

**WITHYPOOL AND HAWKRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL Draft Minutes**  
**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 6.30pm at Hawkridge 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); **Somerset County Council Cllr** F Nicholson (for part of meeting) – FN; **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/>

**93/21 Questions from the public** – none.

The meeting started at 6.33pm.

**94/21 Apologies of Absence** - Cllr J Down - JD

**95/21 Declarations of notifiable interests:** None

**96/21 Approval of the Minutes** of the previous meeting on 14/09/2021 - proposed by AC and 2<sup>nd</sup> by TL and all Approved. Chair then signed the minutes.

WL joined the meeting at 6.35pm while the minutes were being reviewed under **96/21**.

**97/21 Matters arising from the Minutes** of 14/09/2021: (i) **61/21** Overhanging Hedges – Clerk has written to the homeowner who has agreed to cut the hedge, Chair has also spoken to him. (ii) **86/21** Grit bins – Clerk has submitted the grit bin review to Highways and noted a couple of bins have gone missing. Cllrs decided not to purchase new ones but asked whether salt bags could be delivered instead. **Action: Clerk to ask Highways** (iii) **86/21** Dog Litter Bin – Clerk circulated costs of installing and emptying a dog litter bin. Cllrs decided to review in the Spring when the problem was likely to start again. (iv) **87/21** Thank you Note – Clerk reported that a thank you note had been sent to Jeremy Davies as requested by the Cllrs to thank him for his continued work on the signposts. (v) **88/21** Parish Council Elections – Clerk reported that the majority of parish councils had voted to keep the parish council elections in line with district elections (see **99/21** for district election update). (vi) **88/21** National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) Together for our Planet – Clerk updated the Cllrs with the response from the NLCF regarding electric charging points. Cllrs decided that while funding was not available under this particular scheme it was worthwhile exploring further as it would future-proof the village. It was noted that charging points are available at Wheddon Cross, Dulverton and Brushford. Siting of the points, views of villagers, cabling requirements, funding options will all need to be investigated further.

PS joined the meeting at 6.41pm while the dog litter bins were being discussed under **97/21** (iii).

**98/21 COVID 19 for the parish update:** Agreed to remove from the agenda assuming Covid measures are not re-introduced

**99/21 Report by the County & District Councillors:** (i) One Somerset - FN noted that the proposed name for the new council is Somerset Council and if elections go ahead in 2022 there would be doubling up (110 members in 55 wards based on existing county divisions). SP added that draft text had been received for the Somerset Structural Changes Order but timing was now very tight to meet the legislative timetable to allow sufficient time for preparations to be made for May 2022. We should know fairly soon whether the May 2022 elections will go ahead or be postponed to May

2023. (iii) Local Community Network (LCN) – FN reported that discussions were progressing with the parishes with some keen to have more influencing power but others thinking it may be more work. The pilot on Exmoor focuses on Highways but in theory LCNs could deal with anything where decision making can be devolved. LCNs may be able to influence the choice of contractors – an example being previous repair work on Portford Bridge which was carried out by contractors from outside the area. The Cllrs discussed the most recent accident at Portford Bridge, the time taken to repair the bridge because of English Heritage requirements and bidding process to do the work. FN said it should be raised at the next Panel meeting. (iv) January Panel meeting – attendees should include Alyn Jones with a further update on the LCN progress and the Police & Crime Commissioner - drink driving and the level of police presence will be raised (v) Kitridge Lane Mast – this will not be switched on until the mast at Winsford is ready, although the original site has now been granted planning permission after appeal it is noted that the planning application for the alternative site has not yet been withdrawn (vi) Broadband Progress – an application to join the Gigabit Voucher Scheme will be submitted shortly to OpenReach, the majority of households have expressed an interest.

