WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Winsford Parish Council Held on Monday 31st March 2025, at 19.00pm in Winsford Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors: Colin Wilkins (CW) – Chair, 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.

CW opened the meeting at 19.04

81.1 Public Question Time: None

81.2 Apologies for non-attendance: Cllrs Mel Mileham and Frances Nicholson

81.3 Declaration of Interests: None

81.4 To agree the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 24th February, and any outstanding actions: The minutes were approved as a true record proposed KC, seconded BN, approved by all. Action: JY will write to Somerset Council devolution team requesting an update re the car park whilst waiting for feedback from Mr Thurlow at ENPA.

81.5 To discuss planning application; 6/40/25/001

Location: LITTLE HAM, WINSFORD, MINEHEAD, TA24 7JF

Proposal: Proposed demolition of cottage and erection of 1 no. rural workers dwelling without complying with condition 10 (windows, doors and external joinery material) and condition 2 (approved plans) of approved application 6/40/21/120 to allow change in windows, doors and external joinery material from timber to uPVC.

Following discussion it was agreed to support this proposal. It is recognised by the Councillors that uPVC windows have improved greatly now. They can now appear similar to wooden windows. They also have a longer life and require less maintenance and once needing replacement they can be recycled. The property is not in the conservation area.

81.7 To consider Highways Matters including update re parking at Edbrooke: CW has been in communication with Magna homes re the parking at Edbrooke which is a concern due to vehicles parking on or partially on the road pushing passing traffic to cross the white line on a blind bend when leaving the village. The vehicles are all legally taxed and roadworthy. The representative from Magna recognised that there is a danger and will look into who owns the verge once she returns from her annual leave. The position of the Parish Council remains that there is a concern for safety for residents and other members of the public. She will also follow up on new signage re parking at their properties in Ash Lane as a complaint has been raised by a resident to CW. Discussion was held re an area of verge which has been concreted over near a property in the village as it has previously been understood that Somerset Highways own the strip of verge alongside the road to the width of up to 18 inches. However, the landowner does own the verge and through doing the work has in fact uncovered a drain which is beneficial. Following discussion, it was agreed that no further action would be taken in regard to this.

81.8 Discuss the Parish Council support for the Moorland Food Bank: JY had prepared a statement in support of the Food Bank which was agreed at the meeting and will be sent immediately following the meeting

81.9 Discuss plans for VE Day Anniversary celebrations: The 8th May is the date for the anniversary. The Councillors will support the village if anyone wishes to organise an event but are not in a position to lead this at this time. It was mentioned that permissions for a beacon need to be arranged with Mr Thomas-Everard. The Annual Assembly will take place on 15th May to avoid a clash of dates.

81.10 Finance: To receive financial report and agree to pay amounts due: Payments were agreed as follows, proposed IB, seconded KC

Netwise Domain Renewal	£24.00
J.Atkins Christmas Tree	£90.00
J.Yates Tax and Expenses	£177.00
HMRC	£25.80
Castle and Barry – Fence on pack horse bridge	367.78
Total	**£684.58**
From 2025/26 budget – Village Hall hire	£250

It was agreed to move carry forward funds into the reserve to ensure that it has a balance of at least half of the precept as recommended as good practice. JY to action once the new reserve account is set up and new precept received. The carry forward will include funds held as part of the resilience grant. MH reported that the Village Hall Committee are looking into acquiring a generator for use in an emergency, and a keysafe which would give access in the event of an emergency to a group of named people who would lead the emergency response. JY fed back that at her recent resilience meeting power packs were recommended which are portable and therefore could be put into someone's house in an emergency. It was agreed that this could be beneficial and would be further discussed at a later date as Mrs Mileham has led all of the work done in this area.

81.11 Winsford Village Green Trust

a) **Finance Report:** Current account balance £1,968.70, Reserve balance £1,973.79.
b) **AOB:** Mowing is expected to resume shortly. JY to follow up with the solicitor re the boundary as there is an area of rusty fencing to be replaced which it is believed belongs to a neighbouring property.

SP arrived at 20.05pm

81.6 Updates from Somerset Councillors: SP has been in discussion with ENPA planners re uPVC windows as it is recognised that these windows have changed tremendously.

The Government gave Somerset Council permission to raise Council Tax to 7.5%. The main financial pressure for the Council is social care for both adults and children. It is felt that this needs a national approach to resolve the issue which is a national problem being dealt with locally. It is expected that

the financial pressure will continue into next year's budget with changes with national budgeting such as increases in defence spending.
SP will liaise with Mr Thurlow re the car park and next steps.
Re parking at Edbrooke he advised that police can only become involved if the cars are blocking pedestrians being able to safely move along the side of the road.

81.12 Correspondence and Emails received: CW re the car park in Ash Lane as discussed above.

81.13 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended: CW and JY attended the recent LCN meeting. The boundary review is taking place and Winsford would be confirmed as West Exmoor. It was recognised that our local LCN is one of the most effective in the County in a recent review. To develop further it would need to become more independent in decision making and being able to hold funds. One of our local Highways representatives, Mr Bridgwater, is leaving as part of the County redundancy package but Mr Martin will remain. CW reported that Falcon are finding it difficult to let properties on Exmoor. SP suggested that it would be helpful it parishes could support them by publishing details when properties become available.

81.14 Any Other Business: None

81.15 Items for Next Agenda: IB was asked to follow up on progress with the tree planting scheme proposed last year as nothing has been heard for some time.

81.16 Date of Next meeting – April 28th 2025 at 7.00 in Winsford Village Hall

There being no further business CW closed the meeting at 20.41