

MINUTES OF MONTACUTE PARISH COUNCIL
MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 17TH AUGUST 2020 VIA ZOOM APP



20/046a PRESENT:

Members: Mrs C Saint (Chairman), Mrs A Gihon (Vice Chairman), Mrs J Folkard, Mr R Folkard, Mrs K Harper, Mr R Littlefield, Mr D Warry and Mrs M Wilson

Others: Mrs S Moore (Clerk), and no members of the public

20/046/b APOLOGIES:

Mrs M Mansi, Mr Tony Capozzoli (District Councillor), and Mr C Hull (District Councillor)

Cllr Saint reported that Cllr Inglett had resigned from the council.

20/047 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr Gihon declared an interest in matters relating to the Sheep Wash, Triangle Trust, and the Village Hall

Cllr Harper declared an interest in matters relating to the Village Hall and W.I.

Cllr Littlefield declared an interest in matters relating to the Village Hall

Cllr Saint declared an interest in matters relating to the Village Hall

20/048 PUBLIC SESSION:

There were no members of the public in attendance

20/049 DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCILLORS:

20/049/a Cllr Capozzoli

No report received

20/049/b Cllr Keating:

Cllr Keating's reports had been circulated to all councillors.

20/050 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

It was RESOLVED to approve and sign the Minutes of the previous meeting.

20/051 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

20/051/a Review of Actions List

- Mobile Phone Mast: Cllr Wilson agreed to investigate this matter. **Action Cllr Wilson**
- Various Highway Issues: The Clerk agreed to contact Highways. **Action Clerk**
- S.I.D. Hire and Locations: The Clerk is waiting to hear back from SCC. **Action Clerk**

20/052 SPORTS & LEISURE:

20/052/a Play Area & Recreation Ground:

A report had been circulated to all councillors.

i. S106 Funding

The Clerk reported she had updated SSDC regarding the play area project and pavilion project. The advice given regarding S106 funding and a possible Community Grant was excellent. In order to claim the S106 award for the play equipment copies of the invoices need to be sent to SSDC once they have been received. This amounts to £5,610 towards the capital improvements and £3,240 towards ongoing maintenance. The latter of which will need to be ring-fenced for future maintenance **Action Clerk**

ii. Play Area

The play area had to be closed due to the Covid-19 virus. Government guidance is that playgrounds could open from 4th July, but it was decided to keep the play area closed because the new equipment was being installed and the existing equipment needed cleaning and re-painting. During this period, the lengthsman was asked to install the new bin.

The Clerk reported there had initially been a few issues with the ordering of the new play equipment due to the Covid-19 pandemic as the suppliers had to close their factories. However, this was resolved, and the installation began in July. To date the climber and wig wams have been installed and the basket swing will be installed at the end of August. The old tyre swing matting has been removed and the area made good with grass seed being sown at the end of August. The old mats have been sold for £75 and it was agreed that the money will go towards the play equipment.

The Clerk said that once the installation has been completed, she will arrange for an inspection to be carried out.

iii. Recreation Ground

The Clerk reported that the benches have been removed from the recreation ground and the lengthsman will replace the existing benches in the play area with these and, he will be painting yellow warning lines around the concrete bases. The Clerk said the dog signs have been collected from the supplier and the lengthsman will be putting them up at either end of the recreation ground.

The removal of the top height restriction bar on the security gate had been discussed at a previous meeting, but this was met with consternation by some members on the council. However, a problem arose when the new play equipment was being installed as the contractor could not get a skip into the grounds because of the height bar. In order to remove the stone, additional soil and grass from the site the contractor had to transport it in the back of his van, and it was fortunate that he did not to charge the council extra for this. It was agreed to discuss altering the security gate at the next parish council meeting.

20/052/b Recreation Ground Pavilion Project:

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting the building plans had been sent to Cllr Littlefield to check their accuracy; quotations have been received regarding the groundworks and for a cesspit and; a new location plan has been drawn up. The Clerk said the quotation from Western Power Distribution for the electricity has expired so when approval has been received from the National Trust a new quote will need to be obtained.

