

**WITHYPOOL AND HAWKRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL Draft Minutes**  
**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 7.30pm at Hawkridge Village Hall**

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

**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/>

The meeting started at 7.30pm.

**66/24 Questions from the public:** None

**67/24 Apologies of Absence:** Cllrs A Morrissey, J Soltau and P Soltau

**68/24 Declarations of notifiable interests:** None

**69/24 Approval of the Minutes** of the previous meeting on 07/05/2024: proposed by TL and 2<sup>nd</sup> by AC and all Approved. Chair then signed the minutes.

**70/24 Matters arising from the Minutes** of 07/05/2024: discussed under agenda items as appropriate.

**71/24 Report by Somerset Council Councillors:** (i) Withypool Bridge will be repaired during September under traffic lights (ii) Tarr Steps Signage – Googlemaps shows the sign at the top of Marshclose Hill used to have more appropriate wording. This sign has been changed in recent years (to less effective wording) without input from parishioners or the PC. ENPA Landscapes officer has suggested a red sign with wording is placed underneath any blue signs. This may have more impact. Signs on the Tarr Farm side clearly use the words “Access Only”. Appropriate wording to be agreed with Kate Brown from Highways and then presented to Hawkridge parishioners at an extraordinary PC meeting. Decisions made will be final, there will be no opportunity to change one’s mind!

**73/24 Broadband Scheme:** Letter received from OpenReach detailing costs and properties included. Follow up meeting to be arranged with Matt Barrow of Connecting Devon and Somerset.

SP left the meeting at 7.52pm

**72/24 Planning:** 6/42/24/001 WEST HOLLOWCOMBE FARM, WEST HOLLOWCOMBE, HAWKRIDGE, DULVERTON, TA22 9QL Proposed siting of 1no. timber cabin, together with, the conversion of existing building to holiday accommodation and associated landscaping – The Cllrs discussed the application and decided to object due to the siting of the proposed timber cabin as this is a long way from the existing buildings and could be brought back within the curtilage of the farmstead. The cabin may be seen from the Village Hall and the Churchyard, and will look out over open access common land. This is proposed as a temporary removable unit but will be connected to the mains water and a new Package Treatment Plant. The Turkey Shed may have been considered favourably had it been subject to a separate application, especially with a Local Needs Affordable Housing condition.

**74/24 Highways:** (i) Signage Tarr Steps – see **71/24** (ii) Withypool Bridge – see **71/24** (iii) Rail Replacement Outside Broadmead/Old Chapel – the rail has finally been replaced but as the contractors did not wish to disturb the foundations of the adjacent wall it is now in a different position making the road narrower. It is also much lower than previously. Several parishioners have made comment and Clerk has requested Highways rectify the issues. FN will follow up (iv) Hedges – Cllrs/Clerk discussing overgrown hedges with landowners (v) Cllrs also noted the cattle grid at Greystone Gate is full & some road signs between Chibbet Post and Exford need removing. Clerk to report.

FN and member of the public left at 8.21pm.

**75/24 Finance Report:** (i) Bank Reconciliation – £6,276.34 as at 1 July, this includes £10,000 transferred to the Liquidity Manager Savings Account and all cheques raised at the May meeting have cleared (ii) Approval of Invoices: for the Minutes Clerk noted that since the May meeting Cllrs have approved an invoice for the repairs to Plot C **Chq 594 £145 A Blackmore** (iii) Savings Account – this has been opened with a £10,000 deposit as agreed at the last meeting and has already earned £32.46 in interest.

**76/24 Risk Register & Freedom of Information Policy:** The Cllrs reviewed the Risk Register & FOI Policy and agreed no amendments were necessary.

**77/24 Parish Gardens:** (i) Plot C Maintenance & Tenancy Agreement – AB met with Cllrs after the May meeting to discuss what repairs were necessary and has completed the work to make Plot C stockproof. As the new tenant has been unable to use the land during the first months of the tenancy the Cllrs decided to approve a refund of **£160** to the tenant **Chq 595** (ii) Plot D Tender – the Cllrs reviewed, discussed and voted on the bids received for Plot D (iii) Inspection Date – Cllrs will meet at 6.45pm in Withypool Car Park before the September meeting to inspect the parish gardens

**78/24 Parish Maintenance:** (i) Bench – the back of the bench is broken and needs repairing, Chair has asked AB for a quote

**79/24 Flood Group Plan** – PS provided the following in advance of the meeting:

The Flood Group will not be meeting again until September. In the meantime, I have arranged to meet with representatives in other Parish Councils who have more experience than I, and have been successful in procuring grant aid towards anti flood resources. Will report to our next PC meeting.

**80/24 Chairman's Notices:** none

**81/24 Correspondence:** all correspondence has been circulated

**82/24 Report from representatives of other groups:**

- Withypool Village Hall – AM provided the following update in advance of the meeting: The AGM was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June. The Annual accounts were adopted. Richard Williams stood down as Chairman and Keith Branfield has agreed to take on this role for a year, with Richard as Vice Chair. The rest of the committee remains unchanged. A new microwave has been purchased. Andrew Blackmore has washed down the hall's external walls and has done a temporary repair of the roof valley lead, with a more permanent repair when he can. We are looking into painting the inside and new curtains. Georgie Clarke will continue to clean the hall on an ad hoc basis.
- Hawkridge Village Hall – plans to paint the inside of the hall.

- Henry Leigh Trust – the closing date for the next round is 31 August
- Exmoor LCN – JS provided the following update in advance of the meeting:

The LCN meeting in June was the Annual General Meeting which re-elected Steven Pugsley as Chairman and Mike Ellicott as vice-Chairman.

- We had a discussion with highways about the Withypool Bridge during which I stressed the need to keep the bridge open as far as possible during repair works.
  - SC Highways have a significant number of “minor” repairs (potholes etc.) outstanding across the county but are now in a position where they are making more repairs each week than are being reported by the public.
  - A presentation was given by a representative of Magna Housing – there are currently significant numbers of tenant complaints about repair work and customer service which Magna acknowledge need to be addressed. Specific tenant and property repair issues were raised by members of the LCN which will be followed up by the Magna housing officer for this area.
- Exmoor National Park Forum – AC reported problems trying to register for the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July, Clerk to try. *Post Meeting update: event is full, no further registrations possible.*

**83/24 Parish Community** including the social media page update, events by other groups not listed in **82/24**: (i) Flower Show – Permission to use Coronation Garden – AM has sent a note on behalf of the Flower Show Committee requesting permission to use the Coronation Garden for the annual village fete on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August - all Cllrs agreed.

**84/24 Items for September 2024 agenda:** A member of the public would like to address the PC about parking outside the village shop in Withypool

**85/24 Date and time of next meeting:** 10<sup>th</sup> September - the Cllrs will meet at 6.45pm in Withypool car park to inspect the Parish Gardens, the meeting will follow at 7.30pm at Withypool Village Hall.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.44pm.

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