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WEDMORE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting**

**Held at:** The Council Rooms, Grants Lane, Wedmore, BS28 4AE

**on:** Wednesday 19th October 2022 **at:** 7:30pm

**Present:** Councillor Farley (Acting Chairman), Councillor Beacom, Councillor Loughery, Councillor Smith, Councillor Reeson, Councillor Thorogood, Councillor Tinny, Councillor Candy.

**In Attendance:** Mrs Lindsey Baker (Clerk), Councillor P Costello (District Councillor), Councillor H Munt (County Councillor), Councillor T Munt (Somerset County Councillor for Wells) Pete Brown, rep. Wedmore Playing Field Management Committee, Suzie Ladbrook, rep. Lamplight committee, Cathy Butterworth, Andy Daintree, rep. Wedmore Men’s Shed

**Apologies:** Councillor Banwell

**Prior to the opening of the official meeting, Councillor Farley read a statement that advised that Councillor James Lloyd had resigned and under Section 14 of The Local Government Act 1974 which reads as follows A parish council shall consist of the chairman and parish councillors and shall have all such functions as are vested in the council by this Act or otherwise. Given that the chairman has resigned the Council are not currently constituted. She went on to say that as a Councillor, Babs had made a huge contribution ensuring the council has improved the way it runs and is up to date with recent legislation and regulations. She had been part of the committee that wrote many of the new policies and procedures that have since been adopted by the council. She dedicated a huge amount of time into her role as councillor and more recently as chairman and will be missed by all.**

**Councillor Farley resolved to a vote as to whether the meeting go ahead at this stage, taking into consideration that no financial matters can be discussed including grant applications or the budget. An extraordinary meeting of the council will be scheduled at the earliest convenience of members. It was resolved unanimously by all in attendance that the meeting go ahead under the afore listed restrictions.**

**ACTION: Schedule Extraordinary Meeting**

**ACTION: Clerk to notify the Monitoring office of Councillor James – Lloyd’s resignation**

## reports from county and district councillors (by invitation)

**Councillor H Munt reported that.**

* 1. Duncan Sharkey has now been appointed as the new Council Chief Executive.
  2. Children’s Social Care Services in Somerset are now rated as ‘good’.
  3. That The Chancellor's announcement that the Gravity site, just north of Bridgwater, could be part of one of the first of the Government's new Investment Zones. The former Royal Ordnance Factory north of Bridgwater has been identified as a potential site for a Gigafactory. The 616-acre site has the potential for an onsite rail terminal and sits by J23 of the M5 motorway. The total project could deliver up to 7,500 skilled jobs in the county.
  4. The Consultation period for Somerset’s Local Government Reorganisation has come to an end although taking into consideration the disruption to meetings around the National period of Mourning, late responses can be received although it was pointed out these should not be too late.

**Councillor P Costello reported that.**

* 1. Sedgemoor have now entered their ‘winding down’ process, the final meeting of the Licencing Panel will take place in January
  2. She had attended a Licencing panel meeting, which was mainly in relation to changing hours on premises licences.
     1. **to record any declarations of interest**

None to record.

* + 1. **to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 17th August 2022**

Councillor Farley addressed the Parish Council and confirmed everyone had read the minutes from the previous meeting.

It was accepted as an accurate record and the minutes signed

* + 1. **to confirm the minutes of the planning meeting held on 16th August 2022**

Councillor Farley addressed the Parish Council and confirmed everyone had read the minutes from the previous meeting.

It was accepted as an accurate record and the minutes signed

* + 1. **public participation –** *(max. time 10minutes)*
* Pete Brown gave an update on the progress at the playing fields. the function room project has started, and it is anticipated that it will be complete by March 2023, the function room will be run by the Wedmore Playing Field Management Committee.
* The grass seed has been laid on the community field site, and the recent weather conditions means that the seed has taken well, it is already looking much better. it is hoped that it will be ready for regular use by next summer.
* Wedmore Playing Field Management Committees next project is to install battery storage for solar panels. The Energy crisis has highlighted, this would be beneficial. Pete addressed the council and asked if they felt this would be a project that would meet the grant criteria. as the process of applying is long and if it was not looked upon as favourable, he would spend time applying elsewhere. Councillor Farley confirmed that this would not be able to be discussed tonight, but they will give some informal feedback once the extraordinary meeting has taken place.
* Finally, Pete tabled some emails that had been sent by the previous clerk. he commented that it appeared the council were now backtracking on the good faith agreement. Councillor Farley confirmed that the council do want to make progress with this, and Councillor Banwell has been working on a proposal which should be available for the November meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk to add a resolution agenda item for Wedmore Playing Field Management Committee public toilet to the November agenda.**