Action Clerk

20/052/c Any Other Issues:

The commemorative celebrations for VE Day 75 could not be held but residents did not let the 'lockdown' defeat them and held their own garden parties. Since May residents have been asking when the village commemorations will take place and suggestions have been made to celebrate VJ Day instead but it was agreed that as large group meetings were still not permitted the celebrations would probably not be held until May next year at the earliest.

20/053 **VILLAGE ENVIRONMENT:**

A report had been circulated to all councillors

20/053/a Allotments:

Cllr Gihon reported that a number of letters have been sent out to allotment holders; two termination letters, one requesting a gate key back and three answering queries raised at the allotment holders meeting in March. Since the lockdown allotment holders have continued to make good progress with their plots and there has been some additional interest. Cllr Gihon said a skip would soon be delivered so that the rubbish can be cleared and, the old benches from the play area will be put to good use at the allotments. It was agreed to ask the groundsman to move the mound of soil on plot 1 under the hedge line.

Action Clerk

Cllr Saint asked the manure could not be put on plot 1 but further down the allotment site. Cllr Gihon said she would discuss this with the farmer.

Action Cllr Gihon

20/053/b Crime & Anti-Social Behaviour:

No report given.

20/053/c Footpaths:

The Clerk said she was unable to report the blocked footpath between Montacute and Tintinhull she was unable to access the Definitive Map on the SCC website because of a page error. Cllr Mansi received a report that the footpath running from the Southern corner of the tower field up to Bateman's Barn was very overgrown. Cllr Mansi said that she has investigated this matter and despite a large amount of nettles the path was in an acceptable state.

20/053/d Ground Maintenance:

i. Parish Lengthsman

The Clerk reported the lengthsman scheme was put on hold for a short period of time during 'lockdown' and that the parish would not be charged for this. Whilst the play area is locked, the lengthsman has been asked to install the litter bin, move and replace the benches and clean and re-paint the existing play equipment as required.

ii. Grass Cutting

The Clerk reported that at the start of the lockdown the contractor had said that they would not be cutting the grass until the lockdown had finished as some of their staff had underlying health issues and they were concerned about coming into contact with the public. However, the contractor continued to cut the grass after a couple of weeks.

iii. Grass Cutting Contract

The Clerk said the grass cutting contract came up for renewal at the beginning of May and she had received tenders back from K M Dike Nurseries and Evis Ground Maintenance. Greenways Grounds Maintenance did not reply so the Clerk along with Cllrs Saint and Gihon decided to compare the two contractors' tenders received. A comparison report of the tenders was sent to all councillors. K M Dike Nurseries quoted £16,519.80 over the three years and Evis Ground Maintenance quoted £14,000.00. It was decided to accept the tender from Evis Ground Maintenance.

It was RESOLVED to ratify the decision for to accept the tender from Evis Ground Maintenance.

20/053/e Highways & Transport:

The Clerk reported the fingerpost in Middle Street was damaged and a resident is kindly looking after the top part of the sign. This damage has been reported to Somerset County Council Highways who have state that they will repair the hole in the pavement but cannot justify paying for non-mandatory services. Despite this SCC recognise the importance of fingerposts as a valuable part of the county's heritage and have stated that any work required will need to be managed and paid for by the Parish Council. The Clerk said she would ask whether the lengthsman could do this job. **Action Clerk**

The Clerk said she had written to a resident in Lower Town as their hedge was overhanging the highway and causing an obstruction for pedestrians and vehicles.

20/053/f National Trust:

Cllr J Folkard reported the National Trust had been enquiring about some information regarding a planning matter for their Welham Brook project. The Clerk said she had explained to the Trust that the parish council were only consultees and did not have the expertise on this matter and advised the National Trust to contact the planning department at SSDC.

Cllr J Folkard said the Trust have had a water trough and a gate stolen; there has been fly-tipping in the orchard, and they are investigating an overhanging tree in Lower Town. Montacute House is open, but visitors need to book their tickets online.

