

WITHYPOOL AND HAWKRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL Draft Minutes
Tuesday 5th July 2022 7.30pm at Hawkridge Village Hall

Present: Parish Councillors: A Howard – AH (Chair), T Lloyd - TL, P Soltau - PS, J Soltau – JS, A Morrissey – AM; **SCC Cllr** F Nicholson (for part of meeting) – FN; **Clerk** R Tomalin; **Public:** One

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/>

62/22 Questions from the public – none.

The meeting started at 7.36pm

63/22 Apologies of Absence – A Collins, W Lock, SCC & SW&T Cllr S Pugsley. All Cllrs wished AC well.

64/22 Declarations of notifiable interests: None

65/22 Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting on 17/05/2022 – Clerk explained that some of the details given at the last meeting regarding how the village parking area in Hawkridge was created were incorrect. However, the minutes correctly represent the discussion at the last meeting (see **66/22** for updates). Proposed by TL and 2nd by PS and all Approved. Chair then signed the minutes.

66/22 Matters arising from the Minutes of 17/05/2022: Hawkridge village parking area – clerk has spoken to David Bawden and looked through the old Minute Books. The car parking area was created after applying for an Environmental Improvement grant from Somerset County Council in 1988. The minutes do not make reference to what was agreed about the upkeep of the parking area. Clerk to ask the Hawkridge Village Hall Committee if their minutes detail what happened. FN explained it will be difficult to ask Highways to maintain it if there is nothing in writing, however she will ask to see the Highways maps to determine what is marked as Highways.

67/22 Report by the County & District Councillors: FN reminded Cllrs that a lot of householders were entitled to claim a council tax rebate due to the rising energy prices. The Highways Pilot continues and the Highways Steward started in late June. There is a new lead for Highways so it is important to show that the LCN pilot is working well. There was some discussion over the verge which has been fenced off opposite West Hollowcombe in Hawkridge. If this is privately owned there is nothing Highways can do, FN will see if she can access the Highways maps & will circulate. ENPA Local Plan Review – a formal review is not required, however concerns raised during the consultation period do need to be addressed. The Planning Policy Advisory Group will meet regularly to review and consider updates and supplements to the guidance.

68/22 Format of Annual Parish Meeting: Cllrs agreed to trial an alternative format of the Annual Parish Meeting. Parishioners will be invited along to raise concerns and could submit specific questions beforehand. Format and advertising of the meeting to be added to the January agenda.

69/22 Broadband Scheme: JS and Michael Lock provided an update. The quote has been received from OpenReach and it is far more than anticipated, and far more than the value of the vouchers. Matt Barrow (MB) from Connecting Devon and Somerset has suggested moving forward despite the gap as the government is likely to announce a new scheme in the Autumn. There has been a very high take up of the voucher scheme, but all the easy areas are done and now the vouchers do not reflect the commercial cost of rolling out broadband to the harder to reach locations. The next stage is to ask OpenReach to prepare a formal quote, hopefully by the time they have done this the new voucher scheme will be available. It was also noted that OpenReach are likely to use the same routes as their existing cables as wayleaves and easements are already in place, this could be why additional properties have been included in the quote. The PC may need to sign the contract (as has been done in other parishes according to MB), although there will be a clause to say the scheme will not go ahead if funds are not available. The PC thanked the Broadband Committee for all their hard work.

70/22 Highways: (i) HGV Sign Sparrow Lane – the Cllrs discussed whether a sign was required, what sort of sign would be appropriate and whether it would stop large traffic. In particular it was not clear whether vehicles are using Sparrow Lane as a cut through or if the traffic is accessing properties on Kitridge and Sparrow Lane. Clerk will write to all properties on Kitridge and Sparrow Lane (including the owner of the mast) to ask them to be mindful of the narrow access when having deliveries and request smaller vehicles are used where possible. Clerk will also ask the parishioner who raised the issue to keep a log so that Cllrs can better understand the magnitude of the problem and where these vehicles are going. It was suggested that it might be beneficial to highlight the guttering/fascia boards by hanging reflectors so that they are more noticeable to drivers (ii) Parking by pub – the Cllrs discussed the number of cars which park around the pub and block the highway between the pub and the pub garden, noting that it was important to support our local amenities.

