

The Management Committee

MILBORNE PORT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Management Committee meeting
held via Zoom on:

Tuesday 24th November 2020 @ 7:00pm

Present:

Councillors; Mr R. Lockey (Chairman), Ms D. Barsby, Mrs E. Stewart, Mr A. Fletcher, Ms L. MacArthur, Mr T. Watts.

In attendance:

Mr Simon Pritchard - Parish Clerk & Committee Officer

Public Question and Comment Time:

(None)

Agenda Number:	Agenda Item:
1	<u>Apologies for Absence:</u> None.
2	<u>Declarations of Interest:</u> None.
3	<u>Adoption of Minutes:</u> • Tuesday 23rd June 2020 • Tuesday 27th October 2020 (Notes of informal meeting) It was proposed by the Chairman to adopt both sets of minutes, seconded by Cllr Stewart and resolved unanimously.
4	<u>Management of – Trees in the Council’s care:</u> a) At the informal meeting in October it had been agreed that the Clerk would obtain some quotes from an Arboriculturist to carry out a condition report on all the trees in the council’s care. Cllr Watts raised the question as to if the Parish Council knows what land it owns therefore what trees. The Clerk responded that all the land owned should be on the council’s asset register. Members asked the Clerk to approach the Land Registry to see if it was possible to carry out a search on the Parish as a whole to check that there are no areas in the Parish Council’s ownership that have not until now been identified. Action – The Clerk

Management Committee - Milborne Port Parish Council – 17th November 2020

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	b) No report received. The Clerk has been in contact with the Tree Warden and he is supportive of getting an Arboriculturist survey done. He would also be pleased to have any support in keeping an eye on the tress.
5	Management of – <u>The Town Hall:</u> ▪ Leaking Roof: The Clerk reported that the roof in the little room upstairs was leaking. About a plate worth of water would come in when it rains. A local handyman had been up onto the roof to have a look in the hope that it was just leaves blocking the gutter / down pipes and its apparent that the channel between the two roofs is poorly designed, with no runoff. It is made from fibre glass and this has split, the assessment was that any repair would be a bodge job and that the whole channel needs to be redesigned and replaced. ▪ Clock Restoration: This is still underway. Have asked how much longer it will be but to date no reply. ▪ Painting of Windows and Doors: this cannot be done until April as it needs to be done in the lighter months when its less likely to rain. The best plan may well be to combine doing the roof repair and painting at the same time as scaffolding will be required for both.
6	Management of – <u>The Allotments:</u> ▪ Tarmacking of Entrance way: The Clerk reported that it was possible that the council could obtain a grant towards the tarmacking of the entrance of the Allotments car park, but that he would only pursue this with the committee's support. It was agreed to get some quotes Action – The Clerk ▪ Gap in Allotments Hedge: This is going to be replanted by the Ranger during the winter. ▪ Hedge / Tree line on south border: This requires a few days work to strip out the dead trees and the cutting back of what has become a rather overgrown area. ▪ Allotments Rules for 2021: These had been updated and circulated to Members for comment. The Chairman stated that they seemed to be a sensible adjustment. It was agreed to adopt the new rules. ▪ Allotment Rates for 2022: In light of the thousands of pounds of work that has been undertaken at the allotments over the last two years and with the prospect of further work required in the next year members felt there was little choice but to increase the rent a little. It was proposed by Cllr Watts to increase the full allotment price by £5 and a half allotment by £3, seconded by Cllr Stewart and resolved unanimously.
7	Management of – <u>Springfield & Gainsborough Playparks:</u> ▪ Springfield Playpark: The Chairman reported that Springfield Playpark had no major issues upon inspection. The odd rotting fence post, but not worth taking any action as the whole area is due to be refitted this summer.

