WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Winsford Parish Council Held on Monday 24th February 2025, 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) and Clerk Jennifer Yates (JY).

Somerset Councillors Frances Nicholson (FN) and Steven Pugsley (SP) attended part of the meeting.

Two members of the public attended the first part of the meeting.

CW opened the meeting at 19.04

80.1 Public Question Time: A local couple came to discuss the use of PVC windows as opposed to wooden windows prior to taking this to the planning team at ENPA which would incur further costs. There would be a saving of around £20,000 to use PVC, and the sample/pictures shared showed that chosen design of PVC windows look like wooden ones. The Parish Council had previously had this discussion with regards to another building and shared their conclusions that new PVC windows are more environmentally acceptable due to the fact that they are now recyclable and reduce the need for heating/use of heating fuels. They also are more long lasting and require less maintenance. In addition, the building in question will be outside the conservation area, so it was felt that this change would be supported by the Parish Council if the planning variance was put forward.

80.2 Apologies for non-attendance: None

80.3 Declaration of Interests: None

FN arrived at 19.12

80.4 To agree the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 27th January, and any outstanding actions: CW fed back that the school transport issue is now satisfactorily concluded and that thanks had been received from the family most affected. Thanks were also given to FN/SP for their work on this issue. The rail which needed repairs has been done. The issue of parking at Edbrooke has worsened and it was suggested that the police may need to become involved as it is a safety issue pushing cars across the central line of the road on a bend. The minutes were approved as a true record, proposed IB, seconded MM approved by all.

80.5 To discuss planning applications:

a) **WTCA 25/03 - Location: PITCOTT MILL, WINSFORD, MINEHEAD, TA24 7JE**
Proposal: Works to trees in a conservation area: removal of 3no. Lawson Cyprus trees to ground level: It was agreed that the trees have outgrown the site and are non-native trees. It is hoped future planting will take place. No objection.

b) **WTCA 25/04 – Location: BALL COTTAGE, WINSFORD, MINEHEAD, TA24 7JF**
Proposal: Works to tree/s in a conservation area: removal of ash tree: The tree is clearly dangerous and there is no objection to its removal.

80.8 Updates from Somerset Councillors: Further discussions are taking place at County prior to setting their budget. Whilst the focus remains on reducing staff numbers it appears that Highways Supervisors will now remain in role, which is very welcome news due to their local knowledge of the highways in their patch. However, the final team structure is not available as there is still uncertainty about who will retain their roles in the wider team. With regard to the local government boundary

review it would appear that Winsford parish will remain unaffected other than having the number of County Councillors reduced to one. There are going to be changes re the local plan for Exmoor and FN recommended that Winsford follow the consultation process and comment when there is an opportunity.

80.9 To consider Highways Matters: There is no update re the wall by the Winn, as the ownership has not been confirmed. It was part of the donation from the Acland family but then fell under the control of Dulverton as part of the Rural District Council. It is believed that the County Highways team are responsible as it abuts the Highway. CW recently showed it to Mr Thurlow from ENPA, along with the car park, and he has said he will help with following up on both areas. The wall is being undermined by the river and has been for some time and work will need to take place, but it is not deemed dangerous at this time. Discussion took place re the gully clearance spreadsheet recently shared from the County team. It will allow the Parish Council to track the work being carried out and follow up if gullies are missed. FN had noted that a number of them in the centre of the village had been classified as 'urban' which mean less frequent clearance, and it was suggested that this needs to be amended. JY to follow up. MM raised the issue that local roadworks at neighbouring parishes are not always shared with this parish, but they do affect journeys to local towns. FN recommended signing up with One.Network for email alerts to work in the area. Discussion took place regarding signage placement for road works/closures which just say 'road closed' but often refer to side roads ahead. It was suggested that putting that actual site of the closure would be much more helpful to road users.

FN left at 19.48

SP arrived at 19.54

SP advised that the current car park is classed as part of the highway as it was purchased under the road widening scheme. He advised that if ownership could be finally established he would be happy to work with Mr Thurlow at ENPA about advising re gaining funds for improvements. Re Upcott Lane Keir have been asked to clear the gullies but it does not appear that the work has been carried out. Mr Kali Martin recognised that due to the nature of the hill the debris washes down the road filling the gully traps and will follow up.

SP left at 20.12 following a brief feedback re the earlier discussion re windows. He will follow up.

80.6 Update re Henry Leigh Trust representative: Debbie Debney has agreed to take on the role representing the parish. She has met with Mr Lindop and done a handover, and JY has passed on her details to the Trust. Appreciation was shared re the work Mr Lindop has done in the role.

80.7 Feedback from Thomas Thurlow visit to the village: CW met with Mr Thurlow re the car park. He will look into the ownership and is keen to support the improvement of the site which is central to the village and within the conservation area. Funding may be available dependant on his findings. He was pleased to see the new bus shelter and resilience store, and the placement of the benches.

80.10 Update re preparedness for long term power cuts in the parish and village emergency planning: MM and CW were pleased to be invited to a recent village hall committee meeting. They, and MH who sits on that committee, shared the work which has taken place regarding resilience and the village emergency plans. The final piece of work is to confirm the Village Hall as the place of safety and to apply for grants to acquire a generator for the Hall so that if needed people can use it to charge their phones, get hot drinks, heat some food and get warm if there is a long term power cut. The committee were in agreement that this would be beneficial, and they now need to complete some paperwork with Somerset Prepared. CW will be the named contact for emergency services and will need to have a key. It was agreed that it would be good to share the work on the emergency plan with the

village at the Annual Assembly, and mention that we need to be informed if the Defibrillator is taken out as the pads need to be replaced if used.

80.11 Finance: To receive financial report and agree to pay amounts due: Payment was agreed for Society of Local Council Clerks (£55). A further invoice had been received after the finance report was issued so payment was deferred to the next meeting.

80.12 Winsford Village Green Trust:

a) **Finance Report:** Current account balance is £1.883.48 (including grant funds of £1,400.80) and Reserve at £1,784.34.

b) **AOB:** JY had shared bin designs as this is now a priority. Preferences were shared and JY will follow up. The purchase and installation will use up much of the remaining grant funds. One quote has been received for works to the skittle alley but following discussion, and feedback from a local resident, it was decided not to call for any further quotes at this time. The Trustees are very pleased with the work which has taken place so far to upgrade the Village Green, with new swings and picnic tables already installed. No decision has been made at this time when and if future projects will take place with the ongoing review and upgrade of the Village Green facilities.

80.13 Correspondence and Emails received: The local government boundary review consultation period has been extended – it was agreed to submit a response stating that Winsford are keen to stay in the current West Exmoor division with similar Exmoor parishes. An e-mail was received from a local resident with regard to the skittle alley on the Green and a reply has been sent by CW see item in 80.12b.

80.14 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended: MM, MH and CW attended the Village Hall Committee meeting.

80.15 Any Other Business: None

80.16 Items for Next Agenda: None

80.17 Date of Next meeting – March 31st 2025 at 7.00 in Winsford Village Hall

There being no further business CW closed the meeting at 21.21.