Cllr J Folkard said grass had been dumped in the recreation ground and also some rubbish. The Clerk said a letter had been sent to all residents in St Michaels View about the dumped grass. The Clerk said she had asked the groundsman to dispose of the grass.

(Cllr Harper left the meeting due to loss of connection)

The police had been contacted as a fire had been lit under one of the Cedar trees. Some youths had camped out on the recreation ground and it was explained to them that the National Trust did not allow camping in the grounds. They youths were very polite and understanding and took everything away with them. St Michaels Tower is still boarded up due to vandalism and the Trust have noticed that the grass had been scorched.

The Clerk said she further amendments were needed to the new recreation ground lease which had been accepted by the National Trust. Details of these had been circulated to councillors. It was RESOLVED to approve and accept the draft lease. **Action Clerk**

20/053/a Street Lighting:

Cllr J Folkard said there had been no problems with the streetlights.

20/053/g Triangle Trust:

No report given.

20/053/a Any Other Issues:

The Clerk said a leaflet was produced to support a resident with the Community Help project which was sent around to every household in the village. A resident kindly volunteered to deliver the leaflets and it was agreed to give him a £30 voucher. A further leaflet regarding Covid-19 guidance was also

delivered a few weeks later and it was agreed to give the volunteer another voucher for £30. It was RESOLVED to ratify this decision.

20/054 MEMBERS' & CLERK'S REPORTS

Cllr Saint's said that back in March councillors did not imagine that the parish council would not be able to meet for so long and that meetings will now be held by the Zoom app which would probably be challenging but nevertheless necessary. Although councillors have not met as a council the day to day running of the Parish Council has continued and as agreed at the last meeting the Clerk, the Chairman and the Vice Chairman have had regular meetings either by phone, Zoom or self-distancing. A number of decisions have been dealt with and these are covered at this meeting for ratification.

The Speedwatch coordinator has stepped down for personal reasons, and Cllr Saint expressed her thanks for all that he has done.

(Cllr Warry left the meeting due to loss of connection)

Cllr Saint said that in these very strange and somewhat challenging times she would like to thank all those people in the village who have stepped forward to help with shopping etc. for those people who were unable to get out themselves and to the post office and garage for keeping everyone supplied with necessary items.

The Clerk reported that the Countryside Team at Ham Hill has had approval for their first stage application to the National Lottery's Heritage Fund for their project 'Uncovering Ham Hill's past for its future' and they have now entered the development stage of the project. The Countryside Team are also providing an essential habitat in the fields on Ham Hill for the rare Shril Carder Bee and hope the bee will colonize the area. SSDC are offering the parish council a place on the South Somerset Countryside Steering Group (SSCSG) because the parish council are representatives of the communities that sit around Ham Hill. The SSCSG oversees the management of South Somerset District Councils country parks and nature reserves. The SSCSG have been supporting the countryside team since 2004, but they have seen a decrease in membership over the last year, for a variety of reasons. They would like to strengthen the group by inviting new members so that it can continue to support the countryside team for the future. The Clerk said if anyone was interested to let her know.

(Cllr Warry re-joined the meeting)

The Clerk said it was decided to subscribe to the funding sources website 'Grants Online'. This will not only help the parish council to look for funding for projects, but the council can assist the village organisations and business by signposting them to possible sources of funding.

The Clerk said she had been forwarded some information by SSDC from the Royal British Legion and Avon and Somerset Police regarding Remembrance Parades/Services. Most of the information from the RBL refers road closures, insurance, and the fact that the RBL are unable to provide funding for any events. The information from the police is if any Remembrance Sunday events are taking place then the current Covid-19 restrictions regulations must apply and the maximum attendees at any event can (currently) be no more than 30 (unless specified additional criteria can be met). Current Restrictions Regulations: Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (No.2) (England) Regulations 2020 (the Restrictions Regulations) Restrictions on gatherings. No person may participate in a gathering which consists of more than 30 persons, and takes place:

(Cllr Warry left the meeting due to loss of connection)

