

# WINSFORD PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Meeting of Winsford Parish Council held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at 7.30pm in Winsford Village Hall.

**PRESENT:** Councillors David Godsall, Kevin Connell, Steve Hunt, Mel Mileham, Colin Wilkins, SCC Frances Nicholson, WSC Bruce Heywood and Nicholas Thwaites and Clerk Verity Vigars.

**15:43 Apologies for non Attendance** - Beverley Flanagan and John Bray.

After completion of his Acceptance of Office form, the Chairman welcomed Colin Wilkins to his first meeting. He also welcomed new WSC Nick Thwaites and congratulated Bruce Heywood on his new post as Vice Chairman of WSC.

**15:44 Declarations of Interest** - None.

**15.45 Approval of Minutes**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015 (as circulated) be approved and signed as correct.

*Items were taken out of order to allow the County and District Councillors to leave early to attend Exton PC meeting.*

**15:46 Actions from the Previous Minutes**

a. Speed Limit

The Chairman noted that in doing the Parish Archive a folder had been found with a petition from as early as 1960 so it is a longstanding issue. FN reported that she is expecting a meeting with Gary Warren soon. She noted that the public notices for speed limits had been done but there was no budget for them.

b. Broadband

It was noted that the recent media coverage was affecting phase 2 and not phase 1 (expected in October). FN highlighted that Exmoor and Dartmoor are better off as those contracts have actually been signed.

c. Highways (including signposts)

FN reported that she had an upcoming meeting with the National Park on Friday (which they had organised) on this issue. They are looking at funding volunteers to record signs as they are initially. It seems a local company has quoted to sandblast all signs and looking at alternatives. A single sign is approximately £400. FN **AGREED** to report back on how the meeting goes.

d. Village repairs and maintenance

Kept busy cutting grass and the car park is now OK. It was noted that verge cutting has been cut back - should parishes think about doing some themselves? It was noted that Milton Shoot usefully trim the road to Copleham. It was suggested Highways should do Halse Lane before the road closure. FN **AGREED** to find out.

e. Speeding quad bikes

BF reported via email that she had spoken with Jo Dawson the PCSO who confirmed that she has visited the families of the known offenders and has asked them to use their vehicles in a more sensible way and told them of the legal requirements, which are that you must be 17 to use a quad bike on public roads and must hold a private vehicle licence. You may however use a quad bike on the roads if you hold a provisional licence but you must display 'L' Plates. She suggested taking the number plates of any offending vehicles but it was thought that most of them do not have them! NT noted that you also need to have tax & insurance for a quad bike. **AGREED** that PCSO be asked to speak to the local users.

f. Dog fouling

It was noted that a copy of the letter had not been received from the Recreation Ground Committee. CW **AGREED** to forward a copy.

g. Wi-Fi access in the Village Hall

SH had registered an unease with the previous decision at the last Village Hall meeting and the committee agreed to reconsider based on funding and to develop further business opportunities which would benefit the Hall. It was hoped that together something could be worked out. It seemed that BT would install it for free and that there would then be a monthly broadband fee of approximately £20 per month. SH has been tasked with finding new opportunities. It was noted that the ENP are keen for Parish Councils to look online at planning in future.

h. Empty/incomplete/derelict properties

David Wyborn's detailed response on procedures was discussed. The state of the derelict farm buildings at the Old Rectory were also highlighted as being a problem and it was noted that the Clerk has already emailed DW regarding that and so it was **AGREED** to wait to see what he says. KC suggested exploring whether other parishes have similar problems with abandoned properties. It was suggested that affordable housing might have limited things in the past but is not such a problem now. It was noted that empty houses are of interest to the District Council as a housing authority issue and so those not being used should be identified. BH **AGREED** to investigate from WSC end.

**15:47 Financial Report**

The financial report was received.

**RESOLVED** to issue a cheque for £200 for Mike Hillier for Village Green Maintenance.

**RESOLVED** to issue a cheque for £200 for Mike Hillier for General maintenance and repairs.

**RESOLVED** to issue a cheque for £100 to West Somerset Council for the uncontested election fee.

**RESOLVED** to issue a cheque for £60 to SALC for the Councillor Training Course.

The Chairman reported that he had examined the latest time log content from the Clerk and highlighted that it was weighted down by the training costs. It was suggested that the further two Parishes who have recently appointed VV as Clerk might like to contribute towards some of the training costs. It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Clerk's pay and expenses and submit the figure to HMRC for PAYE calculation. Two cheques would then be needed, one for the Clerk and then another for the deduction paid straight to HMRC.

It was **RESOLVED** that the balance of £190.65 in the NatWest Reserve Account be transferred to the Current Account and that if needs be the Reserve Account be closed. It was **AGREED** the Clerk would send a letter to this effect from her & the Chairman. It was also **RESOLVED** that the £200 for village green maintenance be transferred from the CAF Account, along with £80 as a share of the insurance costs for the village green. Councillors were reminded that this has previously been agreed as approximately 10% of the annual renewal figure. SH suggested that it might be reviewed in future to consider the high risk associated with insuring the green.

Current bank signatories were discussed but it was **AGREED** to leave them as they are for now. It was also noted that the CAF Account interest is going down from 0.25% to 0.20% shortly.

