

WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Meeting of Winsford Parish Council Held on Monday 24 January 2022, at 7.30pm in Winsford Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors: Colin Wilkins (CW) – Chair, Kevin Connell (KC), Mel Mileham (MM), John Bray (JB) Sarah Little (SL), Patrick Watts-Mabbott (PWM), David Luscott (DL) and Parish Clerk Jennifer Yates (JY)

Also in attendance Mrs Sue Hayes, Charles Hayes and Sam Winzer

CW opened the meeting at 19.31pm.

49.1 Public Question Time

The Council received a donation of £250 from Winsford United Charities – to be put towards costs of celebrations for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. Thanks and appreciation were expressed by all.

Mrs Hayes explained her attendance was with the planning application to be discussed later in the meeting (6/40/21/120). She explained that they were aware that the planning size was over the recommended ENPA footings size but that it was to be used not only as a residence but also for running the farm business and that therefore that should be acceptable.

49.2 Apologies for non-attendance: SCC Cllr Frances Nicholson (FN)

49.3 Declaration of Interests: MM – who has a personal interest in planning matter 6/40/21/120 and PWM re planning matters due to his work at ENPA.

SW&T Cllr S. Pugsley (SP) arrived at 19.38

49.4 To agree the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 29 November 2021, and any outstanding actions: Minutes were approved unanimously.

It was agreed that the mobile boost scheme may present temporary support to parishioners until the masts are in place. SP suggested that continued lobbying the Home Office for cover, drawing their attention in particular to those who wish/need to work from home and for support during power cuts. KC suggested that we also need to ensure that EE and BT are aware of the urgent need for change and support for this area.

KC wished to add that the complaint meeting had also taken place on 29th November and that the complaint was not upheld.

49.5 Reports from County and District Councillors

SP confirmed that the unitary elections are to be held on 5th May. There will be two councillors for the area who will sit for 5 years. The Parish Council election will be on the same date and again the term of office will be 5 years.

Winsford is in the Pilot area for the Local Community Network preparing for the devolution of services – and the specialist area for the Pilot is Highways. This has begun to come together with a working group now in place. They would welcome a ‘steward’ for each area to liaise with the contractors and organise local works, arrangements to be finalised. There is a need to ensure that the parish linksman is not adversely affected and good communication will be very important. A devolved budget will be put in place but arrangements are not finalised yet. The Local Community Network is currently working with the community through the Panel but this is likely to evolve into a ‘governance’ group using councillors.

The Local Plan consultation is still running and SP encouraged councillors to take a look and respond.

49.6 To consider Highways Matters, including:

a. Drainage at Exford Road

There is an extremely blocked drain at the Old Stables following the works which took place. A jetter has been out but failed to clear it so follow up works will be needed. Water is still crossing the road which is very dangerous should it freeze and cause black ice.

b. Glebe Drive to Upcott Cross

The drains further up Upcott Road are problematic, leading to issues lower down including those mentioned in 6a. Water is pouring over the drains which are full and need clearance.

MM has reported this twice already.

Action – clerk to write to K. Bridgewater at the Minehead Depot using the reference numbers provided by MM.

c. other Highway matters

Halse Lane – a pothole has appeared. CW has reported this.

Staddon Lane – problems again with running water, it is not running away onto the fields but running down the lane causing dangerous road conditions, particularly in icy weather. CW will visit Stone Cross as drainage issues were also reported there.

49.7 To consider planning matters:

a. 6/40/21/120 – Little Ham - Proposal: Demolition of cottage, erection of one rural workers dwelling

Following discussion the Parish Council voted to support this application. It was recognised that the recommended square meterage would be exceeded but accepted that the recommendation is for a dwelling and this would be both a dwelling and office space. It was felt that the materials chosen were appropriate and the Council were pleased to support the family business.

Mrs Hayes, Mr Hayes and Ms Winzer left the meeting at 20.05

b. GDO 22/01 – Howtown Cottage - Proposal: Prior notification for the proposed erection of lean to extension (4m x 3.45m).

The Council voted to support this proposal as an improvement to the property.

c. Other Planning applications and matters

Since the agenda was set a further application was received – 6/40/22/102. This was discussed and unanimously supported.

49.8 Finance:

a. To consider Budget and Precept for 2022-23

Discussion was held and it was agreed that carry forward and reserves could contribute to any further election costs should it be needed. Legal costs re the field bequest could come from reserves from the Ann Le Bas sales. Costs for the bus shelter were discussed – CW is to liaise with the landowner who had done some repairs but they are not complete. Costs for the swings were mentioned, this will be further discussed in the Trust meeting.

The Budget was unanimously accepted and the form signed ready for return.

b. To receive financial report and agree to pay amounts due

Proposed KC, seconded DL

49.9 To consider arrangements for Parish Council Elections on 5th May

Forms will be issued around 21st March. Councillors need to choose whether to run again, and need to be aware that the term will be for 5 years.

