

MINUTES OF HAMBRIDGE AND WESTPORT PARISH COUNCIL
MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14th DECEMBER 2022
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, HAMBRIDGE VILLAGE HALL

22/957 PRESENT:

Cllr. S. Denley (Chairman), Cllr. P. Masters (Vice Chair), Cllr. R Maidment, Cllr. R Meecham, Cllr G. Hill, M. Stanton (District Councillor), Mr. A Dance (County Councillor), J. Roundell-Green (County Councillor) & Mrs. L. Brooks (Clerk). There was 1 member of the public present.

22/958 APOLOGIES:

No apologies received

22/959 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Nothing to report

22/960 MINUTES:

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

Proposed: Cllr. Masters

Seconded: Cllr. Meecham

Agreed unanimously.

22/961 PUBLIC TIME

22/961/a Public Time:

A MOP discussed the newsletter which had just been published and delivered. The MOP is now the new editor. The Parish Council thanked her for taking the task on.

A MOP reminded the Chair that he still had to make contact with the MOP who offered the trees for planting at the November meeting.

Action: Clerk

22/961/b District Councillor:

District Councillor Stanton was present at the meeting. He had sent a report beforehand which had been circulated, which included an update to the phosphate situation (see below):

Planning and Phosphates update: SSDC's District Executive approved on 3rd November a process for planning to support the release of phosphate credits within the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar catchment, to begin to unlock the more than 360 planning applications, related to 5,000 dwellings, that are currently blocked by Natural England's August 2020 imposition of a moratorium.

At the time of writing, Wessex Water/EnTrade's proposed Catchment Market for phosphate credits appears still not to be up and running. However, some developers and planning applicants have made or are making direct arrangements with landowners to provide phosphate mitigation land use.

Details of the proposals are on the SSDC website within the agenda and papers for the District Executive meeting on 3rd November.

There is increasing recognition that a credits market doesn't solve the problem, merely moves it elsewhere, and takes farmland out of food production. SSDC has therefore been campaigning for government action at district and county level.

The government has now legislated to require water companies to install phosphate-stripping kit in all their sewage works by 2030, which is rather distant. I understand that five of the smaller sewage works (water treatment plants) which discharge into the River Parrett are likely to be upgraded in this way within the next couple of years; the remainder will wait.

22/961/c County Councillor:

County Councillors Adam Dance and Jo Roundell Green was present and discussed the financial position at County. All Councils have been hit by the national and international financial crisis. Costs have gone up - energy, food, pay etc. - to a disproportionate extent. This is making the annual budgeting process a real challenge, not least because the budget has to be for the new unitary Somerset Council, which comes into existence on 1st April 2023, bringing together the activities and budgets of all five predecessor councils. They were still unable to advise the Parish Council on what services they would be responsible for from April 23.

22/961/d P.C.S.O. Report:

Nothing to report

22/962 MATTERS ARISING

1. Newsletter: The newsletter now has a new editor and the first edition has been printed and delivered to all the households in Hambridge and Westport
2. Post office Outreach – any public interest? There has been no public interest with having a Post Office outreach in the village one afternoon a week. Chairman to inform Crewkerne Post Office.

Action: Chairman

3. PCSO – attending future PC meetings? Chairman to email PCSO to ask for attendance. **Action: Chairman**

22/963 PLANNING:

22/9463a Matters for report:

Nothing to report

22/963/b Decisions Notified: The Clerk had been notified on the following –

Nothing to report

22/963/c Applications for consideration.

Nothing to report

22/964 FINANCE:

22/964/a Matters for report

Nothing to report

22/964/b Matters for Resolution

Budget sign off for 2023-24

The Parish Council had still not been informed by SCC on what extra services they will be accountable for from April 2023. County Councillor Dance had no information either. The Clerk has been told some services will become the responsibility of the Parish Council and to prepare for the worst case scenario. The Parish Council had been advised to raise the precept by at least the rate of inflation (currently at 10%) to prepare for this. A resolution was made to raise the precept by 10% making it £ 18,150.00.

Proposed: Cllr. Masters

Seconded: Cllr. Meecham

Agreed unanimously.

22/964/c Cheques Payable:

All paid via Unity Trust Bank

Louise Brooks	Salary – Nov 2022(Plus back-pay from April for National pay rise)	£	656.92
HMRC	NI & PAYE October 2022	£	154.25
Louise Brooks	Expenses & home office Allowance – October 22	£	40.00
M Von Tyszka	Churchyard maintenance – hedge cutting & remove waste	£	510.00
M Von Tyszka	Recreation ground maintenance cut front hedge by hall + 1 x mow	£	140.00
SSDC	Ranger's hours	£	384.14
Simon Denley	2 x sets of defib replacement pads	£	127.18

Proposed: Cllr. Masters

Seconded: Cllr. Maidment

Agreed unanimously.

22/965 CORRESPONDENCE:

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

22/966 FOOTPATHS:

Clerk reported that any footpath issues to be reported straight to SCC Rights of Way Officer.

22/967 MEMBERS' REPORTS/ITEMS FOR NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:

Items for next Agenda:

Trees

PCSO

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.45pm

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 11th January 2023 at 7.30 pm in the village hall.