20/055 FINANCE:

20/055/a Matters to Report

i. Year End Bank Reconciliation

The Clerk gave the year end bank reconciliation as at 31st March 2020:

Current Account	£ 250.00
Business Reserve Account	£46,872.23
Pavilion Reserve Account	<u>£21,255.29</u>
Total	£68,377.52
Less Outstanding Cheques	<u>£ 5,070.35</u>
Total as Cash Book	£63,307.18

Ring-Fenced Amounts

Sports Pavilion	£28,771.24
Play Equipment	£10,649.00
Allotment New Plot Deposits	£ 100.00
Allotment Gate Key Deposits	£ 320.00
Defibrillator Accessories	£ 186.50
Spring Bulbs	£ 100.00
Total	£40,126.74

Budget Working Capital **£23,180.44**

ii. Year End Budget Comparison

The year-end budget comparison had been circulated to councillors. The Clerk reported that despite overspending on the property maintenance budget with the demolition of the recreation ground huts the overall expenditure of the council was under budget.

iii. Receipts & Payments and Balance Sheet 2019/20

This item had been circulated to councillors and had been approved by the internal auditor. It was RESOLVED to approve the Receipts, Payments and Balance Sheet.

iv. Precept Payment for 2020/21

The Clerk reported the precept of £26,877.00 had been received.

v. Monthly Bank Reconciliations

The Clerk gave the monthly bank reconciliation as at 30th April 2020:

Current Account	£ 250.00
Business Reserve Account	£73,151.92
Pavilion Reserve Account	£21,258.78
Total	£94,660.70
Less Outstanding Cheques	£ 5,785.43
Total as Cash Book	£88,875.27

The Clerk gave the monthly bank reconciliation as at 31st May 2020:

Current Account	£ 250.00
Business Reserve Account	£71,928.32
Pavilion Reserve Account	£21,262.16
Total	£93,440.48
Less Outstanding Cheques	£16,337.91
Total as Cash Book	£77,102.57

The Clerk gave the monthly bank reconciliation as at 30th June 2020:

Current Account	£ 250.00
Business Reserve Account	£54,878.95
Pavilion Reserve Account	£21,262.35
Total	£76,391.30
Less Outstanding Cheques	£ 2,034.99
Total as Cash Book	£74,356.31

The Clerk gave the monthly bank reconciliation as at 31st July 2020:

Current Account	£ 250.00
Business Reserve Account	£52,066.54
Pavilion Reserve Account	£21,262.53
Total	£73,579.07
Less Outstanding Cheques	£ 5,020.88
Total as Cash Book	£68,558.19

Ring-Fenced Amounts

Sports Pavilion	£34,154.99
Play Equipment	£ 1,502.60
Allotment New Plot Deposits	£ 100.00
Allotment Gate Key Deposits	£ 320.00
Defibrillator Accessories	£ 186.50
Spring Bulbs	£ 100.00
Total	£36,364.09

Budget Working Capital**£37,992.22**vi. Quarterly Budget Comparison

The quarterly budget comparison had been circulated to councillors. The Clerk reported that the first quarter expenditure was underbudget and that the cost of the new play equipment had been paid for out of the ring-fenced monies.

vii. Wessex Water Invoice

The invoice of £52.53 was paid by direct debit on 1st April 2020

viii. NatWest Bank Interest

The Clerk said the NatWest decreased their interest rates on deposit accounts on 29th May. The gross rate p.a. % went down from 0.20 to 0.01.

ix. National Trust Invoice

The invoice for the Borough car park lease for £300.00 was paid by direct debit on 2nd July.

x. Data Protection Invoice

The invoice for the Information Commissioners Office for £35.00 was paid by direct debit on 3rd June.

