

WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Winsford Parish Council Held on Monday 27 September 2021, at 7.30pm in Winsford Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors: Kevin Connell – Acting Chair, John Bray (JB), Sarah Little (SB) David Luscott (DL), Mel Mileham (MM) and Parish Clerk Jennifer Yates (JY)

Also members of the public; Gerry Flanagan, Beverley Flanagan, Martin Down and Hilary Geilinger

This meeting was recorded for the benefit of the Parish Clerk

KC opened the meeting at 19.30pm.

47.1 Public Question Time.

Hilary Geilinger presented re the planning application 6/40/21/112. She stated that they wished to make improvements to their home, and committed to keeping their neighbours fully informed throughout the process.

Mrs Flanagan listed a number of concerns re the planning application and stated that they were still waiting for responses from several people including the environment agency, the historic building officer and tree specialists, the latter being arranged with the planning authority. She is concerned about the proposed changes to the bank, with large amounts of soil being removed she is concerned that some large trees could be at risk as a result, with potential damage to her property. She no longer has concerns about the bio-digester or the garage, however the plans for the garage has now raised an ongoing boundary dispute, along with the concerns re the bank. She raised the issue of accountability should damage be caused to their property following PC and ENPA approval. She feels that the plans pose potential risk to property and people and is of too large a scale.

47.2 Apologies for non-attendance. Patrick Watts-Mabbott (PWM), Colin Wilkins (CW), SWT Cllr Steven Pugsley (ST) (who will join later if he is able), SCC Cllr Frances Nicholson (who will join later if she is able).

Best Wishes were wished to Mr Colin Wilkins for his upcoming operation and recovery.

47.3 Declaration of Interests. None declared

47.8 Item brought forward for the benefit of the visitors to the meeting.

To consider planning matter 6/40/21/112 – East Glebe, Winsford. Proposed single storey extension, together with replacement of garage, installation of bio-digester and relocation of oil tanks.

Prior to the meeting Councillors had been to the site to view the potential changes and prepared by viewing the materials on the planning website, this website was also made available during the meeting to inform the discussion.

When both parties presented their views to the Council it was stated that the ENPA planning officer had also been out to view the site and had met with both parties.

The chair asked for speakers for and against the application and all councillors had the opportunity to share views and discuss the application. The decision was made to support the application, with a vote of 3 for and 2 against. However, the response is to be supplemented with the following statement;

‘Winsford PC support this application, however they do so with the following comments:

Before the ENPA decision further information is required re the safety of the trees, particularly with reference to the removal of a large amount of soil and the root protection

area. Therefore, it would seem necessary to gain further specialist advice from the Exmoor National Park Tree Officer to ensure what is being proposed is safe. Furthermore, the PC discussed the matter of risk and disruption, and feel further steps may need to be taken to reduce the impact on the neighbours and ensure risk is minimised.'

Gerry Flanagan, Beverley Flanagan, Martin Down and Hilary Geilinger left the meeting at 19.53

47.4 To agree minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held 26 July 2021, and any outstanding actions – MM prop, SL sec approving the minutes of 26 July 2021.

47.5 To agree minutes of the Extra-Ordinary Meeting held 9 September 2021, and any outstanding actions MM prop, SL sec approving the minutes of 9 September 2021.

47.6 To receive update reports from County and District Councillors – No Councillors in attendance, item deferred.

47.7 Highways Matters – No Councillors in attendance, item deferred

47.9 Finance:

47.9.a To receive financial report and agree to pay amounts due – Council noted the financial report circulated by the Clerk. MM prop, KC sec, approving payment to Mrs J Yates £249.90 Clerk's Salary and Expenses; HMRC £62.40 tax due; Unanimously agreed

47.9.b To approve bank account change of address and update of signatories – Unanimously agreed that the account address for a Trust account will move to the new clerk's home address, and that she be added as a signatory with N. Kemp being removed. Paperwork to be signed following the meeting.

47.9.c To consider increase to Clerk's weekly hours – It was proposed that the Council work towards increasing this in line with the national recommendations. It was agreed in principle, dependant on budgeting.

It was noted that an additional meeting for budgeting will need to take place in December.

47.9.d To consider the purchase of a wreath for Remembrance Sunday – Approved by all present for the proposed cost of £30.

47.10 Parish Council Website: To consider the way forward.

DL wished to clarify the way forward. MM raised the discussion re what more can be done with no additional spending. One idea proposed was for members adopting and updating specific pages. Discussion was held about the purpose, other than meeting the legal Parish Council responsibilities. DL mentioned that there is low but consistent usage. It was proposed and agreed that it would be beneficial to put information about the Defibrillator on the site, with the access code. It was requested that Councillors take some time to consider what they want from the site and let DL know if they wish to raise ideas. It was proposed and agreed that it continues to run as previously agreed for a whole year before revisiting.

47.11 To consider reviewing the maintenance and presentation of Winsford and the welcome provided – DL raised the issue of unkempt hedges and verges within the village, including outside private properties. This extended to overgrown areas and dirty signs. It was suggested that should the village wish to move towards obtaining a 'Best Kept Village' award a plan needs to be made on how to move towards this, perhaps with a village plan and committee. They could then take responsibility for how to manage the different areas, including signage for the car park etc. KC suggested that this would combine well with the plans for the Jubilee next year and

this met with general approval. CW will be approached about this when he is back from his recovery.

