

WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Winsford Parish Council Held on Monday 30th September 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), Bryany Neal (BN), Sarah Little (SL) and Clerk Jennifer Yates (JY).

Somerset Councillor Steven Pugsley (SP) attended part of the meeting.

One member of the public attended part of the meeting.

CW opened the meeting at 19.03pm

76.1 Public Question Time: None

76.2 Apologies for non-attendance: Cllr Frances Nicholson

76.3 Declaration of Interests: None

Cllr Pugsley arrived at 19.05

76.4 To agree the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 29th July, and any outstanding actions: It was noted that since the meeting a member of the ENPA team has carried out some training with the Councillors re their involvement with planning matters such as the tree planting scheme. The National Park is not a statutory consultee but would expect to hear more once the initial consultation with the Forestry Commission is completed.

76.5 To consider planning matters:

a) 6/40/24/006: Location – 2 TOWNSEND COTTAGES, Winsford, MINEHEAD, Somerset, TA24 7JE

Proposal: Proposed single storey extension along with front and rear dormer windows.

It was agreed to support this proposal as the windows are small and will not be intrusive to neighbouring properties, and the design will bring the property in line with number 1 Townsend Cottages. Proposed IB, seconded MM, approved by all.

b) 6/40/24/007DC: Location - Great Nurcott Farm, WINSFORD, MINEHEAD, TA24 7HR

Proposal: Discharge of conditions 4 (samples) 6 (ecology) & 7 (ecology) of approved application 6/40/24/003

It was agreed to support this proposal, it appears that the appropriate consultation has taken place and it will be compliant with ecological requirements. Proposed by MM, seconded CW, approved by all.

c) 6/40/24/008DC: Location - Great Nurcott Farm, WINSFORD, MINEHEAD, TA24 7HR

Proposal: Discharge of conditions 4 (samples), 6 (ecology) & 7 (ecology) of approved application 6/40/24/004LB

It was agreed to support this proposal, it appears that the appropriate consultation has taken place and it will be compliant with ecological requirements. Proposed by MM, seconded CW, approved by all.

d) Other Planning applications and matters: 6/40/24/009: WEIRSIDE, WINSFORD, MINEHEAD, TA24 7JE

Proposal: Proposed erection of outbuilding for use as garden room and store.

It was agreed to support the proposal. This will be noticeable from the road but it was acknowledged that there is no room to place the building at the back of the property. It appears that the design will make it an accessible building. The

materials to be used are suitable. Proposed SL, seconded BN, approved by all.

New planning officers are now in place, with Yvonne Dale being the enforcement officer. Joe White is the head of planning now. It was acknowledged that people wishing to carry out work should take up the offer on pre-planning from the National Park to highlight issues which may arise such as the materials to be used for windows.

- 76.6 To discuss the proposal for block tree planting in the parish:** There appears to be no news with this. JY had spoken with Graeme McVittie and he has not received any information formally as yet. ENPA are not a statutory consultee but do hope to be consulted, particularly as block planting is not in line with National Park policies. It was also mentioned that there are plans for further temperate rainforest work to take place in the area, but no site has been identified as yet but is likely to be in another part of Exmoor.
- 76.7 Reports from County Councillors:** There is little news at the moment, however things are building up now to the County budgeting process which takes place in October which does have a direct impact on the Parish Council. It does appear that this may be an improvement on last year's but there will still be the withdrawal of non-statutory highways works. Theo Butt-Phillips has been approached to consider changing the arrangements for LCNs to allow them to hold a coordinating role to carry out such works going forward. However, there are complications with this so there may be the need for parishes to manage this themselves. There is a Somerset Prepared Day planned for 6th November to be held at Bridgwater Rugby Club.
- 76.8 Information re Dulverton Food Bank:** This has been run by the Church in Dulverton for some time, with boxes going to most local parishes. However, the current arrangement is coming to an end and new arrangements need to be made. They are currently setting up a new committee and are seeking both Trustees and volunteers. Winsford shop does send in donations for this currently. Please contact Frances Nicholson if able to volunteer.
- 76.9 To consider Highways Matters**
- a) To discuss potential arrangements for highways maintenance including feedback from the LCN meeting:** JY fed back about the proposed arrangements for highways tasks as set out in a recent document from the County. It is proposed that the parish should buy back services from Kier at the cost of £684.71 per day (more on weekend days) which would buy two men in a vehicle with small tools for 8 hours. It was discussed and concern was raised that if that time included travel and lunch it is likely that we would only get 4-5 hours work at most for that large sum. County have recommended in that document that parishes should allow for purchasing this service when budgeting in January, and increase their precepts accordingly. They also propose free training for volunteers to carry out tasks on the highway such as litter picking, clearing gullies, cleaning signs, verge and hedge cutting and more. This was discussed and the issue of both provision of insurance (Chapter 11 in particular) and of tools was raised. JY will write for further details raising these concerns. Finally, there was discussion re the contradictions in emails and correspondence received regarding some road maintenance issues. For example, we recently received communication identifying the village as being at risk from flash flooding, but communication from Highways appears to state that the gullies will not be cleared annually, which it is felt would further increase the risk of flooding. It would be helpful if all departments had more 'joined up thinking' regarding such issues so that the correct amount of maintenance work is identified.
- b) To discuss the arrangements for road sweeping:** There is continued frustration that they often choose to sweep before the leaves fall rather than after, and also at times are not going to the full extent of their identified routes. Also there are