20/055/b Cheques for Signature27.04.2020

Sarah Moore	March Expenses	£ 310.24	<i>Chq 1611 & 1614</i>
K M Dike Nurseries	Grass Cutting – March	£ 412.00	<i>Chq 1612</i>
HMRC	PAYE Period 10-12 (2019-20)	£ 274.80	<i>Chq 1613</i>
Lucy White	Refund for Allotment Key Deposit	£ 10.00	<i>Chq 1615</i>
	Total	£ 1,007.64	

03.06.2020

Sarah Moore	April Expenses	£ 222.04	<i>Chq 1616</i>
R A Evis	Grass Cutting – May	£ 388.88	<i>Chq 1617</i>
Playdale	3 x Wigwams	£ 4,006.80	<i>Chq 1618</i>
Tayplay	Active Climber	£ 6,807.60	<i>Chq 1619</i>
David Fox	2 x Allotments Ploughed	£ 50.00	<i>Chq 1620</i>
K M Dike Nurseries	Grass Cutting – April	£ 206.29	<i>Chq 1621</i>
Came & Company	Parish Council Insurance	£ 430.53	<i>Chq 1622</i>
	Total	£12,112.14	

25.06.2020

Sarah Moore	May Expenses	£ 111.75	<i>Chq 1623</i>
Tayplay	4 x Corner Boxes for Climber	£ 1,332.00	<i>Chq 1624</i>
HMRC	PAYE Period 1-3 (2020-21)	£ 245.20	<i>Chq 1625</i>
Sarah Moore	½ Cost of Printer	£ 74.00	<i>Chq 1626</i>
	Total	£ 1,762.95	

16.07.2020

Sarah Moore	June Expenses	£ 410.63	<i>Chq 1627</i>
R A Evis	Grass Cutting – June	£ 388.88	<i>Chq 1628</i>
Play UK Playgrounds	Installation of Climber	£ 4,635.00	<i>Chq 1629</i>

		Total	£ 5,434.51
<u>17.08.2020</u>			
Sarah Moore	July Expenses	£	129.99 Chq 1630
R A Evis	Grass Cutting – July	£	388.88 Chq 1631
Hags SMP Ltd	Basket Swing	£	2,754.18 Chq 1632
Pinnacle Accountancy Services	Internal Audit	£	126.00 Chq 1633
Somerset Playing Fields Association	Subscription Renewal	£	15.00 Chq 1634
		Total	£ 3,414.05

It was RESOLVED to approve the payments.

20/055/c Other

i. Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

It was RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

ii. Annual Accounting Statement 2019/20

It was RESOLVED to approve the Annual Accounting Statement 2019/20

iii. Savings Account and Online Banking

The Clerk asked councillors to consider online banking instead of issuing cheques. The Clerk said that councillors would still need to authorise all payments that are put through. As the interest rate on the savings account for NatWest had greatly decreased the Clerk suggested moving the reserve money into a higher rate savings account. It was RESOLVED to move to online banking with NatWest and to move the pavilion reserve account to a higher interest account. It was agreed for the Clerk and Cllr Saint to set up the online banking and for the Clerk to look at other savings accounts.

Action Cllr Saint & Clerk

20/056 PLANNING:

20/056/a Planning Information

The SSDC Planning Enforcement Protocol has been adopted by the Council and is now in force.

20/056/b Parish Planning Working Party Feedback on Applications:

20/00991/OUT – Outline application with all matters reserved save for access for the residential development of land for up to 30 no. dwellings – Land at Mason Lane, Montacute – Awaiting Decision – The parish council did not receive any notification from SSDC as this application comes under Stoke sub Hamdon parish. To date 51 objections including Montacute and Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Councils. The National Trust made a strong technical objection on planning grounds. SSDC are awaiting a response from English Heritage. County Highways have now responded and their figures for car movements are significantly higher than the developers: daily total movements of 180-240 compared with 135, and 18 cars at peak compared with 12. Highways require more road drawings from the developer, but have no objections providing that their 4 issues are settled by Conditions and an agreement is entered into with the developer (lighting to be installed, pedestrian crossing at access, give way signs, over-hanging trees and hedges to be cut back (as well as cut down for the new visibility splays). There were some comments about pavement edging but no requirement to put new pavement on opposite side of the road. Also, the trees referred to are the trees /hedges which the Ecologists consider to be protected and at risk. There was no concern at all over speed issues even though it is a 60-mph road with an average 50 mph speed recorded at the site entrance.

