

WITHYPOOL AND HAWKRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL Draft Minutes
Tuesday 9th January 2024 7.30pm at Withypool Village Hall

Present: Parish Councillors: A Howard – AH (Chair), T Lloyd - TL, A Collins – AC, W Lock – WL; **SC Cllr** F Nicholson (for part of meeting) - FN, **SC Cllr** S Pugsley (for part of meeting) – SP; **Clerk** R Tomalin; **Public:** Two

Abbreviations: ENPA – Exmoor National Park; SC – Somerset 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/>

1/24 Questions from the public: none

The meeting started at 7.37pm.

2/24 Apologies of Absence: Cllr A Morrissey, Cllr P Soltau, Cllr J Soltau

3/24 Declarations of notifiable interests: None

4/24 Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting on 14/11/2023: proposed by AC and 2nd by TL and all Approved. Chair then signed the minutes.

5/24 Matters arising from the Minutes of 14/11/2023: discussed under agenda items as appropriate.

6/24 Report by the Somerset Council Councillors: (i) Recycling & Rubbish Collection Changes – new routes will be starting in February. There have been complaints about SC wasting money on sending a notification letter, however this has to be sent to notify residents of changes (ii) DIY Waste Charges Changing – charges have been stopped for some disposal of household waste but quantity limits will apply (iii) ENPA Partnership Plan Survey results – a resident commented on the results and noted that the education & signage for visitors in the park is far less than it once was (iv) LCN – next meeting is this Thurs, there is still no feedback about the potential costs of devolved services. There may need to be an extraordinary meeting. In SC's cost saving mission the Dulverton recycling centre may have to close and possibly the library (in the future - will need to go to consultation first).

The agenda was taken out of order so that SC Cllrs could participate in appropriate items.

9/24 Highways: (i) Portford Bridge – has been repaired, but ask KB if a reflector can be placed on the bridge so that it is not damaged again (ii) Jetting – good job made of those drains cleared but some missed (iii) Slade Bridge Cattle Grid – ask Devon CC to make the hole under the grid match up with the 6 inch outlet pipe (iv) Hawkridge drainage – work is in hand with the landowner, however FN to follow up as nothing has been done to date (v) Signs for Tarr Steps – SP/FN to raise again with KB. Signs on other side of Tarr Steps make it clear the ford is impassable (vi) Salt Bags – WL thanks SP & FN for sorting out the salt bags on Marshclose Hill.

8/24 Broadband Scheme: Connecting Devon & Somerset have uncovered a change to the voucher scheme rules which means that if Airband (or another supplier) is available in an area the vouchers cannot be used even if those properties cannot access the alternative source.

SP, FN & members of the public left the meeting at 8.45pm

7/24 Planning: None

10/24 Finance Report: (i) Bank Reconciliation – £11,473.06 as at 3 January, this includes cleared Chqs 578/580/581/582 raised at the November meeting as well as Chq 574 Life Saver Technology £35 and Chq 575 SALC Cllr Training £50. Chq 579 SALC £61.32 (yearly affiliation fee) and Chq 583 Notice Board Company (UK) Ltd £1088.50 have not yet cleared (ii) Approval of Invoices: none

presented. For the minutes Clerk noted that **Chq 583** for **£1088.50** in favour of **Notice Board Company (UK) Ltd** had been raised following the November meeting.

11/24 Budget/Precept 2024-25: Clerk presented the income and expenditure for the previous and current financial years, along with an estimate of the projected position in 2024/25. In the absence of any detailed information from SC regarding the costs of devolved services the Cllrs made an estimate of the potential costs for hedge/verge trimming, drain/gully jetting and salt bags. With a small contingency amount this came to approx. £3,500. The Cllrs agreed to raise the precept to £7,000 to ensure that these extra services could be paid for if necessary. If detailed cost estimates are presented at the LCN on Thursday the PC will call an extraordinary meeting, otherwise the Chair will sign the precept form following the LCN meeting. Cllrs also discussed whether the PC should open a savings account to hold excess funds – Clerk will investigate accounts. This must be the same as the bank account and have dual authorisation/joint signatories.

12/24 Parish Gardens: AH reported motorbikes had been riding over the riverbank by the Jubilee Garden. The new tenant of Plot E has reported that the fencing needs some attention. TL to take a look. The tenancy on Plot C is due to expire on 29 February. Clerk will advertise as per the Parish Gardens Policy and Cllrs will inspect the field.

13/24 Parish Maintenance: (i) Withypool Noticeboard – The new noticeboard in Withypool has been put up. Keys are held by the Clerk & village shop; the village hall committee and church warden will also be asked if they wish to be key holders. (ii) Hedges Car Park – AB has provided a quote to trim the hedges by the car park. *AH to ask DP (iii) Grass Cutting Quote – DP to be asked for a quote to strim by the car parking area in Hawkridge.

* and a quote was provided from Nigel Phillips via Cllr PS.

14/24 Flood Group Plan – AH attended the Rivers Authority meeting.

15/24 Chairman's Notices: none

16/24 Correspondence: all correspondence has been circulated

17/24 Report from representatives of other groups:

- Withypool Village Hall – no meeting
- Hawkridge Village Hall – no meeting. Limited number of free BHF defibs available.
- Henry Leigh Trust – 18 applications received for the last round, meeting to discuss later in the month
- Exmoor LCN – meeting this Thurs 11th January
- Consultative & Parish Forum – no dates as yet

18/24 Parish Community including the social media page update, events by other groups not listed in **17/24:** none

19/24 Items for March 2024 agenda: Flood Group Plan, Plot C Tender

20/24 Date and time of next meeting: the meeting will take place on 12th March at 7.30pm at Hawkridge Village Hall.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.35pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

12/3/24.