

WITHYPOOL AND HAWKRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL Draft Minutes
Tuesday 8th November 2022 6.30pm at Hawkridge Village Hall

Present: Parish Councillors: A Howard – AH (Chair), T Lloyd - TL, A Collins – AC, W Lock – WL, P Soltau - PS, J Soltau – JS, A Morrissey – AM; **SCC & SW&T Cllr** S Pugsley (for part of meeting) – SP; **Clerk** R Tomalin; **Public:** Two

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/>

102/22 Questions from the public: a presentation has been received from Michael Lock (ML) about increasing traffic trying to access Tarr Steps via Hawkridge village - see **111/22 Highways**

The meeting started at 6.33pm.

103/22 Apologies of Absence: SCC Cllr F Nicholson

104/22 Declarations of notifiable interests: See **Planning 108/22**

105/22 Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting on 27/09/2022 - proposed by TL and 2nd by AM and all Approved. Chair then signed the minutes.

106/22 Matters arising from the Minutes of 27/09/2022: (i) the Cyber Crime Presentation from Avon & Somerset Police will take place on 6 December at 7pm at Withypool Village Hall (ii) HGVs on Sparrow Lane – Clerk has written to the residents of the two affected properties and requested a log of incidents is kept.

The agenda was taken out of order while waiting for SP to arrive.

108/22 Planning: AH declared an interest in all planning applications as all applicants use the village shop regularly. AC, TL & AM noted that they own land which borders that of Great Bradley but the proposed development is not near any of these borders. (i) *6/42/22/107 Bradley Pond, The Great Bradley Estate, Withypool, Ta24 7rs Proposed change of use of the land for the siting of 4no. holiday pods around the fishing pond.* The Cllrs discussed the application and agreed to object to the proposal as it was inappropriate development in the open countryside and would be in view of everyone on Winsford Hill. Cllrs noted there would be light and noise pollution, increased traffic and potential scope for further infrastructure development, as well as considerable disruption to wildlife and habitat. (ii) *6/42/22/108 EAST HOLLOWCOMBE, HAWKRIDGE, DULVERTON, TA22 9QL Proposed conversion of 3no redundant barns to form residential accommodation to be used by participants of educational field trips and associated works.* The Cllrs supported the proposed plans. Hawkridge village has already welcomed many such educational field trips undertaken by the applicants and the village hall has been used on these occasions. The Cllrs understand the applicants need to comply with current standards given they have children in their care. It is good to see young people on Exmoor enjoying all it has to offer and we should continue to encourage these educational visits. (iii) *6/42/22/109 EAST HOLLOWCOMBE, HAWKRIDGE, DULVERTON, TA22 9QL Proposed erection of dormer to provide additional head height to existing bedrooms and associated works.* The Cllrs

discussed the application and agreed to support it as they believe the proposed alterations will add to the viability of the property without affecting any other property or providing visual harm.

109/22 Budget/Precept 2023-24: Clerk presented the income and expenditure for the previous year and current financial year, noting that funds needed to be set aside to purchase a new noticeboard for Withypool. Cllrs noted that there may well be a celebration for the Coronation of His Majesty the King next year, however there was money in the bank to cover any unforeseen expenses and the Cllrs did not want to add extra burden to parishioners in an extremely difficult financial environment. TL proposed & AC 2nd the precept remained at £3,500, and all agreed. As the paperwork does not need to be submitted until 20th January, Clerk will not submit until after the January PC meeting.

SP joined the meeting at 7.06pm.

111/22 Highways: (i) Traffic to Tarr Steps via Hawkridge village – Cllrs discussed the very comprehensive information provided by ML and the suggested improvements. Tourists regularly try to access Tarr Steps from the Hawkridge side which is a narrow single track lane with limited passing places. There is no parking on the Hawkridge side but often cars park in the turning space. Despite signs, drivers blindly follow their satnav. The large sign in Hawkridge village is often missed as drivers are looking round the corner. Cllrs discussed amending or moving the sign noting there was a fine balance to find effective signage which was visually in keeping with the surroundings. SP agreed to raise the issue with Highways regarding sign wording and position and whether anything could be done with Satnav technology, he will also ask ENPA to add the postcode for the Tarr Steps car park in their literature about Tarr Steps (ii) Highways Steward – SP explained the Highways Steward had found a new position and recruitment was underway for a new Highways Steward. In the meantime all Highways issues should be reported using the SCC Highways website. Clerk to report the following issues: drain by Bigmoor, Westwater Bridge as well as previous issues report to Highways Steward.

107/22 Report by the County & District Councillors: (i) LCN Consultation – SP noted there had been over 600 responses to the consultation, so any decisions would be delayed by at least a month. Whatever the outcome LCN's needed to function in the community's interests otherwise they would not work. The majority of the parishes who attended the special Exmoor Panel meeting in October were supportive of an LCN which combined the existing Exmoor Panel parishes with the Dunster division – this proposal was put forward to the Consultation as a suitable alternative (ii) Planning – there is a national shortage of planners but ENPA has successfully recruited two new planning officers. 98% of applications do get approved, but the speed and process of assessing more difficult applications needs improvement (iii) Masts for Emergency Communications – Dean Kinsella from ENPA is chasing the Home Office regarding the switching on of the masts erected over recent years to assist with emergency services communications. With the roll out of fibre and the switching off of copper, everyone will be reliant on their mobile phone in a power cut as the landline will no longer work (iv) Emergency Planning – SP hopes that the Civil Contingencies Partnerships who coordinate the Somerset Emergency Community Contacts will be able to join an Exmoor Panel meeting in the near future. Chair noted he is happy to be a community contact as most parishioners go to the shop in times of crisis.

One member of the public left the meeting at 8.01pm.

110/22 Broadband Scheme: The government is expected to increase the value of vouchers in early December which will make the project more feasible. Hopefully this will be announced before a

decision needs to be given to Open Reach in mid December. It was noted Matt Barrow is due to present at the next Consultative Forum on 17th November.

112/22 Finance Report: (i) Bank Reconciliation £11,819.88 at 1 November, this includes cleared Chq 558 Spanglefish (website) £29.95, Chq 550 SALC (election training) £20 and Chq 559 Clerks Pay and Exp June-Aug 22 £346.36 (ii) Approval of Invoices: **Dan Passmore** Grass Cutting & Maintenance **£710 Chq 560**; **SALC** Cllr Training **£50 Chq 561**; Clerks Pay and Exp Sept-Nov 22 **R Tomalin £294.30 Chq 562**; PAYE due to **HMRC £73.60 Chq 563** – all AGREED.

113/22 Parish Gardens: nothing to report

114/22 Parish Maintenance: (i) Withypool Noticeboard – Clerk to investigate if any grants are available

115/22 Chairman’s Notices: None

116/22 Correspondence: previously circulated by Clerk. See **107/22** for Somerset Emergency Community Contacts

117/22 Report from representatives of other groups:

- Withypool Village Hall – no meeting
- Hawkridge Village Hall – no meeting
- Henry Leigh Trust – no meeting, next round of applications due 31 December.
- Exmoor Panel – next meeting 24th November.
- Consultative & Parish Forum – next meeting 17th November 10.30am.

118/22 Parish Community including the social media page update, events by other groups not listed in **117/22:** None

119/22 Items for January 2023 agenda: Finalise Budget/Precept, format of Parish Meeting, project ideas for grant applications

120/22 Date and time of next meeting: the meeting will take place on 10th January at 6.30pm at Withypool Village Hall.

Future Meeting dates - tbc

Tuesday 14th March 2023 – Hawkridge Village Hall

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.18pm.

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