

MINUTES OF HAMBRIDGE AND WESTPORT PARISH COUNCIL
MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13th OCTOBER 2021 IN THE VILLAGE HALL

21/825 PRESENT:

Mr. S. Denley (Chairman), Mr. P. Masters (Vice Chair), Mr. R Maidment, Mr. R Meecham, Ms. J Lock, Mr. A Dance (County Councillor), Mrs L. Brooks (Clerk). 1 member of the public was present.

21/826 APOLOGIES:

M Stanton (District Councillor)

21/827 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Councillor Denley declared an interest regarding footpaths - Proposed diversion of footpath L 9/22, Hambridge

21/828 MINUTES:

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

Proposed: Cllr. Lock

Seconded: Cllr. Masters

Agreed unanimously.

21/829 PUBLIC TIME

21/829/a Public Time:

A resident of Hambridge asked whether the Parish Council knew who owned the land at the entrance to the close where she resides in Hawkers Lane as it required some maintenance to the entrance and pavement.. County Councillor Dance, asked her to email a picture of the area and he would find out if Highways had adopted the road or whether it was a private road, meaning the home owners would be responsible. However, repair work to the pavements on a highway is normally the responsibility of Highways to repair. It will depend if this is also classed as being part of the private road.

Action: County Councillor Dance

21/829/b District Councillor:

Councillor Stanton was not present at the meeting but he did send a report that was circulated to all the Parish Councillors. It included:

Planning: Most applications are now into their second year of being held up by Natural England's ruling on phosphates discharge into the river Parrett catchment; the council's new lead planner and his team are working actively on mitigation solutions, both with Wessex Water and on possible solutions of our own. Area North Committee met via Zoom in September to deal with one small planning matter.

It has been confirmed that SSDC cannot show a Five-year Housing Land Supply, so even when the phosphates issue is dealt with, most planning applications will be determined according to the NPPF, not taking into account the now outdated Local Plan.

Elections to Unitary: All five councils in Somerset have submitted a joint proposal to the Secretary of State (SoS) for 100 members in single member constituencies. The outgoing SoS preferred a smaller number, but the new one (Michael Gove) may see things differently.

Councillor Stanton had also sent through an update on the caravan at Westport which had been circulated.

21/829/c County Councillor:

Councillor Dance attended the meeting. He discussed the Unitary although there was very little at the moment he could inform us on as no decisions had been made.

He informed the Parish Council that following the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) decision to support the move to a single Unitary Council across Somerset the transition programme, lead teams and governance structure have been agreed by the five current Councils. On 17th September the Councils responded to the Governments request to look at possible ward boundary changes with a maximum of 85 Unitary Councillors being elected. Whilst a number of options were presented it was almost universally felt that these gave sub-optimal outcomes at such an important stage. A cross-party and cross-authority request was therefore also submitted requesting more time, more flexibility in the warding parameters and involvement of the Local Govt. Boundary Commission ahead of a Unitary election. It is still expected that statutory orders will be laid before Parliament in the late autumn and a vesting date of the new authority as April 2023.



21/829/d P.C.S.O. Report:

The Clerk reported that the PCSO had been in contact, with regards to the recent activity of more 4x4 off roaders using the droves at Westmoor Lane. He reiterated that the law states that Section 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 provides the offence of driving a mechanically propelled vehicle without lawful authority on common land, moorland or land not forming part of a road, or on any road which is a footpath, bridleway or restricted byway. This includes all motorbikes of all descriptions as well.

21/830 MATTERS ARISING

1. Update from the village Shop:

The owners of the village shop and Post Office attended the meeting to inform the Parish Council that unfortunately, the shop will be closing from the end of December. (The Post Office will remain open until the end of January). This is mainly due to a lack of trade and parking related issues. After four years of running this village facility it will be a big loss to the village and the Parish Council were saddened to hear this news. The Parish Council discussed other options that might be possible including the possibility of a community shop or a farm shop.

2. Funding applied for (SCC funding via SALC) on behalf of the village hall – application completed & sent

On behalf of the Rec Trust, the Clerk informed the Parish Council that she had successfully won £1,500.00 in funding with regards to the 'Opening Up Safely and Reconnecting Communities Fund', that Somerset County Council has allocated monies for, and SALC are managing on their behalf. This was for the village hall to put towards their hearing loop system. She reported that she was still waiting to hear if they'd been lucky to win further funding to help pay for a new projector and multi-function amplifier system.

3. Banking – Progress Update on transfer to Unity Bank

The Chairman informed the Parish Council that he had now submitted the application with the Unitary bank and was waiting to hear whether we had been accepted. **Action: Chairman, Cllr. Denley/Clerk**

4. Road safety mirrors

The Chairman reported that the posts and mirrors would now be ordered and the Ranger would install them, under the guidance of the Chair and Vice Chair as to where they will be positioned.

Action: Chairman, Cllr. Denley

5. SSDC Rangers Scheme:

The Chairman reported that following a meeting with Jon Brown, who runs the Rangers Scheme for SSDC, they have agreed two days a month to start with. Within this time, the Ranger will be responsible for moving the speed sensor to different locations. This will include the speed sensor being changed from location to location. The Ranger will also be present when the Parish Council gets the training for the new speed sensor. Chairman to inform the Clerk when the posts have been installed so she can arrange a date that is mutually convenient for all attending the training of the speed sensor installation.

