

WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Winsford Parish Council held on Monday 23rd May 2016 at 7.30pm in Winsford Village Hall.

PRESENT: Councillors David Godsal, Colin Wilkins, Steve Hunt, Kevin Connell, Beverley Flanagan, John Bray, Mel Mileham, WSC Bruce Heywood, WSC Nicholas Thwaites, SCC Frances Nicholson and Clerk Verity Vigars. Six members of the public were also present.

Parish Electorate's Opportunity to Speak:

Mike Ellicott (ME) was in attendance to introduce himself as a parish member of the National Park.

Tim Lloyd was in attendance because of the planning application for the phone mast at Great Bradley near Withypool. The application is incorrect and he has objected as the landowner. He understands it is being withdrawn, and then corrected before re-submission. It was added that the coverage area for it is unclear as it is below the hill line and requires line of sight.

4 members of the electorate did not wish to speak. The fifth parishioner raised the issue of the Village Green and whether the stumps are being cut to ground level ready for topsoil. This was to be discussed at a meeting on Thursday.

16:34 Apologies for non Attendance - None.

16:35 Declarations of Interest - SH reported he had received notification of Withycombe planning application personally because it might "have an effect" on his property. Similarly KC had too and had submitted his own response.

16:36 Election of Officers

- a. Chairman CW proposed DG continue, and BF seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**
- b. Vice Chairman SH proposed KC continue, MM seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.**

16.37 Approval of Minutes

KC pointed out that the inclusion of verbatim points should not be normal practice but it was agreed that it was justified on this occasion. It was then **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 21st March 2016 (as circulated) be approved and signed as correct.

16:38 Actions from the Previous Minutes

a. Village repairs and maintenance (including telephone box/bus shelter/noticeboard working party for renovation

The Chairman thanked everyone for helping with the recent litter pick up and particularly BF for organising it. CW thanked individuals for scrubbing the signpost, which it seemed has inspired

others. BF noted that an email had been received concerning the restoration the Copleham signpost. She then mentioned that the phone box is in a bad state. It was noted that it is necessary to keep it whilst there is no mobile reception so it was **AGREED** to smarten it up with a coat of paint before the Party for the Queen (it was last done 4 years ago by a national firm). It was **AGREED** BF would ask for volunteers, set a date and organise the paint. It was also **AGREED** to give the parish noticeboard a coat of stain. MM reported that George Strickland has offered to help with an additional noticeboard in the bus shelter, to eliminate posters being pinned all over it. It was **AGREED** to ask him to put some soft board on the back wall. It was noted that it was a shame the entrance to the Village Hall is locked meaning the noticeboard in there cannot be used.

b. Speed Limit

FN reported that they have still be waiting for a reply from BT but that there has been a new directive to Highways reducing the number of repeater signs needed within speed limits. Road paint had also been suggested but it was deemed more intrusive. Jo Sharp is now drawing up a plan with the smallest number of signs possible. FN confirmed she would keep at it. The Chairman thanked her.

c. Broadband

SH raised the planning application which has already been mentioned which gives hope for coverage of Winsford although lots of different masts will be required in the vicinity to ensure line of sight to the village. He **AGREED** to do a latest news flyer for outside the shop and for the noticeboard. There was also some correspondence regarding the voucher scheme for those without access. Overall the village is deemed to be "served by BT" so may be a lower priority for other providers.

d. Highways (including signposts)

It was reported that the Copleham signpost has been cleaned and re-painted and it looks much better. FN noted that the Parish Lengthsman has the correct paint to use and she has requested some of it to be made available to parishes who do not use the Lengthsman. The Quarme Lane signpost was raised again as being in a bad state. ENPA have not yet started working on any signposts and parishes are beginning to get on with some themselves. CW queried the spacers on the signposts and offered to take out the unused ones and move everything down. The ownership of the brown signs was raised and it was noted that they belong to the business name listed who would have bought them initially. It was **AGREED** to approach both the Royal Oak and the Campsite to ask if they mind them being cleaned.

