

**MINUTES OF HAMBRIDGE AND WESTPORT PARISH COUNCIL**  
**VIRTUAL MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2020**  
**VIA ZOOM AT 7.30 P.M.**

**20/728 PRESENT:**

Mr S. Denley (Chairman), Mr R Maidment, Mr R Meecham, Ms. J Lock, Mr. M Stanton (District Councillor), Mr. A Dance (County Councillor), Mrs L.Brooks (Clerk). 2 members of the public were present.

**20/729 APOLOGIES:**

Mr P. Masters (Vice Chair) - No apologies received

**20/730 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

The Chairman, Cllr. Denley, declared an interest in Footpath L9 22 update.

**20/731 MINUTES:**

The Minutes from the November meeting have been circulated. They were agreed and signed.

Proposed: Cllr. Maidment

Seconded: Cllr. Meecham

Agreed unanimously.

**20/732 PUBLIC TIME**

A member of the public informed the Parish Council that he felt the new website was not working adequately with mobile devices. Parts of the website are not as he expected the final website to look and he informed the Parish Council that he felt it was difficult to navigate and find information. He was asked to compile an email with his observations. He also commented that draft minutes were not being uploaded onto the website. The Clerk responded that it was not a legal requirement to publish draft minutes and a large proportion of Parish Council's do not do this. Draft Minutes are available for the next relevant Council meeting and are draft until finally approved by Council and signed: at that point they are a legal document and are then uploaded onto the website. The priority is to get the draft minutes to each Parish Councillor within 10 days after the meeting for them to read and check they are happy and to make any appropriate changes. The Parish Council understood this. However, due to a later request from The Chair, the minutes will now be published in draft format as well, however, only after the Parish Councillors have had chance to view first for any discrepancies.

**20/732/a District Councillor:** District Cllr. Stanton had emailed a report that had been circulated to the Parish Councillors. The report included:

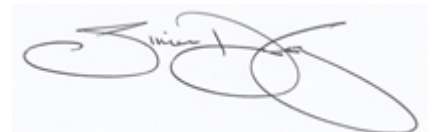
**Planning applications:** within the rainfall catchment area which feeds the Somerset Levels, planning applications are currently delayed by a new requirement by Natural England for a Habitats Regulations Assessment to be submitted with each, to assess the level of phosphates being discharged into water courses.

With regards also to planning, Councillor Stanton informed the Parish Council that SSDC have a five-year Housing Land Supply, so developers again have to take consideration of their fit with the current Local Plan.

**Parking:** All car parks in the District will be free from 3pm on Thursday 10 December until 8am on Friday 11 December to support events such as late night shopping. Free parking will be offered all day and every day from Thursday 17 December to Thursday 24 December

**Unitary Authority progress:** The proposal for a Stronger Somerset by the four Somerset district councils, for two Unitary Authorities, was overwhelmingly approved by SSDC's full Council and by each of the three other district councils on 3<sup>rd</sup> December for submission to the Secretary of State by 9<sup>th</sup> December. He is expected to run a consultative process early in 2021 whether to create one or two unitary authorities, followed by a decision in the summer. It seems unlikely that B&NES and North Somerset will be included. The County Council elections due in May 2021 will almost certainly be delayed, as SCC have formally requested this of the government.

**Covid-19 update:** South Somerset has 161 cases, down 28% from the previous week. 194 people in South Somerset (six in this Ward) tested positive in seven days, a 26% increase in a week. We have had six Covid-related deaths, one fewer than the previous week. All figures are below the national average. The R number was estimated at 0.7-1.0. We are in Tier 2 currently, although there is a possibility that we may be moved to Tier 1 on or soon after 16<sup>th</sup> December.



Community Services from SSDC: The District Council's experienced & award-winning team is available to help parishes keep outdoor spaces safe, clean and looking their best. From one-off jobs to regular maintenance through our Parish Ranger scheme they offer a range of services to take the worry out of maintaining our towns and villages.

Caravan parked at Westport update: Councillor Stanton updated the Parish Council on this situation. He informed everyone that Tim Wills from SSDC now thinks they have located the owner. If this turns out to be the correct information, then he feels he can get him to pull it off sight and dispose of it. This would obviously be quicker and cheaper to get the owner to remove it than SSDC to get a court order, but they still reserve the right to prosecute if this does not happen. When he mentioned the fencing not having to be removed as it was more than a metre away from the roadside, Cllr Maidment informed him that it was definitely not a metre away from the roadside and when the fence fell over it fell into the road. Councillor Stanton would go back to Tim and challenge this and report back at the next meeting.

Development at Westmoor Lane – Councillor Stanton reported that he had been informed that all vehicles and caravans had now been removed. Some fencing and artificial grass is still present but none of this counts as development or requires enforcement action. SSDC are looking into what the official approved use of the land is. The Parish Council need to keep an eye on the area and inform Councillor Stanton immediately if there is any suggestion of it being reoccupied.

