

**WITHYPOOL AND HAWKRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL Draft Minutes**  
**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021 7.30pm at Withypool Village Hall**

**Present: Parish Councillors:** A Howard – AH (Chair), K Branfield - KB, A Collins - AC, T Lloyd - TL, P Soltau - PS, W Lock - WL; **SW&T Cllr** S Pugsley – SP (for part of meeting); **Clerk** R Tomalin; **Public** – none

**Abbreviations:** ENPA – Exmoor National Park; SW&T - Somerset West and Taunton District Council; SCC – Somerset County Council;

**For any Road defects** – please go to the SCC Road Defect Website -

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-problem-on-the-road/>

**75/21 Questions from the public** – none.

The meeting started at 7.36pm. SP joined for part of the meeting so the agenda items were taken out of turn.

**76/21 Apologies of Absence** - Cllr J Down - JD, Somerset County Council Cllr F Nicholson - FN

**77/21 Declarations of notifiable interests** None

**78/21 Approval of the Minutes** of the previous meeting on 13/07/2021 - proposed by AC and 2<sup>nd</sup> by TL and all Approved. Chair then signed the minutes.

**79/21 Matters arising from the Minutes** of 13/07/2021: (i) **61/21** Overhanging Hedges - the hedge has now been cut on one side of the road but the other side is impacting motorists visibility and needs trimming **Action: Clerk to write to homeowner to request hedge is cut.** (ii) **64/21** – Highways issues – all issues reported by Clerk but not yet fixed. (iii) **65/21** Website Upgrade – Clerk circulated statistics and benefits of upgrading the website. After discussing the practicalities of including and updating more information on the website the Cllrs decided that there would not be a substantial benefit particularly as other parties such as the Exmoor Hill Farming Network and the parish magazine publish community news and activities. (iv) **67/21** Parish Flower Bed Wall – this has been inspected by the Cllrs and agreed to leave it for now. PS reported that Steve Blackmore would be fixing the Parish Garden Room wall so he could have a look and offer advice. (v) **69/21** Empty Property Riverside – this has been advertised on the Homefinder website.

**80/21 COVID 19 for the parish update:** Noted that all restrictions have now been lifted

**82/21 Highways:** (i) Highways Meeting – Chair & AC met with SP, FN & representatives from the new Somerset Council to discuss local highways issues. As part of a pilot for the new unitary authority a Local Community Network (LCN) will be set up so that all issues are reported to one person & they will then pass onto the appropriate department. This pilot scheme should be up and running next year. Issues such as cattle grids, gritting and better communication with Devon Highways were raised and the response was positive. (ii) WL noted that David Bawden had done a great job trimming the hedges at Pit Corner.

SP joined the meeting during the discussion under 82/21 at 19.57pm.

**81/21 Report by the County & District Councillors:** (i) One Somerset - SP noted that the Secretary of State has decided a single unitary authority is the way forward for Somerset. This will allow more local management of services, although there is a lot of work to be done to redraw the electoral boundaries without causing electoral inequality. (ii) Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) meeting – several of the Chairs from the local parish councils met with the PCC to highlight local issues such as

the visibility of police, finding the right person to report crime to and responsiveness to local crime. The PCC was willing to listen and will be attending a Panel meeting in future. (iii) Broadband Meeting – held on 19<sup>th</sup> August was very well attended with a large number of people signing up. An application will be made this Autumn.

**84/21 Planning:** 6/9/21/125 Land at Liscombe Farm, Liscombe, Dulverton, TA22 9QA, Proposed removal of existing 8m tower and replace with 20m extendable lattice tower in new location, together with installation of associated equipment and cabling including 3 no. 17.5m EAS antennae, 4 no. cabinets, 2 no. generators, a 1.2m diameter pole mounted VSAT dish and 2 no. electricity meter cabinets, all enclosed within a 2.2m high closed boarded timber fence.

<https://planning.agileapplications.co.uk/exmoor/application-details/22566>

The Cllrs supported the above proposal with the assurance that the mast will be made available to other mobile network providers to ensure the local area is fully covered. The Cllrs noted that while it is essential that the emergency services are able to communicate effectively, it is also critical that the public has sufficient mobile coverage to be able to call for assistance when required.

SP left the meeting.

**83/21 Finance report:** (i) Bank Reconciliation £11,164.08 (includes receipt of annual rent for Plots B & E and expenses of Clerk's Pay and Exp Q2 21 and defib service (Chq520 finally cleared). One cheque for the SALC training & affiliation fee remains uncleared (Chq 533) (ii) Approval of Invoices: **Spanglefish Website Renewal £29.95 Chq 534**; Clerks Pay and Exp Q3 21 **R Tomalin £295.42 Chq 536**; PAYE due to **HMRC £66.20 Chq 535** – all AGREED, Clerk will organise signing of cheques. (iii) Bank account authorisation – Clerk reported that the banking mandate could not be updated until the July minutes (authorising the removal of the outgoing clerk & addition of the incoming clerk) had been signed by the Chair. (iv) Website upgrade – decision noted in 79/21

**85/21 Parish Gardens:** Annual rent has been received for Plots B & E.

**86/21 Parish Maintenance:** (i) Grit Bins – AC & TL provided an update on the level of salt in the grit bins. Highways have requested information by 30<sup>th</sup> Sept so they can plan refilling. **Action: Clerk to update information and send to Highways** (ii) Dog Litter Bin – Chair raised the issue that the public toilets were recently blocked due to several dog litter bags. The PC discussed whether a dog litter bin would be appropriate for the village and agreed it was a problem which was likely to get worse **Action: Clerk to enquire with Timberscombe and Winsford PC Clerks as to costs of emptying**

**87/21 Chairman's Notices:** Mare Pool re-birth – Jeremy Davies has once again made a tremendous effort to restore signposts which have been damaged. **Action: Clerk to draft thank you note from PC expressing their gratitude for his continuing work, run draft past Chair & KB**

**88/21 Correspondence:** (i) Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme – the Chair reported that Mark Thomasin-Foster (MT-F) is applying for a grant to remove the island below the bridge. MT-F will speak to the landowners. The PC has noted his application and intended actions. (ii) Future Parish Elections – the Clerk reported that SALC was seeking views regarding the parish council elections which are due to be held in May 2023. These are usually held at the same time as the district council elections, thus creating a cost saving. Following the decision to create a unitary authority the elections will now likely to be held in May 2022. The PC agreed that it was better to stay in line with the district council elections. **Action: Clerk to respond to SALC with the PC views.** (iii) National Lottery Community Fund – grants available for communities to take action on climate

change. Cllrs discussed the possibility of electric charging points or a projector for the village halls.

**Action: Clerk to re-circulate email**

**89/21 Report from representatives of other groups:**

- Withypool Village Hall – new shed is ready to go, planning to improve the disabled access but first need to address water coming across the road
- Hawkridge Village Hall – Hawkridge revel was very well supported
- Henry Leigh Trust – applications have been received, meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> September to review and award grants
- Exmoor Panel – meeting delayed from 7<sup>th</sup> September, will now be 21<sup>st</sup> September at Exford Memorial Hall
- Consultative & Parish Forum – meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September

**90/21 Parish Community** including the social media page update, events by other groups not listed in 89/21: nothing to report

**91/21 Items for November 2021 agenda:** dog litter bin, precept, broadband update, Kitridge Lane mast

**92/21 Date and time of next meeting:** 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 6.30pm at Hawkridge Village Hall

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.12pm

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