

WEST KNOYLE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk – Mrs. L. C. Wood

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 16th May 2023 immediately after the Annual Parish Meeting in West Knoyle Village Hall.

Present: Councillors Marcus Randall, Paul Vita & Paul Yates

137. To elect Chairman of West Knoyle Parish Council for 2023/24 and to receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office - Cllr. Paul Yates was re-elected as Chairman for the ensuing year & signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

138. To elect Vice-Chairman of West Knoyle Parish Council for 2023/24 and to receive the Vice-Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office - Cllr. Marcus Randall was re-elected as Chairman for the ensuing year & signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Apologies for absence received from Wiltshire Councillor George Jeans & Cllr. Alex Davies.

139. To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests from Councillors on matters to be considered at the meeting.

Members are invited to declare disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests in items on the agenda as required by the West Knoyle Code of Conduct for Members and by the Localism Act 2011.

- None received

Public Session - None

140. Minutes – The Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday, 22nd March 2023 were approved with an amendment to the name of one of the attendees.

141. To appoint/re-appoint representatives to outside bodies/organisations and arrangements for reporting back:

Organisation	2022/23 Representative	2023/24 Representative
Footpaths & Rights of Way	Cllr. Alex Davies	Cllr. Alex Davies ?
Village Hall		Cllr. Marcus Randall
Parish Steward	Cllr. Tony Davis	Cllr. Tony Davis
Area Board	Chairman & Vice-Chairman	Chairman & Vice-Chairman
Play Area Safety Inspections	Cllr. Marcus Randall	Cllr. Marcus Randall

143. To review bank accounts and signatory arrangements: it was agreed that the existing bank accounts should remain and that Clerk + Cllrs. Tony Davis & Marcus Randall would continue to act as bank signatories (two signatures required for each cheque transaction and the Clerk was authorised to make transfers between Council accounts. The Clerk pointed out that it may be better to defer the idea of moving towards electronic payments until a new Clerk has been appointed.

144. To appoint/reappoint internal auditor: It was agreed to appoint Mrs. Virginia Brockway as internal auditor for the ensuing year.

145. To review and adopt the Standing Orders for West Knoyle Parish Council – the standing Orders, having been distributed to members in advance of the meeting, were approved and adopted by the Parish Council.

146. To review and adopt the Financial Regulations for West Knoyle Parish Council - the Financial Regulations, having been distributed to members in advance of the meeting, were approved and adopted by the Parish Council

147. To fix the dates and times of ordinary meetings of the Council for the ensuing year – It was agreed that the next Parish Council meeting would be held on Tuesday, 12th September and that other ordinary meetings would be held in November 2023 and March 2024 – dates to be decided.

148. Matters Arising

- None

149. Wiltshire Councillor’s Report

- None

150. Planning (All applications can be viewed on Wiltshire Council’s website

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/planninganddevelopment/planningapplicationssearchonline/planningsearch.htm> – and type in the relevant application number)

a) Applications to consider at the meeting:

- None

b) Applications considered/determined since last meeting:

- None

151. Footpaths, Highways, Traffic & Transport

a) Highway and footpath issues for parish steward – The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Steward is now employed by Milestone instead of Ringway and he now has a different vehicle. The Parish Steward is now filling potholes and the normal Parish Steward service will not be resumed until June/July.

b) Flooding at Stoney Bridge – It seems that a number of officers at Wiltshire Council and the Environment Agency were involved following a flooding event that occurred after very heavy and intense rainfall in March. The Parish Council was asked by Wiltshire Council to help with identifying the owner of parcels of land that were not registered with the Land Registry.

152. Play Area

a) Play Area maintenance & other equipment repairs – Cllr. Randall said that he was not aware of any outstanding tasks other than signage.

153. Finance

a) Assets/Insurance – RESOLVED that the details in the Asset Register were correct and noted that the Platinum Jubilee Bench had been added to the Parish Council’s asset register.

The Clerk also confirmed that the Speed Indicator Device (listed on the Asset Register) had been taken into the manufacturer in Fordingbridge for potential repair.

b) Payments – RESOLVED to approve the following payments. Members confirmed the approval of the S.137 payments and agreed that they would provide a direct benefit to the area and/or inhabitants.