(Cllr Capozzoli entered the meeting)

Cllr Saint said she had contacted the planning department on several occasions but had received no response. Cllr Capozzoli asked that any questions to go through to him so that he can go directly to planning.

20/01393/HOU – Erection of a carport to the front of the garage doors and a covered walkway connecting the French doors, back door and car port – Fig Tree Cottage, Wash Lane, Montacute TA15 6XA – There were no objections to this application but the observations were as follows: 'There is some confusion as the address given is Yeo Cottage but refers to Fig Tree Cottage and the planning office referred to the structure as a 'car port' but it is in fact a veranda and covered walkway. It is felt that there would be no problem as the property had a large soakaway installed during previous work

which will prevent any runoff going into Wash Lane. Also, the structure should remain open without the addition to walls, doors, glass, brick work or woodwork now or in the future so that it does not become an extension of the property.

20/056/c Planning Decisions and Reports

i. Decisions

20/00348/LBC – Listed buildings consent for the improvement of 2 no. internal doors on second floor – Montacute House, Bishopston, Montacute TA15 6XP – Approved 20/00336/S73 – Application to vary Condition 2 (approved plans) of planning approval 19/03126/HOU to allow hipped roof design in substitution of approved gable design – 14 Yeovil Road, Montacute TA15 6XG - Approved

ii. Reports

20/00308/HOU & 20/00309/LBC – Application to regularise single storey rear extension and external WC (retrospective) – 23 The Borough, Montacute TA15 6XB – Withdrawn

20/00326/LBC – The carrying out of internal and external alterations to provide structural stabilisation works to the west gable end of dwellinghouse – Jasmine Cottage, 4 Middle Street, Montacute TA15 6UZ – Withdrawn

20/02039/TCA – Notification of intent to carry out tree surgery works to various trees within a Conservation Area – 46 Bishopston, Montacute TA15 6UU – Awaiting Decision. The Parish Council are not required to comment on TCA applications

20/057 GOVERNANCE:

The Clerk said that as the parish council are now holding virtual meetings for possibly up until May 2021, the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations need amending accordingly. She said she had set up a new Virtual Meetings Protocol in accordance with The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 and NALC advice.

- Virtual Meetings Protocol – this sets out how we as a council need to operate under a virtual platform. The content of this document is set out in accordance with the advice from NALC.
- The Standing Orders have been amended to reflect that virtual meetings are now being held and the sections that have been added/amended are as follows:
 - ❖ 2. Disorderly Conduct at Meetings (a) & (b)
 - ❖ 3. Meetings Generally (added 2 new points) y & z
- The Financial Regulations have been amended to reflect the delegated powers given to the Clerk along with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman during the lockdown period. This is highlighted under section 5. Banking Arrangements and Authorisation for Payments – 5.12.

It was RESOLVED to approve the new Virtual Meetings Protocol and the amendments to the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

20/058 CORRESPONDENCE:

The Clerk said she had received a grant request from the Friends of All Saints PTA as they need to make their school forest area 'accessible to all' by the autumn term and aim to do this by building a safe and aesthetically pleasing ramp. As the PTA have been unable to do many fundraising events this school year, they are looking into obtaining grants to support the project. In order to get a community grant from South Somerset District Council they need the support of the parish council as well as providing other sources of funding. The estimated cost of the project is around £7,000 and they have around £2,400 towards it. Councillors asked how much the PTA were asking for towards this project and the Clerk said she has already asked for this information and has signposted some possible funding opportunities for them to apply for. However, the PTA have yet to respond. Councillors agreed in principle to the support the funding depending on how much was needed.

20/059 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS:

To discuss possible 'dark sky areas'

Security Gate

20/04560 DATE OF NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.25pm. The next parish council meeting will be held remotely via the Zoom app at 7pm on Monday, 21st September 2020.