Discussion was held re the use of volunteers however MM raised the issue of legal liability re health and safety for them if they were to undertake clearing around village signs etc. Clerk asked again to explore whether the insurance covers public liability.

JB queried whether our contract for grass cutting could follow hedge cutting in the future, and MM pointed out that road sweeping should also coordinate with this if possible.

Clerk to review insurance arrangements. Agenda item for next meeting.

SCC Councillor Frances Nicholson joined the meeting at 20.19.

46.6 To receive update reports from County and District Councillors.

FN reported that a panel meeting had taken place the previous week at which many items were covered. Messages from across numerous parishes were similar and all were keen to move forward with the proposed changes resulting from the unification and these were generally seen as an opportunity. Listening had taken place from the SCC representatives, but further work is to take place moving forward, particularly as there is some disparity between parish and county council priorities. More listening sessions are planned. Delegated budgets and staffing money is to come for opportunities such as the local community network. New committees will need to be established, and these will have decision making powers. It is suggested that these will be 'cross skilled' e.g. they could include members from the health community. One of the main drivers behind this is to use and respect local knowledge. It is hoped that as this progresses it may open opportunities for small local businesses and contractors for work such as e.g. gully clearance and jetting. However, road gritting is likely to remain an SCC Council responsibility. There are still ongoing discussions re the reunification generally and potential border re-organisations.

47.7 To consider Highways Matters.

JB reported that he had attended the panel meeting referred to in item 46.6 and raised that he had some concerns about current arrangements. For example, a local tree overhanging the road had been damaged by a large vehicle in August, and this was becoming a regular occurrence. FN responded that trees need to be taken back to the edge of the highway up to a particular height (JB suggested 14 feet), if under that the ENPA would review the matter. It was also raised that locally hedge cutting was not happening on a frequent enough basis, and that when wet the branches sag. FN responded that local landowners and SCC are free to cut their trees back from the end of the nesting season (beginning of September) so that should shortly begin. Previously it was agreed to gather local landowner names and addresses re requesting hedge work – clerk to discuss progress with CW on his return.

47.12 To consider the Free Tree offer from SW&T Council – It was discussed that this ties in with the requested tree planting for the Jubilee. MM agreed to organise this.

47.17 To consider the arrangements for Future Parish Elections – It has been agreed in principle to bring these forward to next year, to bring them in line with the County Council elections. This now has to be ratified by Parliament.

47.18 To consider the impact on the Parish of the BT fibre plans – MM expressed deep concern about the vulnerability of the villagers in the event of a power cut should they need to contact the emergency services. If the whole village was on the Fibre network there would be little or no ability to call for help in that situation. FN agreed that this was a matter for both SCC and ENPA as it is a matter of wellbeing and safety for the villagers.

FN left the meeting at 20.46

It was agreed that the clerk writes to Dean Kinsella and Sarah Bryan (ENPA) to raise the issue of personal and village safety due to no mobile signal being in place. MM will support in drafting this.

47.13 To consider the NALC consultation for DEFRA Local Nature Recovery Strategy – It was agreed that the Parish Council would not respond at this time but would like to be involved in the future.

47.14 To receive an update on the Reconnecting Community fund event – The funding application was successful. CW had proposed that the timing of the event would have more impact if combined with Christmas, this was supported by KC. Agreed unanimously.

47.15 To receive update on the Platinum Jubilee plans for June 2022 – There is to be a meeting in the village on 7th October. DL is happy to support CW in publicising this and will take part in putting up posters and getting information onto both village websites. He was thanked for his support for this venture. JB reported that Mr Everard is happy to support the beacon proposal.

47.16 To discuss the PC membership of the West Somerset Flood Group – MM was voted in as the Council representative for a further year. There is a fee for membership.

47.19 To receive update on sale and advertising of Ann Le Bas artwork –

47.19a The Art Sale – The sale raised £2783 and there are further prints to sell, and an art related auction will be sought for this purpose. SL proposed that local parishioners be given a further opportunity to purchase prints, as some had not been able to attend on the previous sale date. CW and MM to arrange. Thanks were expressed to Will Raynor at the Courtyard Gallery for his help and advice.

47.19b The Memorial - It was agreed to discuss the memorial in more depth when CW was in attendance. A piece is to be commissioned for her, which will be personal to her memory.

47.19c The Field – The Clerk raised the issue of the paperwork received from the solicitor which she had shared with KC due to her concerns. It was agreed that they had not done what was requested of them, and that there was some confusion due to us receiving ‘proforma’ paperwork which does not match our needs. KC, DL and CW volunteered (CW has discussed this with KC) to form a sub-committee with the clerk to move this matter forward. JY to arrange this meeting.

47.20 Record of Correspondence and Emails Received – A report had been received from CW which was noted, and the Council wished to thank him for providing the information. He had attended the following meetings;

3rd Sept – met with new police and crime commissioner and discussed rural crime, policing, access to speeding test equipment and other issues.

8th September – CW and MM met with senior Highways officials to discuss localised issues and solutions

21st September – CW and JB attended a Panel meeting at which there was a further opportunity to discuss localised highways issues, along with a new local housing initiative.

47.21 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended – MM attended the meeting re the Highways local community group on 8th Sept with CW. JB attended the Panel meeting as mentioned in item 46.7.

47.22 Items for Next Agenda – Ann Le Bas Memorial.

47.23 Date of Next Meeting – Monday November 29 2021 – 7.30pm – in the Village Hall.

There being no further business, KC closed the meeting at 21.14pm.

Date.....

Signed.....