49.10 To discuss arrangements for the village re the Queen's Platinum Jubilee

There is to be a village meeting on 10th February and all villagers will be invited to attend with the aim a special committee will be set up. There has already been a contribution made this evening towards this (49.1)

49.11 To discuss the Ann Le Bas Bequest

a. The Field

It was suggested that Risdon Hosegood or Maitland Walker could be approached to handle this work. PWM proposed £1400 be put aside for this work, this was seconded by KC. A sub-committee meeting needs to be arranged as soon as is practical.

b. The Memorial Seat

This is being made currently and is due at the end of March. It has cost £2,000 approx. and will be a very apt tribute to Ann Le Bas with her name, the church and cricket wickets all represented. The base is going onto SCC land so it needs to be clarified with FN as it will be back from the road and using a site previously used for a bench – replacing like for like. Someone will be arranged to ‘unveil’ the bench.

SL mentioned she has a contact in Lynton should the Council wish to consider them for the sale of the rest of the artwork. It was agreed they would be considered but they needed to give a reasonable offer otherwise an Auction House will be used for the sale of the remaining pieces.

c. Archive – to South West Heritage Centre or Somerset Museum

MM and the Archivist have contacted the Somerset Heritage Centre re the remainders of the collection (photographs and papers). They won't take framed items so MM has been working hard preparing and sorting them. Some date back a long time – taken by Miss Le Bas father and grandfather. There are also medals in the collection, from her father and uncle. Some may go to the museum and others may remain with the village. The decision needs to be made whether items remain in the Village Hall (for future use/reference) or go to the Heritage Centre for storage. The collection can either be loaned or given to the Heritage Centre. SP suggested that the Exmoor Society could also be considered for some of her items.

A discussion was held and a vote taken. The decision was taken to approach the Exmoor Society to consider taking the collection.

d. Replacement Trees for the Recreation Field

The trees have been donated by SW&T. They are Oak, Beech and Hawthorn.

49.12 To discuss the planting of the Free Trees from WSDC – date and location relating to the Queen's Green Canopy

It has been decided it would be ideal to use the trees to create a mini copse on the field using the Hawthorn, and for the others to be used on the recreation field. Discussion re the involvement of children in the planting will be taken at the jubilee meeting on the 10th Feb.

49.13 To receive an update re repairs on the noticeboard and gate on the Green

The noticeboard is due for delivery shortly, it has needed extensive work. PWM will organise for a walking map of the village to go in it. The gate is due for return by the end of March.

49.14 To receive an update re bus shelter repairs

CW will liaise with the land owner of the tree which caused the damage. Some repairs have taken place but further work would be beneficial.

49.15 To receive a report on the Reconnecting Communities fund event

This event was held on 9th December 21. It was very well attended with 60 people coming out to enjoy meeting up. Thanks were expressed to CW, DL and JB for distributing the invitations. The food was excellent and enjoyed by all. Many were keen to repeat the event on a regular basis if possible. New people were brought in, and others were reconnected with each other so the aim of the event was achieved and exceeded. Thanks were given to CW for obtaining the grant and organising this successful event.

SP left the meeting at 21.28

49.16 To discuss arrangements for the maintenance of the dog bin at the recreation car park

Arrangements need to be made to empty this new bin.

Action – clerk to contact the District Council to add this bin to our current contract.

49.17 To discuss a process for alerting councillors to concerns over grievances, to avoid future vandalism and damage

DL reported a recent incident where a number of breeze blocks had been removed from a premises in the village and thrown into the river. The owner had retrieved them so they were no longer in place. DL expressed concern at the aggression and criminality of the act and suggested we need to have a safe way for villagers to report things to the Council. Discussion took place and no other malicious damage or vandalism was known about. The incident was shared on the Council blog and DL will draft a message on the website to let people know that the Council wishes to know about such incidents.

49.18 To discuss Insurance arrangements for volunteers

PWM has shared some useful information re risk assessments and will liaise with MM to ensure that any activities taking place in the village can have risk assessments in place.

49.19 To discuss Footpath DU10/19 – Tree on path

This was reported on 30th November but the tree is still partially blocking the path. DL reported that there is now another causing difficulties on an Ash Lane path (near Withycombe Farm) and he will report this to the public rights of way team.

49.20 To discuss a plan to welcome new residents, holiday home and rental visitors to the village

DL mentioned that welcoming new people and visitors is really linked with keeping the village tidy and attractive. He suggested a 'welcome' board would be beneficial – not only letting people know village information but also setting out behaviour expectations (eg using litter bins and dog bins, not staying overnight in the car park etc). Following discussion KC suggested setting up a working group for this. Councillors were unsure as to whether planning permission would be needed for the sign and DL offered to put together a proposal for what would go on there and where the best site(s) would be. It was recognised that there is a cost implication for both the sign and potentially planning costs.

49.21 Correspondence and Emails received: None

49.22 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended

CW attended the Panel meeting – SP had covered the main points earlier in this meeting (49.5). CW has recently met with the Police Commissioner re drugs and local issues.

49.23 Items for Next Agenda

Elections

49.24 Date of Next meeting – Monday 28th March 2022 at 7.30 in Winsford Village Hall