**15:48 Election of Parish Members to Exmoor National Park Authority**

Parish Councillors were sorry that Kevin Connell has not been elected. KC thanked everyone for their support and said he was disappointed to have not been successful. It was noted that there had been a tie for the final place and that they drew straws. The successful candidate then subsequently stood down. FN **AGREED** to find out the voting order of the candidates in case of casual vacancies mid-term.

**15:49 Draft Local Plan**

It was noted that the comments made by the Parish Council in 2013 have been taken on board and that it was a useful explanation about why things happen planning wise. It was spotted there was a new listed building in the parish, which is the Phone box. It seems anyone can apply to English Heritage to list something. It was questioned who owns it but as it is still a working phone box it was assumed that BT are the owners. This consultation was more about responding on the processes rather than the content. David Wyborn had asked at the last Forum meeting whether procedures were correct. It was **AGREED** that the Chairman had congratulated the ENP on the document overall. It was noted that this document only covers planning and that the speed limit is the responsibility of Highways not the ENPA.

#### **15:50 Parish Council Procedures**

It was reported that the Clerk had updated the previous old Code of Conduct and the revised version was **APPROVED**. An updated version of the Standing Orders, which are over 20 pages long, will be ready for approval in advance of the next meeting.

#### **15:50 Top Five Parish Priorities**

The Chairman highlighted 5 priorities: 1. Speed Limit; 2. Road Repairs; 3. Roadsigns; 4. Broadband/mobile reception and 5. Derelict/unoccupied/unfinished buildings and it was **AGREED** that these were accurate. When asked what was the purpose of this exercise, BH suggested it was all to do with Section 106 funding, which the Chairman believed did not apply to ENP parishes. BH **AGREED** to check with Angela Lamplugh about relevance within the National Park.

#### **15:52 Parish Archive**

It was reported that Jan Faulkner had recently tendered her resignation because the commitment had become too big. The Chairman reported that he had thanked her on behalf of the Parish Council for her work. The Archivist post is to be filled by Susan J. Hayes. It was reported that a very successful display of the archive had taken place on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July at which over 100 people attended and more than 70% of the questions were answered. Grateful thanks to everyone who helped. MM reported that she is in touch with the Archivist from the Exmoor Society. It was noted that the Parish Council are responsible for the Archive but that a subgroup might be created to look at organising displays etc. It would be nice to have it online but that is very time consuming. It was suggested that expenses might be eligible for Charitable Trust funds?

#### **15:53 Correspondence and Emails**

- a. Somerset County Council Chairman's Awards for Services to the Community - circulated.
- b. Minehead Motor Club Ltd: The Exmoor Clouds Classic Trial - Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2015 - noted, particularly with a view to adding to website.
- c. Exmoor Motor Club Ltd – Neil Westcott Memorial Road Trial - Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2015 - noted, particularly with a view to adding to website.
- d. CCS Event - 'How digital technology can help your community' - Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September, Holford - circulated.
- e. Adopt-a-path scheme - circulated.
- f. Vacancy for a Parish/Town Council representative on the West Somerset Standards Advisory Committee - previously circulated, no one interested in standing.
- g. Freedom of Information Request from Making Parishes Better Places for Organisation Chart - it was noted that we have been contacted for an organisation chart, which after checking with SALC whether the enquiry was genuine, the Clerk has prepared a diagram for sending back to them.
- g. SALC AGM on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2015 - noted.
- h. Fund for Transparency Code - it was noted that SALC had sent a short questionnaire about possible funding for setting up a website to comply with the transparency code. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk answer the questions and return in case the Parish Council is eligible.
- i. Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - noted.
- j. Parish Council Training from WSC - noted but no one interested in attending as several just attended SALC course.

**15:54 Report from Committees and Highways**

a. Halse Lane Road Closure

It was noted that this closure on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2015 was expected to last for 6 days (excluding the weekends) to enable preparation and resurfacing works to be carried out.

b. Exmoor Consultative and Parish Forum - Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June

Nothing to report other than KC raised moor damage as covered later.

b. Exmoor Area Panel - Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June

Nothing to report.

**15:55 Planning Applications and Decisions.**

a. Highercombe Farm, Dulverton

**6/9/15/109 - Adjoining Parish**

**NYD**

It was **RESOLVED** that this had no impact on the Parish.

It was also noted that the following have all now been approved: Dowry Cottage (6/40/15/107), The Old Forge (6/40/15/108), Tally Ho House (6/40/15/109) and The Old School (6/40/13/110), which has taken over two years.

**15:56 Other Business Directed to the Clerk**

a. Byelaws on Winsford Hill - camping/littering

Issues of damage done by camping, littering, BBQs and driving on the moor have been raised for discussion. Winsford Hill is an anomaly because it is privately owned, leased to the National Trust and then run by the National Park. MM has approached the ENPA for the rules but policing it is very difficult. There used to be signs but they have gone and it was noted that and lots of new signs would ruin the landscape. KC has previously raised it at the Consultative and Parish Forum meeting where discussion included a belief that it is perfectly desirable to camp responsibly and that it is not necessarily a bad thing. However, there is still a problem with irresponsible people. It was **AGREED** that KC would contact Steven Pugsley as Chair of the Forum to how establish how best it can be brought forward. It was also suggested that he mention derelict properties too. KC and MM to work together. It was pointed out that it could be an item for the Panel meeting and that it might be worth involving the National Trust as the tenant.

**15:57 Date of next Meeting**

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at 7.30pm

The meeting was closed at 9.30pm.

Date.....

Signed.....