Action: Chairman, Cllr. Denley/Clerk

6. Dog Bin for Westport: The Clerk reported that she'd been in discussions with SSDC regarding the possibility of having a dog bin at Westport. She was informed that SSDC have had to put a hold on any additional bins at present as they've been inundated with bin requests from throughout the district, and they are struggling with the man power to empty them. However, after further talks the SSDC localities department came out to Westport and started the process to see if there was a need for a bin. They also looked at prospective areas a bin could be positioned in for maximum use. The Clerk was waiting for a decision as to whether they would allow Westport to have one. Clerk will chase. **Action: Clerk**

21/831 PLANNING:

21/831/a Matters for report:

Nothing to report

21/831/b Decisions Notified:

Nothing to report



21/831/c Applications for consideration.

APPEAL IN RESPECT OF APPLICATION DECISION REFERENCE: 21/00181/S73A

Proposal: Application to vary condition 2 (approved plans) of planning approval 18/02149/FUL and as amended 19/02771/S73 to allow a minor increase in roof height, to ensure buildability and a continuous parapet.

Location: Land Adjacent Burgum Westport Langport TA10 0BH

The Chairman asked all Parish Councillors if they still objected to this planning application. All Parish Councillors informed the Chair that they all were totally against the planning application for the same reasons as before (these reasons can be viewed on the SSDC website under planning (and then enter the planning number). County Councillor Dance suggested that The Parish Council speak to a planning consultant, which The Chairman will do. The Chairman and the Clerk will write to The Planning Inspectorate at Bristol who will be dealing with the appeal and reiterate the Parish Council's reasons why they still object to this planning application.

Action: Chairman, Cllr. Denley/Clerk

21/832 FINANCE:

21/832a Matters for report:

1. End of 2nd quarter:

Current account £ 6,524.04

Reserve account £ 31,652.27

£ 38,176.31

There was 1 chq

outstanding £ 147.43

Total as cash book £ 38,028.88



The accounts and bank reconciliation had been emailed to all the Parish Councillors before the meeting.

The accounts were taken by Cllr. Maidment who will deliver them to the internal auditor, Mr Clarke, for checking and sign off.

2. Budget for 2022/23 – sign off

All Parish Councillors had been emailed the proposed budget for 2022/23 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 2022/23 including costs for the Rangers Scheme (maintenance to both villages) and administration. However, more importantly she discussed that in less than 18 months, the Parish will be under a Unitary Council. It is very likely The Parish Council will be responsible/charged for, all of the maintenance of both villages – for example, verge cutting, drains, pot holes, dog bin emptying, plus an increase in admin (including elections and all other admin that SSDC currently do). Clerks will likely be responsible for all of the admin that SSDC currently do as District Councils will be abolished. The Parish Council will also need to budget for Clerks extra hours to allow all the extra work to be completed. Both The Chairman and the Clerk, felt it was necessary to start planning now and adding something into the precept for 22/23 to prepare for the additional costs to all of this, instead of having to make one larger increase to the precept in 2023/24.

The Chairman proposed an increase to the precept by £3,000.00 this year and then see where we are for 23/24 (by the time we come to setting the budget and precept for 23/24 we will have more of an idea to what we will be responsible for and the related charges). It would be better to raise the precept gradually over the next two years rather than one big rise in 23/24.

It was agreed that the precept that will be applied for in 2022/23, will be: £16,500.00.

Action: Clerk

Proposed: Cllr. Maidment

Seconded: Cllr. Meecham

Agreed unanimously.

21/832/b Matters for Resolution:

The charge for holding the Parish Council meetings in the village hall committee room for the next year will be £12.00 per session. The Clerk and Cllr Masters asked if this could be an annual payment.

A resolution was made to accept this monthly rental charge.

Proposed: Cllr. Denley

Seconded: Cllr. Masters

Agreed unanimously.



21/832/c Cheques Payable:

Louise Brooks	Salary for Sept 2021	£ 384.13	chq no: 548
HMRC	PAYE payment for Sept 2021	£ 96.00	chq no: 549
Louise Brooks	Expenses & Home office allowance Sept 2021	£ 40.00	chq no: 550
Cox & Co	Payroll expenses Oct/Nov/Dec 21	£ 90.00	chq no: 551
M Von Tyszka	September - Recreation ground maintenance 3 x mowing @ £110 per session plus trim hedge	£ 360.00	chq no: 552
M Von Tyszka	September- Churchyard mowing x 2 @ £100.00 per session	£ 200.00	chq no: 553
Squiggle Graphics	Parish Website hosting annual renewal	£ 240.00	Chq no: 554

Proposed: Cllr. Masters

Seconded: Cllr. Denley

Agreed unanimously

21/833 CORRESPONDENCE:

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

The Clerk reported that an email had been received and forwarded to all the Parish Councillors, from Energy Drop Zone Ltd, regarding Key West Cottage at Westport. This was in response to complaints of noise and disturbances from residents in Westport, which had been previously reported in the July 2021 minutes (Ref 21/809/a); the complaints received had been in regard to the holiday let. The email was responded to by the Chairman, Cllr Denley.

21/834 FOOTPATHS:

Proposed diversion of footpath L 9/22, Hambridge:

Cllr Maidment reported that Hambridge Farm have now signed the consent to move the footpath and as soon as the Rec Trust and Cllr. Denley have both signed their part, the application could then be submitted. Councillor Maidment to get the outstanding signatures and send in the application.


Action: Cllr. Maidment

21/835 MEMBERS' REPORTS/ITEMS FOR NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:

Items for the next meeting: Any of the above which require follow-ups from this meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10th November at 7.30pm in the village hall.



10/11/21.