20/732/b County Councillor: Councillor Dance had emailed his report. Councillor Dance reported on the vote that Councillors recently had regarding delaying the elections for County Councillors for next year. He reported that he had objected to this happening and explained his views.

Yeovil Town Football Club: Councillor Dance also reported that SSDC had put in an offer to buy the ground (not the club), as the club are struggling financially. If their offer was accepted then YTFC would rent the ground from SSDC until the time ever arose that they did not need the ground. Councillor Dance stressed that SSDC's aim was so that Yeovil Football club would remain. This proposal was only to take some of the financial pressure off them. There would be a clause within the purchase to say that YTFC could buy the ground back at any time in the future if they so wished. If SSDC bought the ground this would safe guard prime development land for future development that was required for Yeovil, rather than if a developer purchased it and build properties that would give the greater return but not necessarily what was needed for the area.

20/732/c P.C.S.O. Report:

Nothing to report

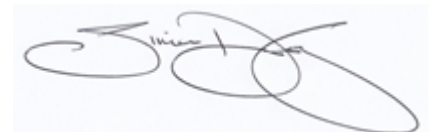
### 20/733 MATTERS ARISING

20/733/a 4x4's using the droves: The Parish Council had received reports of off road vehicles, being driven on the droves off Westmoor Lane – (the road that runs between Hambridge and Burrow Hill), and leaving them completely churned up with deep ruts. The Parish Council discussed this at great length. The vehicles being used are not only damaging the track and effecting the wildlife. The Parish Council were informed by a member of the public that in Somerset there is no rights of way on green lanes for vehicles other than landowner vehicles, so therefore these groups of off-road vehicles are breaking the law. The Parish Council was also informed that one landowner has already reported recent disturbance.

Some of the droves are in Hambridge and Westport Parish and some are in Kingsbury Episcopi Parish. It was agreed to report the issue to the police and to work together with Kingsbury Parish Council. The Clerk will email details to our new PCSO and liaise with the Clerk at Kingsbury.

The Clerk had been informed that one of the individuals driving down these droves lives locally and his information would also be passed to the police.

**Action: Clerk**





**20/735 FINANCE:**

**20/735/a Matters for report:**

**1. The Budget and Precept:**

All Parish Councillors had been sent emailed copies of all the accounts and budget for 2021/22 before the meeting. The Clerk ran through a brief summary of the proposed budget. She discussed where there would be an increase in expenses for 2021/22. The Clerk felt that with the good reserves the Parish Council had built up, the Precept should be kept at the same figure as last year - £13,500.00. The Parish Council was in full agreement and a resolution was made. Clerk to apply for the precept of £13,500.00. **Action: Clerk**

Proposed: Cllr. Maidment                      Seconded: Cllr. Lock                      Agreed unanimously.

**2. Internal Auditor:** Cllr Maidment reported that he had now spoken to a resident in Westport who had agreed to be the internal auditor for Hambridge and Westport Parish Council. Cllr. Maidment informed The Clerk that he would email the contact details of the resident to her and as soon as it was possible (due to Covid restrictions) he would organise a meeting to discuss between the internal auditor, himself and the Clerk/RFO. The Clerk reported that the next internal audit was due in January. **Action: Cllr. Maidment/Clerk**

**20/735/b Matters for resolution**

Nothing to report

**20/735/c Cheques Payable**

Louise Brooks	Payment for extra hours worked (agreed Oct PC Meeting	£ 115.24 chq no: 490
HMRC	PAYE payment for September 2020	£ 28.80 chq no: 491
Louise Brooks	Salary for October 2020	£ 192.06 chq no: 492
HMRC	PAYE payment for October 2020	£ 48.00 chq no 493
Louise Brooks	Expenses & Home Office Allowance – Nov 2020	£ 40.00 chq no: 494
Louise Brooks	Salary for November 2020	£ 192.06 chq no: 495
HMRC	PAYE payment for November 2020	£ 48.00 chq no: 496

Proposed: Cllr. Maidment                      Seconded: Cllr. Lock                      Agreed unanimously.

**20/736 CORRESPONDENCE:**

All correspondence received, had been forwarded to the Parish Councillors.

**20/737 FOOTPATHS:**

20/737/a Footpath L9 22 update: Cllr. Maidment reported that this is ongoing.

20/737/b Any other footpath issues: A damaged gate was reported on the footpath that runs alongside the canal. Cllr.Maidment will inform the Clerk of its exact location and footpath number so she can report it.

**Action: Cllr Maidment/Clerk**

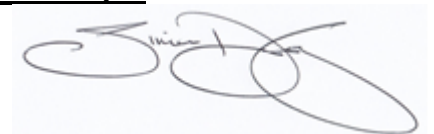
**20/738 MEMBERS' REPORTS/ITEMS FOR NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:**

The members had nothing to report.

Items for January Agenda: Clerk to include items requiring action from this meeting. Parish Councillors to forward any further items required to be added.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

**The next VIRTUAL meeting will be held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 7.30pm**



11<sup>th</sup> January 2021