sometimes small heaps of debris left as they turn, which in turn wash into the gullies causing blockages.

- c) **Any Other Business:** Yellowcombe Leat is now leaking water and it is running down the road. In the winter if this freezes it will cause sheet/black ice, and also the process of freezing and thawing continually will cause the tarmac to break up. We have recently been contacted to alert us to the likelihood that the village has been identified as having the potential for flash flooding, but this is just as likely to cause flooding if not repaired.

MM reported a lot of road signs which were put in place for diversion routes have not been collected at Thorne Lane.

SP left the meeting at 20.12

One member of the public arrived at 19.24 and was invited to speak by the Chairman. She raised two issues. Firstly, the speed limit sign on the road coming in from Coppleham which she feels strongly should be moved further out from the village nearer to, or alongside, the Winsford village sign. CW responded that this has been raised in the past with Somerset Highways without success. Pets have been killed twice in the last year in the stretch past Darby's Knapp. SL mentioned that a child has to walk this route to catch the school bus and there is no pathway or pavement. It was agreed that JY would write a letter to Somerset Highways about this.

Secondly, the issue of litter picking along the road to Coppleham was raised. It was acknowledged that the annual litter pick has not taken place this year, and that a large section of this road falls within Exton parish. The County has proposals to train volunteers to carry out such roles on the highway, more details are to follow.

CW has arranged for the salt bins to be checked and the areas around them cut back.

The member of the public left at 20.22

- 76.10 Finance: To receive financial report and agree to pay amounts due:** The operating balance of the current account is at £12,945.26. It was agreed to pay SALC 93.23 for the affiliation fee – proposed IB, seconded CW. It was also agreed to move the remainder of the money from the Ann Le Bas Fund, the resilience grant and the unclaimed money for the elections in 2022 into the reserve account as this is well below the recommended 50%. Proposed CW, seconded MM. JY will approach NatWest about setting up a reserve account as the money is currently held in NS&I which is not as accessible and who haven't sent a statement in over a year.

- 76.11 To agree the amendments to the Asset Register:** Each item was considered and changes recommended to separate more clearly the items relating to Parish Council and to the Trust, and adding new items such as the new picnic benches. JY to update and circulate.

- 76.12 Arrangements for upcoming events (Remembrance Sunday and Christmas):** It was agreed to proceed with the usual Poppy Wreath, Christmas tree and decorations.

76.13 Winsford Charitable Trust

- a) **Maintenance of the Village Green:** Recent work has been undertaken, and an agreement made with the contractor to undertake further work going forwards.
- b) **Finance Report:** It was agreed to pay £275 for the recent maintenance work carried out on the Village Green. The Cash account is at £2330.25, including remaining grant funds. The Reserve account is at £1,774.03. JY has been in contact with CAF and Aegon for instructions on renaming the accounts. CAF is straightforward, Aegon requested further information re the charitable status which it has been confirmed at this meeting is not relevant.
- c) **AOB:** Following a recent call to the Charity Commission re status and renaming of the Trust JY advised that they had no concern re the name of the Trust.

Therefore it was agreed to formally rename Winsford Charitable Trust to Winsford Village Green Trust, which more accurately reflects the work the Trust carry out in the village. Proposed MM, seconded by KC and approved by all. JY has recently been in contact with Risdon regarding the work being carried out and no further work has taken place due to the solicitor being away.

CW will arrange for the annual inspection for the swings. MM mentioned that it had be recommended that a sign is put nearby listing local medical facilities.

76.14 Correspondence and Emails received: None

76.15 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended: CW and JY attended the recent LCN meeting. Much of the meeting was spent discussing highways matters, and the Dulverton Food Bank.

76.16 Any Other Business: It was noted that the recent Village Fete was extremely successful with over £5,000 raised.

76.17 Items for Next Agenda: Tree planting scheme

76.18 Date of Next meeting – October 28th 2024 at 7.00 in Winsford Village Hall

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 21.17pm