

WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Winsford Parish Council Held on Monday 5th June 2023, at 19.30pm in Winsford Village Hall

PRESENT: Councillors: Colin Wilkins (CW) – Chair, Kevin Connell (KC), Mel Mileham (MM), Mike Hillier (MH), Ian Brooks (IB), Bryany Neal (BN) and Clerk Jennifer Yates (JY).

Also in attendance: For the first part of the meeting Somerset Councillors Frances Nicholson and Stephen Pugsley were in attendance.

JY opened the meeting at 19.30pm.

- 63.1 Election of Chairman** – Following a brief discussion KC proposed Mr Colin Wilkins should continue as Chairman, MM seconded and all were in agreement
- 63.2 Election of Vice-Chairman** – Following a discussion re whether other members who may wish to be Chair at some point may wish to become Vice-Chairman it was proposed by MM that KC be re-elected to the position, seconded by BN and agreed by all, and thanked for his continued efforts in the role.
- 63.3 Public Question Time** - None
- 63.4 Apologies for non-attendance** – Sarah Little
- 63.5 Declaration of Interests** - None
- 63.6 To agree the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meetings held 27th March and 27th April, and any outstanding actions** – March Minutes – Proposed KC, Seconded IB, April Minutes – Proposed BN, Seconded CW
- 63.7 To carry out the business of selecting Parish nominees for the ENPA elections** – Following feedback from KC, MM and BN who had attended the Hustings event, and all having read the nominees forms, five candidates were duly selected.
- 63.15 Reports from Councillors** – SP mentioned that Winsford had been well represented at the Hustings for the new Exmoor National Park Authority Parish representatives. The next meeting of note is the first Exmoor LCN meeting to be held on 8th June, and he reminded the Council that they needed to select their representative and agree on what they would like the LCN to consider when setting their priorities for the next year. The new Somerset Council is now in place and moving forward with ensuring business is being carried out as smoothly as possible. FN mentioned that she is continuing to try to get Yellowcombe Leat sorted out as soon as possible, and is also liaising re the Car Park.
- 63.16 To consider Highways Matters**
- a) Yellowcombe Leat** – There is concern this could breach again once Autumn and Winter weather return. It is seen as a health and safety risk, and a flood risk. The Parish Councillors are keen to see progress with the repairs. MH is concerned with the length of time it is taking to get works done, and KC suggested that a risk assessment needs to be considered.
- b) Local Highway Report (IB)** – FN urged the Parish Council to continue to submit forms, although there is still a lack of clarification regarding what the Steward is able to do for traffic safety reasons. It is recognised that his kit is ‘low tech’ but it is felt that more could be achieved. It is recognised that he is employed through a contractor and the Councillors will be liaising with them seeking clarification re expectations and requests.

- c) **The Car Park** – Now that the Car Park is included in the ENPA Conservation Area it was considered as to whether their support may be gained re improvements. It is in poor repair and maintenance is required, particularly the potholes. FN stated that she is aware that a request has been made re putting benches on the side of the Car Park and would need to be involved if this goes forward as this is Council land. The Parish Council would consider taking over the Car Park if Somerset Council wished to gift it so that benches and maintenance could be arranged. CW asked if ENPA are likely to accept the use of recycled plastic rather than wood for benches. SP responded that he is aware of others which have been installed in the park, and this is in fact a sustainable use of materials.
- d) **Any Other Business** – CW raised the issue of signage, with particular reference to finger posts as some are in poor repair. SP suggested that there may be spare parts in the old Somerset West and Taunton stores and he would explore this option. There is still the ongoing Signpost project – he suggested contacting Shirley Blaylock and Patrick Watts-Mabbot re training and materials. The project are keen to support others in taking this on but don't have the capacity to do more.
SP was asked to speak to the land agent re storage of the resilience plan materials in the village.

63.17 To discuss potentially placing benches on the car park – The Parish Council has been contacted by a resident suggesting that the small bench currently on the strip of land owned by Somerset would benefit from replacement, in particular for families waiting for school busses. It was suggested that it could be dedicated to mark the Coronation from May 2023. As above FN will follow up with Somerset Council. The Parish Council has no objection in principle, however there is no clear funding stream for this, and it would need Somerset to agree.

SP and FN left the meeting at 20.14

63.8 To agree dates and times of meetings – It was agreed to trial meeting 10 times per year (proposed IB, seconded CW, approved) and to trial a start time of 7 pm. Meeting dates for the year are;
June 26th, July 24th, September 25th, October 30th, November 27th, January 15th, February 26th, March 25th and May 21st with the Annual Assembly on April 26th.

63.9 To approve the resilience plan and related issues (MM) – This was approved unanimously and MM thanked for her hard work in this area. MM is now keen to move forward with arranging first aid and defibrillator training next. CW reported that a new battery and pad had recently been purchased and installed.

