

WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Winsford Parish Council Held on Monday 25th September 2023, at 19.00pm in Winsford Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors: Colin Wilkins (CW) – Chair, Mel Mileham (MM), Ian Brooks (IB), Bryany Neal (BN), Sarah Little (SL) and Clerk Jennifer Yates (JY). Somerset Councillors Frances Nicholson (FN) and Steven Pugsley (SP) attended for part of the meeting.

CW opened the meeting at 19.02pm.

66.1 Public Question Time - None

66.2 Apologies for non-attendance – Councillors KC Connell and M Hillier

66.3 Declaration of Interests - None

66.4 To agree the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 24th July, and any outstanding actions – The minutes were approved, Proposed MM, seconded by BN and approved by all. Comments – 65.8: BT have been observed working on the mast and it would appear to be complete with reflectors now in place. MM was asked to request an update as to whether this is still on schedule to go live in the autumn.

66.11 To consider Highways Matters;

a) Yellowcombe Leat – FN reported that little progress has been made despite establishing contact with the correct representative at Somerset Council. However, she has managed to arrange for the Chief Executive to visit the area and this will be one of the items on the agenda. CW requested that they also visit housing in Ash Lane, SP reported that there is now an LCN housing committee who can focus on this.

b) Other highways matters – The checking and topping up of the grit bins is being taken over by Somerset Council. They have been provided with a comprehensive list by CW who recently did his own audit of them all, and this includes the placement of them all which is more up to date than the Council map. FN/SP are meeting with them this week and will make sure they are aware of the placements and the shovels which are included in the bins.

Concern was raised re parking at Edbrook. When driving out of the village vehicles are having to cross the centre line to pass the parked vehicles, on a corner which is dangerous. SP recommended that this would be a police matter, JY to contact PC Haimes to see if she is available to attend a meeting to discuss this and any other relevant matters.

Further concern was raised re the large number of pheasants recently released on the A396 creating a road hazard. Feeders appear to be near the road keeping from dispersing.

66.10 Reports from Somerset Councillors – SP mentioned the ENPA consultation, CW and KC will be meeting to complete this on behalf of the Parish Council. MM enquired about Dan Martin's replacement as County Flood Management Lead, FN will follow up. MM reported that the Devon & Cornwall Environment Agency (which cover the Winsford area) are very supportive.

FN/SP left the meeting at 19.39

- 66.5 Finance: To receive financial report and agree to pay amounts due** - The report was received and was largely unchanged, there were no payments to approve on this occasion. CW has attended a meeting stating that the precept will be paid in one lump sum going forward.
- 66.6 Discuss the revised Code of Conduct** - It was felt that this should be discussed when all councillors were present and was deferred until the next meeting. JY has attended training where the purpose of the code was reinforced and the expectation for good standards of behaviour both in and out of meetings when members are acting as councillors was made clear. While there is a current Code of Conduct for the Parish Council in place (2012 model) Somerset are aiming to have all Councils signed up for the LGA model as previously circulated. Some Councils are 'tweaking' this a little, but ideally it would be adopted in full and unamended. This will mean that the Monitoring Officer can handle all queries and difficulties efficiently as the processes will be aligned across the County.
- 66.7 To discuss the offer of fraud training** – The council would like to take up this offer and discussed the best opportunity for the villagers to attend. It was suggested that as a large number of people regularly attend the coffee morning it may be possible to add the talk to the end of this event. CW will discuss with Sue Hayes. An alternative of it being a Winn Club talk was also mentioned, or a stand-alone meeting held during an afternoon.
- 66.8 To discuss updating the website information** – JY to liaise with the website providers re setting up a new area for information relating to the resilience plan, Environment Agency details etc. Also, each page needs to be revisited to ensure that it is correct, JY to make a plan to refresh each section in liaison with Councillors.
- 66.9 To discuss the completion of the Somerset Prepared survey** – MM, CW and JY completed the majority of this prior to the meeting with the rest completed jointly at the meeting and submitted. The Somerset Council Civil Contingences Unit survey assesses all Somerset Parishes preparedness and response capabilities and assess what further support may be needed. The lack of phone/mobile phone capability and access to emergency services in the event of a power cut was highlighted in the response, and that Winsford is an isolated rural community. A question was submitted re whether the CCU has a database and whether Winsford is on it, and if not how they can be added.
- 66.12 Winsford Charitable Trust**
- a) Maintenance of the Village Green** – Going forward it is likely that contractors will be needed to carry out the bi-annual clearance, including removal of the waste, as fewer volunteers are going to be available. This will clearly dwindle the savings of the Trust over time. SL suggested that a weekend 'help day' could be trialled, as a lot of people who may be willing to help are working mid week. Alternatively it will go out to tender for contractors to take this on.
 - b) Financial Report** – CAF Cash = £1,193.73, CAF Gold = £2,209.12. AEGON at £25,146.44 (August statement). JY will take advice from the Charity Commission with regard to savings accounts.
 - c) Wooden Slats on Bridge** – These are anticipated to arrive shortly. The bus shelter should be in place during October.
 - d) Village Green Ownership** – It has been discovered that when the name of the Trust was amended to separate the Trust from the Village Hall committee in 2009, which enabled the sale of the old village hall, the new Trust name was not properly registered (it would appear from work done by Nic Kemp this is likely to

be because the Trust income is too low to be registered ie less than £5,000 annually). CW is liaising with the Charity Commission and solicitors to amend this, and the name will then need to be aligned with the names on the bank accounts, and the record for the Village Green ownership and registration. The current Parish Councillors are the current Trustees of Winsford Charitable Trust as the original trustees were set up in 1929 and are no longer alive.

- e) **AOB** – Concrete bases will be put down for the two benches which are being put in on the Green and by the Car Park and they will be installed. The costs will be met by the Parish Council for the Car Park and the Trust for the Village Green.

IB reported that the grant which has been applied for will be decided in October.

66.13 Correspondence and Emails received – Mr and Mrs Morris have moved into the village. Exmoor National Park are going ahead with diverting the bridleway near Tarr Steps in order to do work on the bridge.

66.14 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended – CW attended the LCN meeting.

He reported that it is quite different from the previous group as there are so many attendees including some on zoom links. However, they are moving forward positively and committees have now been set up for Housing, Employment, Highways and Education. It appears that the work on the Wheddon Cross to Exford road is now set up which is likely to have a knock on effect of more traffic through Winsford for the duration of that work (anticipated to be 6 – 8 weeks).

MM reported on the flood group meeting. The expected National Park presentation did not take place so the hoped for opportunities for making links and introductions did not happen. She reported that most flooding events are taking place between June and August, and that flooding is likely to become more problematic going forward. Because of the geographic landscape in the parish there is the issue of rapid run off from hills causing fast flooding, and putting the village in the second highest catchment category in the South-West for this. There is now an Environment Agency pollution team in place, and these details will also be added to the website.

66.15 Any Other Business – Fly tipping has taken place in the quarry area past Edbrook. CW has contacted Mr Thomas-Everard with regard to getting it cleared. It has been noted that run off from the track off the hillside at Milton is causing safety issues on the road.

66.16 Items for Next Agenda – Code of Conduct adoption.

66.17 Date of Next meeting – **27th November 2023 at 7.00 in Winsford Village Hall**

There being no further business CW thanked all who attended and closed the meeting at 21.22.