

EXMOOR PARISH COUNCIL DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Thursday 28th July 2022 7.30pm at The Old School, Simonsbath

Present: Parish Councillors – F Schott (Chair) FS, A Chapman AC, J Wright JW, Charles O'Connor CO, County Cllr F Nicholson FN, Clerk R Tomalin, ENPA Historic Buildings Officer Tom Thurlow TT
Members of the public: One

The meeting started at 7.30pm.

The agenda items were taken out of order so that TT could outline ENPA's proposal.

62/22 Planning: (iii) Simonsbath Conservation Area proposal – TT the Historic Buildings Officer from ENPA explained the background to and the reasons for the proposal to designate Simonsbath as a Conservation Area. Much of the preliminary work needed was completed as part of the programme to restore White Rock Cottage. Simonsbath has been selected due to its special character and unique history. The proposal covers the whole of the village and includes woods, hedges and trees. Winsford is also being considered for designation.

Permitted development rights are already more restricted as Simonsbath is in the national park, designation as a conservation area will add two further constraints:

1. Works to trees/hedgerows – six weeks notice will need to be given to ENPA before any work can be carried out. There are some exemptions depending on the size and type of the tree/hedge. However, this would affect work in Ashcombe Gardens but an application can be entered covering multiple trees.
2. Planning permission will be required for demolition of buildings or walls that exceed a certain size in order to preserve the buildings or features which contribute to the character of the area

The next steps are to launch a six week public consultation around the end of August. All households/landowners will receive a letter and be invited to a public meeting where they can review the proposal and ask questions. Documents will also be available online & left in a suitable place in the village. Designation as a conservation area should not add any complexity to planning applications or building maintenance (e.g replacing roof tiles/windows), and may open up opportunities to apply for grants.

TT left the meeting at 7.50pm, the member of the public left the meeting at 7.54pm.

56/22 Questions from the public: None

57/22 Apologies for Absence: Cllr T Gowlland, District & County Cllr S Pugsley

58/22 Declarations of notifiable interest: None

59/22 Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting held on 19/05/2022 These were proposed by FS and seconded by JW as a true and correct record of what took place and all agreed and the Chair signed.

60/22 Matters arising from the minutes of 19/05/2022 – defib update see 67/22

61/22 District and County Council reports: FN noted that the unitary government changes were progressing and it was important to show that the LCN pilot projects were working well, and the Highways pilot on Exmoor had resulted in much better discussions. The Highways Steward is in place and is doing well; responding timely to situations. A new form has been created for the reporting of issues, this helps the steward with work planning and does not mean he is spending time answering the phone. Issues such as extra gully clearing and a better way of communicating diversions & closures with the parishes was being worked on.

62/22 Planning: (i) 6/14/22/104 HORSEN FARM, SIMONSBATH, MINEHEAD, TA24 7LG Proposed erection of Agricultural building (36.5m x 33.5m). Retrospective. The Cllrs supported the application noting that adequate storage facilities were necessary for a working farm given the inclement weather and increasing thefts. The livestock shed related well to the existing farm buildings and would make animal husbandry much easier. Furthermore the farm is well out of sight of residents and visitors.

(ii) 6/14/22/105 Picked Stones Farm, SIMONSBATH, MINEHEAD, Somerset, TA24 7LA Proposed change of use of agricultural land for the siting of a mobile shepherds hut for use as holiday accommodation, together with, the continued siting of a wooden shed incorporating welfare facilities. Retrospective. The Cllrs supported the application noting that the shepherds hut and welfare shed were sympathetic to the location and just outside the curtilage of the property. The positioning within the glade of trees was well thought out and accommodation such as this encourages tourism to the area which is very important for local businesses.

