

**MINUTES OF HAMBRIDGE AND WESTPORT PARISH COUNCIL**  
**MONTHLY MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2024**  
**IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, HAMBRIDGE VILLAGE HALL**

**24/1197 PRESENT:**

Cllr. S. Denley (Chairman), Cllr. R Meecham (Vice-Chair), Cllr. P. Masters, Cllr. R Maidment, Cllr G. Hill, Cllr. J. Roundell-Greene (Unitary Councillor) & Mrs. L. Brooks (Clerk). There were no members of the public present.

**24/1198 APOLOGIES:**

Nothing to report

**24/1199 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

Nothing to report.

**24/1200 MINUTES:**

The Minutes from the October meeting had been circulated. They were agreed as being an accurate account of the meeting and signed.

Proposed: Cllr. Meecham

Seconded: Cllr. Masters

Agreed unanimously.

**24/1201 PUBLIC TIME**

**24/1201/a Public Time:**

Nothing to report

**24/1201/b Unitary Councillor report:**

Unitary Councillor Jo Roundell-Greene discussed all the consultations that were on-going including those related to child and adult social care, which is a statutory service. She talked about the costs involved with both. She also asked for the planning breach details which she would chase again for the Parish Council.

**24/1201/c P.C.S.O. Report:**

Nothing to report.

**24/1202 MATTERS ARISING**

**24/1202/a Jobs for village maintenance ranger**

Nothing to report

**24/1202/b Local Plan**

The Parish Council discussed the Local Plan consultation. The clerk will now respond on behalf of the parish council.

**Action: Clerk**

**24/1202/c Consultation on division boundaries for Somerset Council**

The Parish Councillors will all respond individually to this consultation.

**24/1202/d Clerk's report**

The clerk gave a report on the first clerks meeting between several neighbouring clerks. The purpose of coming together is not only to form an active Clerks group between local parishes where information/contacts and cost of services could be shared, to enable greater efficiency at better costs and to give us greater buying powers, but to also support and offer advice to each other on subjects that others might have better knowledge on. It was hoped that forming a group would give parishes a stronger voice on local matters, including planning and highways.

**24/1202/e Railings around the war memorial**

This will now be looked at early next year, as the weather is not ideal for that type of work.

**24/1202/f Winter preparation**

Cllr Maidment requested it to be minuted that sandbags are kept at Clr Masters property at Manor Farm. Cllr Master contact details are available on both notice boards. Road salt/grit containers are situated in both Hambridge and Westport for members of the public to distribute the salt/grit onto the roads as and when necessary.

**24/1203 PLANNING:**

**24/1203a Matters for report:**

Planning breaches: Clerk to let Cllr Roundell Green have all the details to chase

**24/1203/b Decisions Notified:**

Nothing to report.

**24/1203/c Applications for consideration.**

Nothing to report.

**24/1204 FINANCE:**

**24/1204/a Matters for report**

1. Request from HWRT for annual grant (£1,000): The clerk will arrange direct transfer payment for the annual £1,000 grant for the HWRT.
2. Set up of second bank account: The Parish Councillors all signed the application form to enable the clerk to set up a second bank account. **Action: Clerk**
3. Budget – monthly update: The clerk gave a monthly update to the Parish Council
4. Draft Budget for 2025-26: The Clerk/RFO delivered the draft budget to the Parish Council. She had prepared explanatory notes to go alongside the draft budget to help explain reasons behind the increases. She discussed the need to build reserves for future services and repairs to highways that wouldn't be covered under statutory services. The £5,000 that was added to the budget for 24-25 which had not been used would be ringfenced and saved for that purpose. A further £3,500.00 would be added to the budget for 2025-26, again to cover for highways related issues, as any highways repairs would be huge, if required. She explained they had to prepare for the unknown as information from SC was still very vague. The clerk had received notification from the Rights of Way Officer for Hambridge and Westport explaining that they will be reduced to four people, with one person covering each of the former districts and that they would be passing on the responsibility of many services to the parish council to fund from next year as Somerset Council will likely only be able to address footpath issues that are life-threatening (typically bridge-related) due to limited resources in officer time and funds. Dog and litter bin collections would need to be paid for from April and therefore also added to the budget. Grit would need to be paid for from April too. The clerk explained that they had received a letter from the CEO of SC explaining that all PCs need to be prepared to take on more services. The budget will not be signed off until the December meeting and the clerk/RFO will keep the parish council updated of any further changes.

**24/1204/b Matters for Resolution**

Reserves Policy: A reserves policy for the Parish Council was agreed and signed. Clerk will add this to other policies on the website. **Action: Clerk**

Proposed: Cllr. Masters

Seconded: Cllr. Maidment

Agreed unanimously.

**24/1204/c Cheques Payable:**

All paid via Unity Trust Bank – direct online transfer.

PAYMENTS DUE			
Louise Brooks	Democratic services – October 2024	£	690.18
HMRC	Employee NI & PAYE & Employer NI to pay – October 24	£	7.20
Louise Brooks	Home Office Allowance – October 2024 - Gov set	£	26.00
Louise Brooks	October Office supplies – Includes paper, ink and other office consumables, postage.	£	15.40
Max Von Tyszka	Oct Village maintenance ranger work – hedge at rec/village hall	£	45.00
Max Von Tyszka	Churchyard maintenance -October 24 - 1 cut	£	120.00
SLCC	Society of Local Council Clerks – annual membership	£	120.00
Royal British Legion	Wreath for War Memorial for Remembrance Sunday	£	25.00
HWRT	Annual grant	£	1,000.00

Proposed: Cllr. Masters

Seconded: Cllr. Meecham

Agreed unanimously.

**24/1205 CORRESPONDENCE:**

The Clerk reported that all correspondence received had been forwarded to the Parish Councillors.

**24/1206 FOOTPATHS:**

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

**24/1207 MEMBERS' REPORTS/ITEMS FOR NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:**

Nothing to report

**24/1208 Items for next Agenda:**

Nothing to add

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.55pm

**The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER at 7.30 pm in the village hall.**