It was noted that the Ash Lane manhole has been repaired and the drains in Upcott Lane and at Dowry Cottage and Furzehill have been cleared. The road closure of Quarryhead in Withypool for 3 days from 7th June was noted.

e. Wi-Fi access in the Village Hall

SH reported that the Village Hall Committee is still waiting for a decision from Airband on the free service.

16:39 Parish Clerk

Adverts have been placed in Across Exmoor and on the noticeboard and website. It was noted that someone could do all three parishes in which case the training costs could be shared. The closing date has been set for 13th June and the notice period is to 2nd July, after which a handover will be done. The Chairman thanked VV for all she had done and noted that tonight was her last meeting.

16:40 Financial Report

The financial report previously circulated was received including that the ENP grant of £672 had been received before the year-end and that the first part of the Precept (£1,511.48) had been received on 26th April. Also, that Dave Williams had kindly conducted the internal audit and copies of the final Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March had been circulated, including any explanations of variance. The Accounts were then **APPROVED** and signed. Section 1 of the Annual Return (annual governance statement) was then discussed, **APPROVED** and signed. The Clerk reported that she had updated the Asset Register to include the Parish Archive Cupboards

which were purchased in the last financial year, this was then **APPROVED**. Section 2 of the Annual Return (accounting statements) was then discussed, **APPROVED** and signed.

It was **RESOLVED** to pay the SALC affiliation fee of £78.57 and the AON Insurance Renewal of £792.16.

ME noted that parish councils can apply to for the Transparency Code funding via SALC which could be used for Clerk training to comply with the new rules. Exford PC had recently been successful in receiving funding for equipment, a new website and training. It was **AGREED** to get hold of the application forms.

It was also noted that the ENPA are pushing for planning to be looked at online, which needs a phone line and Wi-Fi connectivity. It was asked whether this could be covered by the grant, if not perhaps the precept should be increased next year to cover the monthly rental. SH reiterated the Village Hall Committee have been holding on for the Airband decision but to get things moving it was suggested that the Parish Council pay the monthly fee and if necessary cancel it at a later date. It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council should be proactive and formally send a letter to the VH Committee outlining the benefits of having broadband, as it is proven to increase hall bookings. SH **AGREED** to find out the process and requirements for the letter to be drafted. NT raised the Vodafone Smart Centre which has a limited diameter around the Village Hall and it was **AGREED** he would liaise with SH with further details.

16:41 Village Green Maintenance (including Play Equipment and Skittle Alley)

It was reported that Chris Deakin, a tree surgeon, is having a meeting at the Village Green on Thursday morning at 9am with DG, Dave Mileham and Mike Hillier about the stumps, which are currently cordoned off. They have been cut as low as possible but the advice of a professional is now being sought as cutting with a chainsaw to ground level can be dangerous. MM reported that some topsoil is required and some has been offered locally. JB would need to look at the site to know whether he can haul it or not and the quality of the topsoil needs to be investigated. It was **AGREED** that DG, MM and JB would liaise. MM reported that there was to be a weeding session on Wednesday on the Old Forge side and that the proceeds from selling the ducks for the race on the Queen's 90th Birthday Party event was being used to buy shrubs. Some additional play equipment for younger children had been raised at the Annual Assembly, but it was thought this was very expensive. The CCS Grant was suggested as a possible option for funding if a need could be demonstrated. ME offered to share knowledge from Exford's recent upgrade of play equipment which had lots of grant funding. It was noted that it was necessary to involve Bryony Neal and Sue Hayes these discussions. Finally, the skittle alley was raised and it was noted that Chris How has offered to look at it to see if it is still usable. It is believed Sue Hayes is storing the equipment.

16:42 Procedures (including Communications Policy)

It was reported that the Chairman and Vice Chairman had researched and prepared a Communications Policy document which had been circulated. KC noted that there are 2 places where website needs adding. It was discussed that any social media presence (or email list) needs to be maintained by a volunteer but that it is a big commitment and the Parish Council would need editorial control. It was **AGREED** to defer Facebook for now. The Clerk pointed out that maintaining email lists of personal contacts means that the Parish Council needs to be on the Data Protection Register (£35 per year). NT **AGREED** to look into whether this was required. The Communications Policy was then **ADOPTED** and it was **AGREED** that it should be displayed on the noticeboard and website. It can be reviewed at any time.