63/22 Finance Report: (i) Bank Reconciliation – current balance £9,476.27 - cheques cleared since last meeting: Chq 288 £103 Spanglefish website, Chq 289 £10 Withypool & Hawkridge PC reimbursement of clerk training; Chq 290 £148.25 BHIB insurance, Chq 292 £194.10 R Tomalin Clerks Pay & Expenses Apr – June 22, Chq 293 £44.00 HMRC PAYE. Cheques issued but not yet cleared Chq 291 £30 British Red Cross. For the minutes Clerk noted the following cheque numbers which were approved at the May meeting but were issued after the minutes had been published: Donation as requested by Internal Auditor **British Red Cross Chq 291 £30**; Clerks Pay & Expenses Apr – June 22 **R Tomalin Chq 292 £194.10**; PAYE Apr-June 22 **HMRC Chq 293 £44.00**.

(ii) Invoices for July – none (iii) Bank mandate - Clerk explained that the bank mandate had been submitted but as all proposed signatories had not completed the necessary forms in the required time period it would need to be submitted again.

64/22 Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, GDPR, Financial Regulations & Aims and Objectives:

The Cllrs agreed to adopt the existing GDPR, Aims & Objectives (with the deletion of the last sentence of paragraph (e) Business Continuity) and Financial Regulations (all previously circulated). The Cllrs also agreed to adopt the most recent Standing Orders published by NALC (previously circulated) but to maintain the current version of Sections 18 & 19 as these had been amended to be more relevant to the PC. The Clerk explained that the Local Government Association (LGA) have put together a new Code of Conduct (previously circulated) which has been reviewed by SALC & the Monitoring Officers from the District Councils. The Cllrs agreed to adopt the new Code of Conduct. Clerk has asked the Monitoring Officer at SWT to provide Code of Conduct training for W&H PC so hopefully both parishes can join together, along with possibly Winsford and Exford.

65/22 Highways: The speed of cars on the approach to the village was raised. FN noted that grants were available under the Highways LCN for small scale improvement projects, the PC could possibly apply for a speed indicator device similar to the one recently installed in Exford.

66/22 Village parking Updates on parking in the village – it was noted that since the bollards have been installed parking has moved to around the sawmill and bridge. FS has passed on the views of the PC with regard to the Small Improvement Scheme (SIS) and is waiting for revised plans, he will chase up. It was noted the SIS needs to tie in with the Highways pilot. ENPA are planning to implement parking charges at Ashcombe Gardens car park, all Cllrs felt this would make the parking situation worse and would discourage people from using White Rock Cottage as a meeting venue and volunteers in the gardens. A permit system needs to be in place. FS to follow up with Rob Wilson-North and also raise again the sawmill car park which appears to have dropped down the priority list. CO mentioned the SWT grant scheme for electric vehicle charging points, upto £1500 is available in match funding.

67/22 Parish Maintenance – Cllrs raised the problem of the rubbish building up above the bridge which is a flood risk, this needs to be cleared. The river bank has also become very overgrown and the pool is no longer visible. The Cllrs discussed a possible location for the defib and noted that many parishes use the telephone box, however by the noticeboard seems to be an appropriate place. Clerk & FS to look at defib costs; no funding is currently available so it is likely the excess precept will need to be used. The telephone box was also discussed as it is not working, this needs to be reported every day. There was concern that the phone box would be removed but FN explained that the PC would be informed if it was placed on the removal list and it could not be removed if there is insufficient mobile signal.

68/22 Correspondence – all correspondence has been forwarded to Cllrs.

69/22 Report from Simonsbath & Exmoor Heritage Trust – a meeting is due to take place soon. There has been an enquiry from a Forest School and discussions of a Winter/Christmas Craft Fair are in the early stages.

70/22 Chairman's Notices – none

71/22 Items for next Agenda – Simonsbath Conservation Area proposal

72/22 Date and time of next meeting: 29th September 2022. As the November meeting clashes with the Exmoor Panel meeting the Cllrs agreed the meeting will take place one week later on Thursday 1st December

Future meeting dates – tbc

Thursday 1st December 2022

Thursday 26th January 2023

Thursday 30th March 2023

Thursday 25th May 2023

Bus Forum – CO noted he had attended the recent bus forum. Devon buses are better than Somerset buses and the information available about the service is also much better. The attendees were advised to raise this with their County Cllrs – noted by FN.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.58pm

Signed.....Date.....