Community First	Zurich Municipal Policy Renewal Premium (1.6.23 – 31.5.24)	268.14
WALC	Annual Subscription	60.48
Mere Matters	S. 137 Donation	80.00
Mere & District Linkscheme	S. 137 Donation	80.00

Citizens Advice Bureau	S. 137 Donation	60.00
H. M. Revenue & Customs	PAYE 2023/24 – Quarter 1	55.00
L. C. Wood	Salary (April, May & June – Q1 2023/24)	220.00
Mere Parish Council	Contribution towards office (2023/24)	85.00
Rob Pearce Ground Maintenance	Play Area – Grass Cutting	140

c) Audit of Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023:

- I. To consider the Accounting Statements prepared & signed by the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) – members approved the accounting statement which had been prepared by the RFO and formed the basis of the completion of the Annual Return for the year ending 31.3.23
- II. To receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report – the Clerk informed members that on 10th May 2023, Mrs. Virginia Brockway had carried out an independent examination of the parish Council’s accounting records, its compliance with relevant procedures and its risk assessments and internal control procedures. Mrs. Brockway had agreed that, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the council and had completed Page 4 of the Annual Return, answered ‘yes’ or ‘Not Covered’ to all questions and had signed the Annual Internal Audit Report in the Annual Return accordingly. Members expressed their gratitude to Mrs. Brockway for carrying out the Internal Audit and the Clerk for preparing all the paperwork.
- III. To approve the Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) – Points 1 – 9 of the Annual Governance statements 2022/23 (Section 1 of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return) were read out to members and members answered ‘yes’ or ‘Not Applicable’ to each of the statements.
- IV. To approve the Accounting Statements (Section 2) – members approved the accounts and supporting statements which included the bank reconciliation & identification of variances requiring explanation which had previously been distributed to them with their agenda papers. From the information provided therein, the Accounting Statements 1-11 (Section 2 of the Annual Return) were completed and approved by the Parish Council.
- V. Certificate of Exemption – To confirm that West Knoyle Parish Council meets the qualifying criteria to be exempt from a limited assurance review by the external auditor and to RESOLVE to certify West Knoyle Parish Council “exempt” from External Audit – the Clerk informed members that at the conclusion of the 2022-23 financial year, if the authority is able to satisfy the various qualifying criteria set out on the Certificate of Exemption, and the higher of its annual gross income and gross expenditure was £25,000 or less, it will be able, if it wishes, to pass a resolution and complete and sign a Certificate of Exemption which will need to be sent to its appointed auditor. The Council must pass a resolution, having first confirmed that it meets the qualifying criteria, that it wishes to declare itself exempt from a limited assurance review and only then can the Clerk/RFO and Chairman sign the Certificate of Exemption and send it to the auditor. It was confirmed that the total gross income was £8653 and the total gross expenditure was £5065 and that the Parish Council met the qualifying criteria to declare itself exempt from a limited assurance review by the external auditor. RESOLVED to certify West Knoyle Parish Council “exempt” from External Audit.
- VI. Chairman & Clerk sign the Annual Governance Statement and Chairman signs the Accounting Statements – Confirmation that the Chairman & Clerk signed the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements in the presence of the Parish Council at the meeting.
- VII. Notice of Public Rights & Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return & to note commencement date for the exercise of public rights (as set by the RFO) – the Clerk confirmed that, as required by the Accounts & Audit Regulations 2015 the Parish Council must now publish the Certificate of Exemption, the unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return and the Notice for the Commencement of the Period for the Exercise of Public Rights. Publication is on the parish website: www.westknoyle.org

VIII. Chairman & RFO to sign the Certificate of Exemption – the Chairman signed the exemption certificate in the presence of the Council.

Before 1 September 2023

The authority publishes: (on its website)

- a) The Annual Internal Audit Report;
- b) The Annual Governance Statement;
- c) The Accounting Statements;
- d) An analysis of any significant year on year variances
- e) A bank reconciliation as at 31 March 2023
- f) A copy of the Certificate of Exemption;
- g) Details of the arrangements for the exercise of public rights; and
- h) The name and address of the External Auditor

d) Clerk's Vacancy – the Clerk said that she had made some enquiries with a lady that carried out this role for other smaller parishes in the area but, unfortunately, she was too busy to commit to another Parish Council at the present time. There was a long discussion on qualifications, training and adverts. It was agreed to advertise the vacancy locally in the first instance and then to pay for advertising in the Blackmore Vale Magazine thereafter. It was agreed to include 'training will be provided' and Salary in line with Local Government Pay Scales.

154. General Items

- None

155. Date of next meeting – Tuesday, 12th September 2023

Members are reminded that the Parish Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health & Safety and Human Rights.