16:43 Parish Archive

MM reported that the filing cabinets had been re-homed to 2 parishioners. She reported that more material had come in and asked whether the Parish Council wanted her keep a hard copy of everything in addition to it being digitally scanned? It was **AGREED** a hard copy was not necessary. She also reported that she had enquired as to whether the ENPA grant covered room rental and because it could be offset against community involvement and is educational, then it can be.

16:44 Emergency Planning / Community Resilience Plan

BF reported that she had not heard anything from Geoff Mackett from CRISP regarding the questions that were raised with him at Annual Assembly but was going to keep on to him. There are plenty of resources available to draft a plan ourselves. Tim Debney has offered to help.

16:45 Village Litter Pick Up / Clean for the Queen - Already mentioned and everyone thanked.

16:46 Winsford Sports and Recreation Association

It was reported that Mike Hillier has resigned as Chairman and that Beverley Flanagan, who was Secretary is now Chair.

16:47 Correspondence and Emails

- a. SCC Environmental Information Sheet 2016 - noted.
- b. ENP Field Services Apprentice - noted.
- c. - The Stella Farrell Exmoor Grand Prix Event (24th July) - noted and **AGREED** to forward to BF for website.
- d. SCC Road Safety Team Route 60+ presentation - noted.
- e. Connecting Devon and Somerset Community Briefing April 2016 and Broadband Voucher Scheme - noted
- f. SCC Consultation - Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) - Minerals and Waste - noted.
- g. Somerset Choices - noted
- h. ENP Notice of submission of the ENP Draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State - noted.
- i. Queen's 90th Birthday Medal - noted.
- j. HAGS 2016 - noted.
- k. Historic Environment Review - noted.
- l. CCS 90th Celebration - 17th June - noted.
- m. Eat Dirt on Exmoor Ride - valid points made particularly that there is no authority to control it but nothing really can be done so wait and see what comes of it.
- n. Protocol between the Monitoring Officer and Police
- o. West Somerset Connect - 8th June - Social Care - noted.

16:48 Reports from Committees

- a. Exmoor Area Panel - Tuesday 17th May. This was not held in May but was going to be in June.

Bruce Heywood was congratulated on his appointment as Chairman of WSC, which he had also already expressed by email. BH **AGREED** to find out the situation with the new waste bins.

16:49 Planning Applications and Decisions

The 3 latest ones, Watersmeet, Exford Road (6/40/16/101), Rose Cottage, Halse Lane (6/40/16/103) and Withycombe Farm (6/40/16/104) are all still Not Yet Decided. The phone mast at Great Bradley has already been mentioned and it was **AGREED** to reply that the PC support it in principle for enhanced communications but understand that the landowner has some concerns. Staddon Farm (6/40/15/112 & 6/40/15/113LB) has been withdrawn and Little Pitcott (6/10/16/102) has been approved. The Clerk has secured an extension for submitting a response for Withycombe flight ponds until immediately after tonight's meeting. SH and KC had already reported that they had received notification as they were likely to be affected, and KC had submitted his own response. DG also knew that Ueli Zellweger had sent in a comprehensive response. The application was discussed at length and a number of questions and concerns were raised:

* What about the nearby public rights of way? Will access be limited to them whilst shooting is in progress because ducks have a lower flight path?

* What happens to the large volume of pond water in heavy rainfall? Can the banks burst and cause a surge of water down the Winn Brook?

* How many ducks are to inhabit the ponds? Is there any risk of pollution or contamination to the brook from the mass of duck excrement being deposited upstream? The very same brook that flows through the village green where children play, as well as past a number of properties.

* The application states the shooting season would be 1/9 to 31/1, an extension of 1 month, concern was expressed regarding the extension.

AGREED the Clerk would draft a response based on the above points for DG before submitting as soon as possible. It was **AGREED** to object to it at this stage because there are so many unanswered questions.

16:50 Other Business Directed to the Clerk

None

16:51 Date of next Meeting

Monday 25th July 2016 at 7.30pm. The meeting was closed at 9.30pm.

Date.....

Signed.....