parishioners

There were none.

7 OFFICER'S REPORTS

Musbury Playing Fields - The recent annual safety inspection has reiterated the areas of the playground in need of attention and as each year passes, the need for work grows.

Annie Stark, who runs Musbury Movers, is keen to drive the regeneration of this area forwards with the help of as many locals as possible. A recent open meeting to discuss potential ideas was well attended and elicited some exciting suggestions. Questionnaires have been printed and distributed around the village and responses are being collated.

Next steps are a meeting on May 6th to discuss responses to the questionnaire and come up with definite ideas to cost.

There is no quick fix for this area as it is an expensive task and one that needs careful planning to ensure the best result for our community now and in the future.

The Clerk asked the council to confirm that they wish to change contractor for the grass cutting from Halcyon to Ian Churchill. The Council agreed.

Cllr Knight thanked Allan Parkman for his help with putting the new goal posts up.

Musbury Village Hall – No report received

Musbury Allotments – The Chair was pleased to confirm that all allotment plots are taken, there are now just two people on the waiting list. If anyone knows of anyone in the village who would like to be added to the list, please contact the clerk. In these times of rising food costs, growing your own is more important than ever.

Allotment rent levels were maintained this year after the increase of 5% for the 2019-2020 season.

The main expenditure in the past year has been the payment of water bills. To counter this, the water is turned off for the months of December, January and February when there is less requirement for water and more likelihood of pipes bursting or leaks going undetected. The Clerk and Mr Parkman liaise regularly to monitor the plots and any ongoing maintenance needs. The allotments have a very healthy balance of £2,231.28 thanks to prompt payment of rents and deposits, some generous waiving of returns of deposits and accurate meter readings meaning accurate water bills.

The Clerk reported a recent communication received of a rat issue at a neighbouring property. An email has already gone out to all plot holders asking them to ensure there is a clear gap between the back of the plot and the hedge and to clear any rubbish that could be used to burrow / hide. The clerk asked if there could be a collection of rubbish by someone with a tractor. The Council suggested that if rubbish was collected and sorted, a way would be found to deal with it but that this would be a one-off action and that plot holders would be expected to remove all rubbish from their plots going forward.

The Chair thanked all those involved in the maintenance of this great asset to the village, especially Mr Allan Parkman.

Musbury Planning & Development - The Clerk outlined the past year's planning applications

Applications – There were 10 applications reviewed in the past year. The majority of applications had the support of Parish Council and there were several requests for advice from EDDC planning. One application was in regard to tree felling.

- Mr Arrow is appealing the planning decision on the change of use of The Reading Room.
- Laurel Cottage has been granted permission to fell the three conifers with the standard time limit.

Mountfield – The planning application for Mountfield house finally arrived 4 days before Christmas 2021 and after serious consideration from the Council, support for the scheme to return it to a family home was given. Along with many in the parish, the Council hope to see this property of historic significance in the village returned to its former glory.

Baxters Farm – There has been no change in the situation regarding Baxter's Farm with EDDC and DCC locked in stalemate. The Council received this update in response to queries about the progress / use of the site in February: *Devon County Council considers Baxters Farmstead to have some development potential. Part of the site falls within the Musbury Built-Up Area Boundary. The Local Plan supports the redevelopment of land within the Built-Up Area Boundary for a range of uses, including residential. The County Council has been working with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to agree a design code/brief for the site's potential development, given the site falls within a conservation area.*

The farmstead is also covered by the East Devon District Council working draft Local Plan.

It is frustrating that discussions with the LPA have taken far longer than anyone ever envisaged but Devon County Council anticipates reaching an agreement with the LPA for the site's potential inclusion within the emerging Local Plan and for the design code within the next 6 months.

It would therefore not be appropriate to consider letting the farmstead at Baxters Farm to a third party to store vehicles on as a temporary and very short-term solution to the current parking problems within the village.

The Chair informed the meeting that EDDC has been told it should no longer grant planning permission to any development that could increase phosphate levels in the River Axe, which are said to be causing a "significant issue."

Natural England has informed the district council that levels of phosphates in the River Axe are having a detrimental impact on local wildlife, and areas designated as a Site of Special Scientific interest and Special Area of Conservation are of particular concern.

This means that EDDC – the local planning authority – can no longer approve any developments in the area that would increase the discharge of phosphates into the river.

For more information, see: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/phosphates-on-the-river-axe>

P3 Footpaths – Cllr Albano read a report prepared with assistance from Cllr Smith.

In our 2020-21 report we stated that our trusted contractor had left Devon for pastures new and we were confident that we had found an approved replacement. Unfortunately, this contractor was unable to carry out our pressing repairs within a reasonable time frame. In July, we found a new DCC approved contractor –the clerk has a copy of his public liability insurance-and we began our planned improvements.

As well as the annual inspection Cllr Smith has carried out many minor repairs such as fixing gate latches and handrails. Paul has also carried out extensive strimming duties such as the whole length of Fp 5, Marlborough Rd to Dead horse Lane –recorded as 650m.

Cllr Smith and I discuss the annual survey, DCC forms are completed and bids are made for improvements. This task has been a bit more difficult this year as prices and availability of materials have been fluid. Contractors can only hold prices for 2 weeks but so far, our bids and quotes have been very close. 2:1 gates have been installed on Fps 38, 11, 7 and 32 and self-closing gates to replace stiles 2 on Fp 20 and one Fp10 and Fp32. Finger posts have been replaced on Fps 10, 1 and 2 on Fp 15. Many of you will have seen the new steps at the top of Mounthill leading to Fp 32 along the top of the castle. These were funded directly by PROW and will make a fitting route to the Jubilee beacon. At the end of the 2021-22 financial year, we have spent all the P3 budget.

Access to our footpaths have been much improved this year and I again ask that any problems are reported to either the clerk, Cllr Smith or to me, please do not wait until a parish council meeting-it helps us to plan repairs with the contractor.

Finally, a thank you to Col. Drake for allowing his equipment to be used by Cllr Smith for footpath maintenance.

Questions from Parishioners

There were none.

8 MUSBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

See separate report.

9 REPORTS FROM COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Report from District Councillor Iain Chubb – Cllr Chubb gave a brief report detailing the Jubilee tree planting and ongoing issues with recycling collections in the area. A parishioner requested more detailed guidance regarding recycling than is currently available. A parishioner asked if there was any progress on Baxter's Farm. Cllr Chubb stated that this was a County issue not an EDDC issue.

Report from County Cllr Ian Hall – Cllr Hall was not in attendance.

10 OPEN FORUM ON THE PAST YEAR

There being no further business the Annual Parish Meeting closed at 8:25pm