63.10 To review Standing Orders and Code of Conduct – It was agreed to defer this until the next meeting.

63.11 Finance:

- a) **To receive financial report and agree to pay amounts due** – This was agreed by all.
- b) **To agree the updates to the asset register** - This was agreed by all.
- c) **To agree insurance renewal** – This was agreed by all.

63.12 Update re the post office – CW explained that the franchise had changed hands and were no longer able to offer outreach to a number of villages. CW had approached

the new Watchet franchise, but also the Dulverton Post office with no success. Wheddon Cross and Withypool will continue to provide the service and will be the most local places for residents to access. Concern was raised re the village shop as the Post Office increased footfall, and it is hoped that resident support will continue re the shop. The Parish Council regret the loss of the Post Office service to the village.

- 63.13 To discuss the local Dark Skies initiative and information regarding lighting in Exmoor National Park** – Concern has been raised with regard to light pollution in the village and discussion took place as to whether this needs to be followed up. It was agreed that JY will contact ENPA and request information/leaflets that can be shared, or any guidance which the council/residents can refer to regarding expectations with regard to their homes and how it relates to planning applications. The current street lighting was discussed and it was recognised that this may need to be changed at some time to a more suitable design.
- 63.14 To discuss the proposal for the new bus shelter and funding** – The proposed cost is £2,200 and Mrs Hayes has already made good progress in raising these funds. Mr Dave Mileham and Mr Nigel Neal have helped to prepare the base, and Mr Mileham is going to renovate the benches inside which were donated in 1939 from Mr H.E. Seligman. The aim is to install the new shelter in August. KC thanked all who have volunteered and given their time and hard work towards this project.
- 63.18 To discuss the new LCN arrangements, agree on Parish representative and gather views on what the LCN priorities could include in the first year** – CW is willing to continue representing the Parish Council, this was proposed by KC and seconded by MM. Priorities for the LCN were agreed to be Rural Isolation (including removal of outreach Post Office services and the ongoing Openreach work and mobile mast), Highways, the Mobile Mast and village Resilience.
- 63.19 To discuss the ENPA approval for part of Winsford to become a conservation area** – As this has now gone through at ENPA level there is uncertainty as to what the next steps are and what support can be requested re, for example, the Car Park. CW offered to make contact with the ENPA team.
- 63.20 To discuss remaining Ann Le Bas prints** – MM reported that Courtyard framing still hold them but are unsure they can sell them on currently as the market has recently had a surge with regard to her work. Other outlets such as the new shop at Malmsmead were discussed but it is hoped that the current arrangement will continue.
- 63.21 Update of Environment Agency information on the Parish Council website and loan of Winsford archive weather records (MM)** – The website has been updated with the ‘Living on the Edge’ document, but JY and MM would like to move it to a more permanent position on the site along with the Environment Agency and Flood Warning sign up phone numbers. The Environment Agency now have the weather records kept by Ann Le Bas and plan to digitise them, offering the village a copy, and then the original records will be given to the Exmoor Society. Copies of the Riparian guidance have been given to most households now.
- 63.22 Winsford Charitable Trust**
- a) **Maintenance of the Village Green** – Mr Hillier is following the spring/summer programme, with little need for mowing in this dry weather.
 - b) **Financial Report** – JY to circulate. The new Financial advisor has been provisionally booked to meet with Parish Councillors.

c) **Wooden Slats on Bridge** – The best quote is from Mr Fowler and would be for dried Oak slats, at the cost of £582 +VAT. Proposed in principle by CW and seconded by IB. JY to move funds accordingly.

d) **AOB** - Cave Foundation submission to be resent and this will be considered in the Autumn. This could include a request for funds towards meeting the cost of the replacement slats on the bridge.

An offer has been made to provide a bench on the Green in memory of a village resident, and this was warmly welcomed. It was suggested that it would be placed on the Village Green near Sunnymede, and that a recycled bench would be ideal for this.

63.23 Correspondence and Emails received – JY has received communication re purchase of the bungalow in Ash Lane, and was advised to refer this to the Enforcement Officer Mr Parry. Communication had been received from the Council with regard to a recent spate of thefts from Cricket Pavilions and community centres. An email was received requesting whether the new Mast would be set up to provide mobile reception for residents, JY had responded with information previously discussed in meetings.

63.24 Reports from Councillors on meetings attended – MH attended the Village Hall meeting, and BN attended the Recreation Association meeting.

63.25 Items for Next Agenda – Code of Conduct/Standing Orders, concerns re Yellowcombe Leat and the potential risks of this collapsing, Slats for Wooden Bridge.

63.26 Date of Next meeting – 26th June 2023 at 7.00 in Winsford Village Hall

There being no further business CW closed the meeting at 21.48pm.