

WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Winsford Parish Council Held on Monday 3rd June 2024, at 19.00pm in Winsford Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors: Colin Wilkins (CW) – Chair, Mel Mileham (MM), Ian Brooks (IB), Mike Hillier (MH), Kevin Connell (KC) and Clerk Jennifer Yates (JY).

One member of the public was in attendance.

JY opened the meeting at 19.00pm.

- 72.1 Election of Chairman:** Colin Wilkins was re-elected – proposed KC, seconded MM, agreed by all.
- 72.2 Election of Vice-Chair:** Kevin Connell was re-elected – proposed MH, seconded MM, agreed by all.
- 72.3 Public Question Time:** None
- 72.4 Apologies for non-attendance:** Councillors Bryany Neal and Sarah Little
- 72.5 Declaration of Interests:** None
- 72.6 To agree the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 29th April, and any outstanding actions:** JY to amend minutes to include page numbers and follow up re keyholders for the village hall. There is now a ballot in the shop re the use of the recreation field for helicopter landings linked to shooting parties using the Royal Oak. Concern was addressed that it contains limited information and detail which was suggested should be included at the annual assembly.
- 72.7 To agree dates and times of meetings for the next year:** Mondays July 1st, July 29th, September 30th, October 28th, November 25th, January 13th, February 24th, March 31st, April 28th, and Tuesday May 27th. Annual Assembly to be held on Thursday May 8th.
- 72.8 Report from Somerset Councillors:** Not in attendance due to the purdah prior to the general election on 4th July.
- 72.9 To consider Highways Matters:**
- a. **Yellowcombe Leat:** No update
 - b. **AOB:** There has been good feedback on Exford roadworks and the traffic levels through the village have been vastly reduced.
- 72.10 Finance:**
- a. **To agree insurance renewal:** JY to check with the insurance company re whether the three year agreement is still in effect and rearrange if it has expired.
 - b. **To receive financial report and agree to pay amounts due:** JY requested a meeting to discuss various matters with both Trust and Parish Council financial arrangements following up from prior meetings, including cheque payments being problematic with post being lost, and arrangements for Trust savings. JY will contact the Charity Commission re suitable arrangements for Trust Funds. Arranged for Weds 12th June 2pm.
- 72.11 Update re the Withycombe - Woodland Creation Planning Consultation:** CW has not had a response from Somerset Councillor Pugsley who is currently in the purdah period. Interest was expressed in how many such

schemes are taking place across Exmoor. Both the Withycombe and Upcott sites would be planted with mixed deciduous trees if approved, with the latter being in small more natural blocks. The Withycombe plan would appear to be to cover 35 hectares with trees. It was noted that the available site maps are poor. It was noted that it is unclear whether deer fencing will be put in place. The Exmoor Society are involved in gathering views. It appears that there is no formal application via the Exmoor National Park planning team. Also, that the plans do appear to be based on the Forestry England recommendations for plantations.

It was agreed that the Parish Council has strong reservations about these schemes, particularly due to the placement on top of hills which will have a significant impact on the character of the landscape over a long period of time. Furthermore, concern was expressed that farmland is being covered which could be used towards local food production, with the knock on effect re carbon footprint and climate change. It was felt that due to the sparse information the Parish Council would need more information before giving feedback.

72.12 Winsford Charitable Trust:

- a. **Update re arrangements for the maintenance of the Village Green:** A local contractor has expressed interest in this work. MM and MH will meet with him to discuss what needs to be done. It is proposed that the contractor will need to make two visits per year (approx. 2 days each) to work on the Green and to keep the Hemlock in the river under control, ideally by removing by the roots. They would need to have their own insurance and tools and dispose of the waste. Contract to be drawn up accordingly.
- b. **Financial Report:** CafCash = £4,363.60, CafGold = £2,249.00. JY has today requested a transfer from Gold to Cash accounts of £500 towards costs for maintenance. Aegon = £26,094.85 as at 29 April 24 an increase of £389.48, and this fund tops up the CafCash account monthly with variable amounts.
- c. **AOB:** There has been no contact recently from Risdon Hosegood re progress with the Land Registry.

72.13 Correspondence and Emails received: A letter was received from central planning team re gas storage. JY called but received unhelpful advice however JY and CW believe this relates to Winsford in Cheshire and JY has emailed the planning team accordingly.

72.14 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended: None

72.15 Any Other Business: There is now permanent signage up at Larcombe Foot which will increase safety. The car park is largely being used by residents on a long-term basis. There has been no news from Somerset Council re repairs and signage improvements for the car park.

72.16 Items for Next Agenda: None

72.17 Date of Next meeting – changed to 1st July 2024 at 7.00 in Winsford Village Hall

There being no further business CW closed the meeting at 8.45pm.