* + 1. **report on the wedmore wellbeing day (presented by cathy butterworth)**
* Cathy confirmed that all the members had seen a copy of the report she has prepared, they agreed they had. She then went on to highlight certain areas that was felt could be improved upon if the event was to be held again. Although the day overall was well received, and more publicity was undertaken that previously, a greater footfall would have been liked.
* Councillor Smith spoke having attended the day. He believed that the difficulty may be in the title of the day is ‘Wellbeing’ perhaps also a hinderance to getting people to turn out. Would it perhaps be more of a suggestion to market it as What’s going on in Wedmore?
* Cathy, suggested that perhaps consideration could be given to if the Parish Council would like to see this as an annual event, possibly move to the Spring of 2024 for the next one and perhaps with a different title.
* Councillor Thorogood asked what outcomes were hoped to be achieved. Cathy replied for people in the parish to know what’s going on, with the broader range of wellbeing. There was no feedback stating, ‘what was missing’
* Councillor Beacom commented that younger people would be attending sports on a Saturday meaning families were perhaps not as available, maybe this is another area to look at.
* Councillor Reeson commented that unfortunately a combination of the Health & Wellbeing title, and the timings had meant he was unable to attend. He suggested that would it be something to consider about combining with another event to raise the footfall for both, perhaps the Street Fair.

Councillor Farley thanked Cathy and her team for all their time and effort put into the project.

**ACTION – Clerk to add discussion point to November’s agenda.**

* + 1. **to discuss the progress and quotes for the works to go ahead at hugh sexey’s middle school and axe valley vets**

-Councillor Costello reiterated that the purpose of this project is to make a safe place for the children to cross. Hugh Sexey Middle School are onboard, and regularly discourage the crossing of the road at the crossroads on Blackford Road and Wellsway due to the lack of pavement. She has undertaken various meetings with Head and County Council Highways, but Somerset County Council have no money. Axe Valley Vets have been approached and have tentatively agreed to donate 2m of land at the end of their plot roadside. They would like a worded agreement from the solicitors. It is mentioned in the Neighbourhood plan as important –but need to ensure the land cannot be taken back if the site is developed in the future.

* She went on to describe the work required, which would consist of erecting a new fence along the edge of Redmans Hill and Blackford Road.
* Councillor Reeson asked why it was not more sensible to put a zebra crossing in. The answer is cost, it adds to much infrastructure which is costly. Councillor Costello continued after having review this option previously the focus must now shift, instead to focus the idea of crossing safely in this area.
* Councillor Candy asked if there a plan that could be shared as she cannot imagine how the change will look, and if it will be effective enough.
* Councillor Smith reiterated his concerns in general about the visibility of crossing at this point on the road.
* We are waiting on Solicitors to have an agreement drawn up.