	▪ Gainsborough Playpark: The park is currently closed due to a report of vomit on the play equipment and the associated Covid risk. It will remain closed for at least 72 hours. ▪ The professional inspection reports had no areas of high risk. ▪ The Clerk reported that there was a need for a uniform approach to the visual inspections and that he hoped to catch up with Councilors MacArthur & Lockey to try and bring that about. ▪ Graffiti on Skate Park: The Wessex Water community action group has whitewashed the sides of all the skate ramps and removed the obnoxious words. Many local authorities now commission graffiti artists to paint areas. It was agreed that this could be something for a youth council to look at if one is formed. ▪ Litter Pick Volunteer: A young man in the Village is undertaking a Duke of Edinburgh award and as part of this he is to undertake the litter picking of both the Springfield & Gainsborough Playparks for the next year. This has been risk assessed and he has been provided with the appropriate equipment.
8	Management of – <u>The Cemetery:</u> ▪ Chapel Income: The income of £200 against the Chapel rent line was confirmed as the income from the sale of a church pew that the committee had been given permission for the sale of. ▪ Rules / Contact details Sign: The Clerk suggested that a sign should be installed in the Cemetery giving the councils contact details and a list of basic rules. Members supported this suggestion. ▪ Cemetery Income: The income was expected to be £4,000 for the year but has already hit that target, it is possible that it will reach £8,000 by the end of the financial year. ▪ Grave in the Path: The informal meeting in October had expressed its concern about the fact there is a grave that sits within the gravel path at the end of the cemetery, the Clerk has organised for the path to be moved over by one metre. ▪ Last Parcel of Land: The Clerk suggested that the Council needed to serve notice on the last part of the land that the council own at the cemetery, as it would take a few years to incorporate it into the rest of the cemetery and by then the land would be required. It was proposed by the Chairman to serve two years notice for repossession of the land, seconded by Cllr Watts and resolved unanimously. Action – The Clerk ▪ Cemetery Overtime: The Clerk asked the committee if it would authorize the use of the cemetery budget to pay for up to 2 days overtime for the Deputy Clerk to bring the digital cemetery records up to date. It was agreed that up to two days overtime should be used to get the records up to date. Action – The Deputy Clerk ▪ Repair and Painting of Chapel Door: The cheaper of the two tenders has been appointed to undertake this work, but they are not going to start it until the spring. ▪ Three Quotes for every Tender: The Clerk outlined the problem with being asked to get three quotes for every job the council wants pricing up. The

	financial regulations say that three quotes are only required for tenders over £5,000. The Clerk is increasingly concerned that some local contractors will cease offering quotes as some are being asked every time and not getting any business. Particularly the local tree surgeons and as there are only three local surgeons, it would be unfortunate to lose the goodwill of one or more. It was agreed to obtain two quotes for tree works under £5,000 and to rotate the companies asked to provide a quote. ▪ Tree Works at the Cemetery: It was agreed at the informal October meeting to have the yew trees in the cemetery crowned. One has already been done by the Ranger, the rest of the work would be much more efficiently undertaken by the SSDC Tree Gang who are part of the Ranger scheme, they would be able to do all the works required in 1.5 days. There is enough money in the ranger budget to support the additional cost. The Clerk was asked to check that they carry out a wildlife survey before carryout any work. Action – The Clerk
9	Management of – <u>Springfield Recreation Area:</u> ▪ Meeting with the Playing Fields Committee: A meeting is still required between representatives of the Playing Fields Committee and the Parish Council to come to a formal agreement of who manages what at the rec and therefore what the council grant to the committee is paying for. The Clerk stressed that this meeting was ever increasing urgent with complaints being received about uncut hedges. ▪ Cost of maintaining the Playing Fields: The part of the K M Dikes contract that its just for maintaining the Playing Fields will now be split out from the rest of the contract so that the cost of maintaining the grass in the current condition can be clearly seen.
10	Management of – <u>St John’s Church Yard, Ball Court & Grove Garden:</u> ▪ Footpath Project: The PCC s leading on the project and have been getting quotes. Three now obtained, all around the £7,000 mark. The Parish Council has £4,000 to spend, the PCC has around £1,500 and the Clerk will try and obtain a grant from SSDC to make up the short fall. The PCC is undertaking research into the sort of surface that would be best and are taking advice as the PCC was disappointed with the first footpaths that were done a few years ago. So, waiting on the PCC to approve the quotes and nominate the money.
11	Capital Projects for 2021/22 Budget: ▪ Bench for the Arbor - £750 The Chairman suggested that the bench be dedicated to the memory of John Farley who had recently passed and had been a long serving Parish Council member. It was agreed to ask his widow. Action – The Deputy Clerk