71/22 Code of Conduct: The Cllrs agreed to adopt the new Code of Conduct which has been put together by the Local Government Association (LGA) and reviewed by SALC & the Monitoring Officers from the District Councils. FN suggested that the Monitoring Officer at SWT may be able to provide Code of Conduct training. Clerk to arrange.

72/22 Finance Report: (i) Bank Reconciliation £11,730.79 at 4 July, this includes £10 reimbursement from Exmoor PC for clerk training and cleared Chqs 549/52/53 (raised at the May meeting). Chqs 543/44 both ifo Withypool Village Hall have now cleared along with Chq 548 Hawkrigge Jubilee celebrations. Two cheques remain uncleared Chq 550 SALC £20 and Chq 554 British Red Cross £30 (ii) Approval of Invoices: Defib Check **LifeSaver Technology £35 Chq No.555** – all AGREED. (iii) Councillor Training – Cllrs AM & JS attended SALC training. AM asked for a hard copy of The Good Councillors Guide. (iv) Chair explained that Exford PC has requested assistance from the W&H clerk to bring the new Exford clerk upto speed and help with the AGAR. W&H PC will invoice Exford PC and then pay the Clerk additional hours.

FN left the meeting at 9.02pm

73/22 Planning: None

74/22 Parish Gardens: AH noted that given the recent auction sales for two lots of pastureland in the village the PC should think about updating the value of the parish gardens on the Asset Register.

75/22 Parish Maintenance: (i) Withypool Noticeboard – Clerk to research a new noticeboard in material similar to the Jubilee benches, must be a wood colour (ii) Jubilee Bench Replacement – all Cllrs agreed that the Platinum Jubilee Committee's proposal to use the residual funds from the

celebrations to replace the Golden Jubilee bench which is in need of repair was a good idea. Clerk to email to say the PC give their permission to make the replacement. The new bench will be exactly like the Diamond Jubilee bench which was replaced last year (iii) Hope Bourne Signpost Kitridge Lane – a parishioner has reported this needs some attention. TL has spoken to the landowner who has confirmed it was erected by Richard Westcott & Chris Chapman. Clerk to make contact with them (iv) AH has asked Dan Passmore to tidy and remove some of the obstructing shrubbery on the pathway from The Old Chapel down to the village (v) It was noted by the PC that all hedges by the junction to Sandyway (by Fir Tree Farm/Hawthorn Bungalows in Withypool) were overgrown and needed to be trimmed back, particularly at a higher level.

76/22 Chairman’s Notices: None

77/22 Correspondence: previously circulated by Clerk.

78/22 Report from representatives of other groups:

- Hawkridge Village Hall – the guttering and outside boards have been painted. Planning of the kitchen refurb is underway.
- Henry Leigh Trust – the Clerk read out an update from Lyn Fisher (Secretary). The Trustees will next meet in September and the closing date for applications is 31st August. Further information is available on www.henryleightrust.chessck.co.uk.
- Exmoor Panel – the last meeting was held in June and included an update on the Highways LCN pilot and a report from Magna housing which prompted discussions about the criteria for the allocation of local housing and who makes the decision. It was noted that PCSO Bryan Stevens is retiring soon.
- Consultative & Parish Forum – the last meeting held in June included an update from Exmoor Young Voices and a discussion on housing.

79/22 Parish Community including the social media page update, events by other groups not listed in 89/21: (i) Queen’s Jubilee celebrations – all events were most successful and thanks go to the committee and their additional helpers. (ii) Flower Show & Fete – Chair has received a request to use the Coronation Field for the village fete and flower show as in previous years. This year the Committee has also asked if Parish Garden Plot C could be used for parking. The Cllrs all agreed with the request and are happy for the Committee to approach the tenant directly to make arrangements. Clerk to review insurance.

80/22 Items for September 2022 agenda: Broadband Scheme, Withypool Noticeboard. JS requested the clerk email the Cllrs prior to the agenda being issued to ask for additional agenda items

81/22 Date and time of next meeting: the meeting will take place on 13th September at 7.30pm at Withypool Village Hall.

Future Meeting dates - tbc

Tuesday 8th November 2022 – Hawkridge Village Hall

Tuesday 10th January 2023 – Withypool Village Hall

Tuesday 14th March 2023 – Hawkridge Village Hall

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.31pm

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