

Minutes of Morebath Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday, 31 January 2023 in Morebath Village Hall at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors A Wilson (Chairman), T Conway, Mrs P Reed, K Stone, J Wescott.

District Councillor A Moore

Mrs S Squire, Parish Clerk

53. **Apologies.** County Councillor Chesterton, District Councillor R Stanley.
54. **Declarations of Interest.**
Councillor Wilson declared a Prejudicial Interest in the payment relating to clearing the surface of the car park and weed killing prior to the entrance being resurfaced.
55. **Dispensation to Councillors.** None.
56. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 22 November 2022.**
Approved and signed as a correct record.
Proposed by Councillor Stone
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Reed and unanimously agreed.
57. **Actions Arising / Updates:**
- 57.1 **Section 106 Application for Play Equipment.**
The Clerk advised that before an application can be submitted to MDDC, actual evidence that the item was wanted must be provided.
Action: The Clerk to include the details in the Signpost publication.
- 57.2 **Website.** A contact the Clerk knew did not supply a quotation.
Action: The Clerk to approach Parish Online, the firm that Councillor Stone had seen at the DALC AGM, and obtain a quotation for a website providing the minimum legal requirement for the Parish Council to meet the rules.
- 58.3 **Online banking – Councillor Conway.** Contact had been made with NatWest Bank and the Clerk added as a signatory for the time being.
Proposed by Councillor Conway that Councillor Wilson is added as a signatory after the departure of the Clerk.
Seconded by Councillor Stone and unanimously agreed.
- 58.6 **Clerk’s Contract of Employment.** This is no longer an item due to the resignation of the Clerk.
59. **Open Forum:** None.
60. **Reports.**
- 60.1 County Councillor R Chesterton. Written Report circulated to Councillors.
Regarding the enquiry regarding the small lane between the A396 and B3227 (Minute No. 36.1 of 27.09.22 refers), the road number should be the B3190. To continue to be an item on the Agenda.
Action: District Councillor Moore will clarify it is the lane between Morrells Cross and Snapbox.

From County Councillor Chesterton’s Report, Councillor Wilson advised that there was no grit salt in the grit bin.

Also the road through Morebath is used by school buses and is on a bus route.

The trigger point is now that Dulverton is in the Wivilescombe catchment area, children travel daily on Council contracted school buses.

Action: The Clerk and District Councillor Moore to make representations to County Councillor Chesterton.

60.2

District Councillor A Moore.

There is currently a shortfall of £750,000 in the 2023/24 budget and it is a legal requirement that it is balanced.

Council Tax is increasing by 1% which will raise a revenue of £65,500.

In Bampton an application for a holiday camp on land above Frog Street has been received. Highways are not in favour and District Councillor Moore will call the application in if the planning officer is minded to approve it.

Local homes. MDDC is proposing to demolish 10 Council houses of the 'Woolaway' style which are not fit for purpose and replace them with 18 houses (10 single bedroom, 2 two bedroom, 4 three bedroom and 2 four bedroom) and two bungalows. A planning application will be submitted in May / June with approval expected in August / September and a year later the properties are expected to be occupied.

A housing needs analysis has shown the need for single bedroom properties.

District Councillor Moore is standing down from MDDC in May, as is District Councillor Stanley.

60.3

Mrs S Squire, Parish Clerk. Written Report on her attendance at a DALC Webinar 'Preparing for Elections'.

61.

Planning.

61.1

The following Application was considered:

23/00075/FUL – Variation of condition 7 planning permission

05/01589/FULL relating to holiday occupancy to allow full residential use of Rose Barn, Exebridge.

Proposed by Councillor Stone to recommend approval.

Seconded by Councillor Mrs Reed and unanimously agreed.

Action: Clerk

61.2

Planning Correspondence: The following MDDC Decision Notices were noted:

APPROVAL for:

- **Certificate of Lawful Use or Development – Blackbridge Farm, Morebath, EX16 9AS**

REFUSAL for:

- **Application 22/01234/FULL – Erection of a replacement dwelling with garage / workshop and landscaping following demolition of existing – Gilberts Lodge, Morebath.**

62.

