

MONKTON COMBE PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Monkton Combe Parish
held at 7:30 p.m. on 12th May 2020 in the Village Hall

Present: Mr. Des Wighton (Chairman), Cllr. Andreea Imecs, Cllr. Adelle Brenner, Cllr. James Bradby, Cllr. Gavin Douglas and B&NES Ward Cllr. Neil Butters

1. Apologies for absence: Cllr. Lyn Alvis

2. Chairman's Report. The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He then summarised the Annual Report, which has been distributed to households within the Parish via the Parish Newsletter, highlighting the main points. He thanked Ian Croker the Parish Sweeper, and Jeff Avis who maintains Miss Davies Garden and the Village Car Park. He wished Roger Croker a Happy Birthday as it was today, and Roger who maintains the Churchyard had recently returned from hospital.

3. Coronavirus – Civil Emergency. It was reported that there were sufficient volunteers to provide assistance. Two or three residents have asked for assistance, but now have their own families helping them. So overall everyone in the village is managing. The document that indicated the longer term development of the situation, indicating the new regulations which would prolong furlough to the end of July, with contributions from employers from then to the end of October.

4a. Monkton Combe School: Cllr. Adelle Brenner reported that the return of students to the school would depend on government guidance. It is therefore unlikely that the senior school will open until September, and then with some social distancing, but there might be some Prep classes. Nonetheless the school continues to provide a full curriculum to students online, but is experiencing a significant reduction of revenue. Ward Cllr. Neil Butters reported that the Bursar Tom Davis was leaving at the end of the summer term.

4b. St Michael's and All Angels Church. James Bradby addressed the meeting and highlighted that the Church is closed and this is the first time churches have closed since the Norman Conquest. As the church was locked there were no bells to mark VE Day. There were normal services until March, together with two Craft days run by D Clark. He also reported that due to Roger Croker's stay in hospital and following convalescence, the Churchyard has been without a gardener. The congregation have been 'holding the fort' but now have a much greater appreciation of all the work Roger did. The Chairman will put a request in the Newsletter asking for volunteers to help, until Roger's return. The Churchyard remains open to visitors and James reported that the walls were all sound and have now been so for three years.

4c. Village Hall Committee: Councillor Des Wighton provided a report from the Village Hall Committee summarised as follows:-

Last year saw just one change to the personnel on the Village Hall Management Committee – Deirdre Greenshields, who has served on the committee at several times over the past years, has decided to step down and D Clark has taken on the role of 'church representative'. The rest of the committee expressed their sadness at losing the services of such a valuable member and thanked her for all her hard work, wise counsel and steadfast support over the years.

The treasurer reported that the increase in fees for bookings resulted in a record year for income which has gone a long way towards replenishing to funds after expenditure on the floor. It was very fortunate that the insurance covered the problems with the leaking water supply pipe.

Events in 2019 went well – The Burns Night Supper was attended by 54 people, the village barbecue was a great success – in July we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first landing on the Moon, and the event made a healthy surplus for hall funds. For the Autumn event we engaged Ben Woodward, a very experienced and talented magician/comedian to entertain us, with a ploughman's supper provided by members of the committee. This proved a very successful night but didn't generate a surplus due to the high costs involved.

The Coronavirus Emergency has meant there are no bookings for the current year, but a Small Business Grant has been received to cover the lost income. This means that we will be able to get on with some of the maintenance issues, and so we look forward to another year with confidence, maintenance is a major concern of the committee. In eight years time the Hall will celebrate its centenary and the fabric of the building requires constant vigilance. Thanks go to my fellow officers, Mike and Martyn for their dedication in keeping the Hall functioning and profitable but also to all committee members, and David in particular, for their continued work on making it a safe and comfortable environment for the lettings and to ensure its future for the benefit of the whole community.

4d. Women's Institute. As the WI no longer meet in the village no one was available to give a report.

Approved and signed Tuesday 9th June 2020Clerk at direction of the Chairman

5. Other matters highlighted or discussed:-

The meeting gave a vote of thanks to Peter Bossom and team for the Village Newsletter. This has been an invaluable communication for the whole village and is hugely important in the present circumstances.

Ward Cllr. Neil Butters reported that more walking and cycling will be promoted going forward and that considerable funding for schemes will become available via the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), some 4 million in the 1st tranche. One such feature would be no traffic neighbourhoods with dedicated walking and cycling routes.

Cllr. Gavin Douglas highlighted the concern that with empty roads people were driving much faster. Neil Butters indicated that incidents could be reported through Avon and Somerset's website at www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/speedingconcern

Cllr. Gavin Douglas thanked the chairman and said how good it was to have three new members of the council.

The Parish Council thanked the Ward Councillors Neil Butters and Matt McCabe for their support and help throughout the year.

Neil Butters then proposed a vote of thanks and round of applause for the Parish Council in recognition of their hard work throughout the year.

The meeting closed at 8:28 p.m.