**100/21 Highways:** (i) The Cllrs raised the following issues; drains blocked at Blake Way, Slade Bridge cattle grid, above Foxcombe between Withypool Post and Willingford, Anstey Hill, the cattle grid sign is missing at Greystone Gate and the road is subsiding outside Withypool Village Hall (WVH) and there is a small pot hole above WVH. **Action: Clerk to report on Somerset Highways website.** FN agreed to follow up on the Slade Bridge issue as Devon Highways did some work to alleviate the problem but it persists as the inlet pipe is larger than the exit pipe. (ii) The Cllrs discussed the recent vandalism across Exmoor. A number plate recognition camera was discussed and FN reported that the one in Wheddon Cross had been funded by the police but that was some time ago. SP suggested the Chair talk to Eric Norman from The Rest & Be Thankful Inn. (iii) Thefts from Outbuildings – the Cllrs noted several properties had their outbuildings broken into recently with new garden equipment appearing to be the target. Raise at the next Panel meeting.

FN left the meeting at 7.24pm after the discussion about vandalism under **100/21** (ii).

**101/21 Finance report:** (i) Bank Reconciliation £10,623.87 includes cheques cleared for Clerk's Pay and Exp June-Aug 21, PAYE to HMRC June-Aug 21, Spanglefish Website renewal and SALC training & affiliation fee (ii) Approval of Invoices: Clerks Pay and Exp Sept-Nov 21 **R Tomalin £299.01 Chq 537;** PAYE due to **HMRC £66.20 Chq 538** – all AGREED, Clerk will organise signing of cheques nearer December due date. (iii) Precept – Clerk presented the income and expenditure for the previous financial year and current financial year to assist Cllrs with making their decision on the precept required for 2022-23. SP noted that there may be an election in 2022 which could be a significant expense. The Cllrs decided to keep the precept the same as the current year at £3,500 noting that the PC had a surplus in the bank account to cover unforeseen expenses and possible election costs. The Chair and Clerk then signed the Precept form. **Action: Clerk to submit completed precept form.**

**102/21 Planning:** 6/42/21/105 HIND HOUSE, HAWKRIDGE, DULVERTON, TA22 9QW Proposed rebuilding and cladding of barn, together with reinstating doors and windows and reroofing with traditional slate roof. Part Retrospective.

<https://planning.agileapplications.co.uk/exmoor/application-details/22680>

The Cllrs supported the above application and appreciated the efforts being made to preserve and prolong the life of the building rather than let it fall down. A slate roof would be preferable to the

current corrugated tin and the Cllrs were pleased that natural materials in keeping with the Exmoor area are being used in its restoration.

**103/21 Parish Gardens:** The Cllrs discussed the hedge by Withypool Village Hall car park and whether it was the responsibility of the tenants of Plot E. KB agreed to deal with the hedge on the car park side.

SP left the meeting at 7.40pm.

**104/21 Parish Maintenance:** (i) Church Room Wall – this will shortly be repaired by Steve Blackmore and will be paid for by the church

**105/21 Chairman’s Notices:** Recent Thefts from Outbuildings – discussed under 100/21

**106/21 Correspondence:** all correspondence previously circulated

**107/21 Report from representatives of other groups:**

- Withypool Village Hall – no meeting, new shed has been installed, disabled access has been upgraded, ditch has been dug to drain water away from the building
- Hawkridge Village Hall – no meeting
- Henry Leigh Trust – 16 applications received for grants. Correspondence received from Lyn Fisher requesting W&H PC nominate a Trustee as David Bawden’s 4 year term has come to an end. All Cllrs nominated David again. **Action: Clerk to write to Lyn to confirm Trustee nomination**
- Exmoor Panel – Exmoor Local Community Network (LCN) discussed and presentation from Local Housing Enabler
- Consultative & Parish Forum – November meeting cancelled, next meeting will be March 22

**108/21 Parish Community** including the social media page update, events by other groups not listed in 89/21: (i) Facebook page – noted that this was useful for updating the community but a number of business adverts had been placed recently (ii) Parking – PS asked if there had been any further progress regarding the possibility of parking in the field (owned by Holmbush) near Barle House (iii) Queens Jubilee – PS is exploring the idea of a tea party in the Jubilee Gardens to celebrate the Queens Jubilee next June. Need to ask J Down about sites for lighting a beacon.

**109/21 Items for January 2022 agenda:** Queens Jubilee celebrations

**110/21 Date and time of next meeting:** 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 6.30pm at Withypool Village Hall

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.03pm

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