Finance.

62.1

Balances: NatWest Current Account as at 30/12/22: £19,370.63

NatWest Business Reserve Account as at 30/12/22: £6,243.70

The updated reserves as at the end of January 2023 were circulated to Councillors.

Councillor Wilson declared a Prejudicial Interest, left the room and did not take part in the discussion, decision or voting thereon.

Proposed by Councillor Stone that Councillor Conway chaired this part of the meeting.

Seconded by Councillor Mrs Reed and agreed.

62.2 Payments: The following payments were approved and authorised:

Proposed by Councillor Stone

Seconded by Councillor Conway and agreed, noting a revised amount on the DALC invoice from that shown on the Agenda.

	Ch.No.	
• Mrs S Squire Salary and Expenses	632	£248.20
• HMRC	633	£51.80
• A Wilson Clearing surface of car park and weed killing in preparation for tarmacing	634	£192.00
DALC Attendance of Cllr Stone at a Webinar	635	£60.00

Action: Clerk

62.3 Appointment of External Auditor for 2022/23 to 2026/27. It was noted that P K F Littlejohn LLP had been appointed and it will be recalled that this firm has been the external auditor for the last 5 years.

62.4 Ministerial Statement regarding Precept referendum. Parish Councils will not be capped when deciding the Precept for the 2023/24 financial year.

62.5 2023/24 Precept. It was noted that the Clerk has submitted the Precept request as agreed at the last meeting in the sum of £6,100.00 to MDDC which has been acknowledged.

63. Correspondence.

63.1 MDDC. Further letter from Deputy Chief Executive – public expenditure.

63.2 Ian Fraser. Email of thanks for the Parish Council's support relating to a new High School for Tiverton. It has been announced by DCC that a new School has been agreed.

63.3 MDDC. Premises Licence application submitted by Harebells, Whitehall Garden, Morebath. The deadline for representations is 13/2/23. Councillors decided that a response of no comment is made.

Action: Clerk

63.4 Masons Kings. Letter requesting the Parish Council to consider financial support for a defibrillator.

Action: Councillor Stone to liaise with Masons Kings with Councillor Wescott's suggestion and report back at the next meeting.

64. Items raised by Councillors / Clerk:

64.1 Resignation of the Clerk. This was solely due to the fact that extra hours had been offered by her largest Council and by accepting, it was necessary for her to resign from other Parishes, due to insufficient time to fit others in. Thanks were expressed to the Clerk for her work over the years.

Action: Councillor Conway to deal with the recruitment issue.

65. Next meeting: Tuesday, 28 March 2023 on the rising of the Annual Parish Meeting in Morebath Village Hall.

The Annual Parish Meeting is being held earlier than usual this year due to the Parish Council elections (see below) in May 2023. It is a legal

requirement for an Annual Parish Meeting to be held between 1 March and 1 June each year.

This will be the last scheduled meeting of Morebath Parish Council in its current term of office, with Parish Council elections being held on 4 May 2023 when a new Council will be elected for a further four years.

The Elections Act 2022 will introduce various changes at future elections. Not all the changes will be introduced at once.

For the May 2023 District and Parish elections, the major change will be that voter ID will be required at polling stations. The Electoral Commission start their national public awareness campaign in January 2023 and MDDC will be also start our local communications at that time.

Any voters who do not have photo ID (e.g. passport, photo driving licence and various other documents) will be able to apply for a free elector identity document either via the national digital service, by post or in person. More information will be circulated in due course.

The meeting ended at 8.25pm.

Summary of Decisions:

- **Minutes of 22 November 2022**
- **Online banking to be followed up with the Parish Clerk is a signatory and upon her departure, Councillor Wilson's name to be added**
- **Planning**
- **Councillor Conway to chair the approval of payments part of the meeting**
- **Payments**

Chairman

Date