12	Allotments Land: The Clerk informed the committee that the Allotments were full and that there is now a waiting list. Going forward it is predicted that the demand for allotments will grow as further homes are built with most having small gardens. The Clerk acknowledged that the process of finding land was not going to be easy or cheap and certainly not quick, but that it was important to feed into the system now that the requirement was there and that all members could be asking around. It was quite possible that local landowners may look favorably on a sale to the Parish Council for Allotments rather than selling the land for further houses. The Clerk suggested that the District Council should start to collect S106 money in for acquiring land rather than continuing to collect money for Springfield or Gainsborough as both were now quite full and had quite a lot of money allocated to them. The committee recognized the need to start looking for new land. The Clerk further advised that a budget line should be created to start to save towards the cost. Action – All Members
13	Verbal Updates: A. Parish footpaths / Rights of way: Meeting (remote) held between the Clerk and Martin Cooper, Somerset County Council (SCC) Rights of Way Volunteers Coordinator. There has been a general disappointment with how SCC have been dealing with local rights of way issues, not least the repair of damaged gates and stiles. With one dangerous stile on Vartenham Hill reported over 18 months ago but remains broken and dangerous. The Clerk reported that there were 5 Rights of Way Officers that covered the whole of Somerset, Eve Wynn is the Officer for this area. As the stiles and gates are owned by the landowners it is the landowner's responsibility to fix them. The Rights of Way Officer's role is to contact landowners to inform them when there is an issue and to monitor the landowner's resolution of the problem. The Officer does have the power to fix the problem themselves, but they will only do this if engagement with the landowner has failed over a long period of time. However, there is less than £100 budget per parish per year and as a repair could cost £500, there is only enough budget to repair one stile per five parishes per year. The other problem is that permission from the landowner is required to make the repair and this may not be given. The last option is legal enforcement, but this is rarely done due to the cost implications. Action is taken on everything that is reported to SCC, but it is a slow underfunded system. The parish council can either accept this and work within this system or the council can attempt to act itself. It is possible for the council to pay for and install gates and stile, but only with SCC and the landowner's permission. A landowner would be more likely to give consent to having a stile upgraded to a gate if it was part of a bigger plan to improve the signposting of the right of way as a whole to assist in keeping people on the right of way. This could be finger posts along the route and the

	smaller fence post arrow discs. Also signs where appropriate asking that dogs are kept on a lead. This project would require someone to go out and assess all the gates / stiles in the parish and draw up a condition report, rating them into ones that need urgent repair / upgrade, ones that will need attention in a few year time and ones that are fine. It would then need to be worked out what style of gate would be installed, with a view to upgrading the access, so leaning towards gates rather than stiles. Once this had been done permission from SCC would have to be obtained and finally the landowners would have to be approached to gain the permission to install the gate. The landowner would also have to accept ownership of the gate after it had been installed. Cllr Barsby felt that she had done much of this work already over the summer and was aware of the problem areas. There is still the issue that SCC will not share the details of landowners with the Parish Council. Members agreed that the council should try to upgrade access to the rights of way, Cllr Barsby happy to lead on the project. Action – Cllr Barsby B. Milborne Port in Bloom: No report. C. Projects in progress: No report.
	End of formal meeting 20:56

Signed: _____

Date: _____