**ACTION – Clerk to add discussion point to November’s agenda.**

* + 1. **to discuss funding and progress of public open space / teenage play area and pump track at cross farm**
* Councillor Costello distributed copies of the plan for the remaining part of the Cross Farm play area. The handover is being dealt with by solicitors.
* The Wedmore Parish Play Area committee have been working on securing funding for the project RLT2 money has been secured to the sum of £37,000 and a further £10,000 raised through fundraising. Councillor Costello is also hoping to obtain more CIL money.
* The company who has done the comprehensive design has held the price of £148,000 for a long time, but she is concerned that with rising costs, timing is important to get the project moving. We are ready, we have the land, we have the design. We just need the money! Councillor Farley asked if a letter of intent would be beneficial? Councillor Costello thought potentially it may help when applying from larger funding sources.
* Councillor Reeson asked the size of the proposed pump track, as no scale is shown on the plan. Councillor Costello didn’t have the size to hand.
* Councillor Costello addressed the members and said that the Parish Council should be spending more money on its play areas.
* Councillor Thorogood asked whether other demographics had been thought about in the design such as the elderly? Or if there would be the option to include them within the plan. Councillor Costello suggested that other sites within the village lend themselves to this option such as the Playing Fields.
* Councillor Loughery questioned if the jumps on the pump track should be bigger – posing that if the idea is to entice ‘bigger kids’ to use it, they should be appropriate plans.
* Councillor Candy vouched for the scheme and the use of the area.
* Councillor Reeson, do we need to be looking at a 5-year cost? The ongoing Maintenance? Cost. Councillors Beacom and Farley agreed this need careful consideration. It should be included for consideration when budgeting, but no decision will be made until a later meeting.

Councillor Farley thanked Councillor Costello for her time and presentation.

**ACTION: Clerk to add to November’s Agenda as discussion point.**

* + 1. **to consider the grant application from wedmore men’s shed**

Andy Daintree addressed the council, first explaining the idea of the ‘Men Shed’ and the ethos behind it. Primarily the focus is to improve the mental health of men of all ages– by doing things together, for the community, enabling activities etc.

* At 3 weeks of operation membership is at 30, with this number rising daily.
* Andy advised that the current members are keen to take on community projects
* They have been fortunate to have the use of the Methodist Chapel, but this is dependant on what happens with the sale of the facility.
* The purpose of the grant application for extra funding is to purchase the things they haven’t been able to beg, borrow or steal. – i.e. a large screen, and the infrastructure to support this.

Andy asked if there were any questions from Councillors.

* Councillor Smith was totally supportive of the idea, and a think’s there is a great need for this type of group within the Parish.
* Councillor Thorogood had spoken to David Kirley who had also highlighted that they would be keen to take on the community projects. He asked if they are looking at the inclusivity of the Shed? Andy – YES! It’s about looking at the hurdles, to be able to evolve and change the needs meeting the membership profile.
* Councillor Beacom clarified if the disability ramp mentioned within the application is moveable – Andy, YES.

**ACTION: The Clerk will defer this agenda item until the extraordinary meeting.**

* + 1. to consider the grant application from wedmore by lamplight

Suzie Ladbrook addressed the council, updating them on the progress made with the event plan so far. Wedmore by Lamplight will be held on 7th December 2022. She hopes that all members will be able to attend. they have taken onboard feedback from last year and would like to look at the hire of more lighting, a larger marquee to allow the music to be under cover.

They have lots of local associations and groups already committed to the event.

Suzie, thanked the council for their time.

* Councillor Farley thanked Suzie and advised this would be considered at the next meeting, knowing that the event is approaching quickly.
* Councillor Reeson confirmed that the road closure request is in place.
* Councillor Smith referred to the current grant application policy and asked if the Parish Council need to look at amending this further.

**ACTION: The Clerk will defer this agenda item until the extraordinary meeting.**

* + 1. to consider the implementation of warm rooms, available grants and somerset county councils warm spaces fund. (presented by IB)

Councillor Beacom reported on the progress with this project so far. After a meeting with other organisations and groups within the parish, The Solar co-op are kindly paying for the Masonic Hall allowing warm in wedmore project to have a permanent home. they have also confirmed that they do not want to pursue any funding from the Somerset County Council grant.

- It’s running for a 12-week period every Wednesday and Thursday excluding the 2 weeks either side of Christmas. from 7th dec 2022 – 9th March 2023

- Councillor Beacom tabled the poster and confirmed that the Clerk will send out emails to community groups suggesting that each could take a week – they are hopeful that lightening the load could feel better, rather than relying on the same pool of volunteers.

- Councillor Beacom advised that anyone can attend. Councillor Candy said should there be a focus on certain groups, such as mums and babies when marketing the event. Councillor Reeson suggested speaking to the Papershop to ask if they would be willing to include flyer within their paper deliveries.

**ACTION: Councillor Beacom to take the suggestions back to the other organisers.**

* + 1. to consider the purchase of an infrared camera for use by property owners within the parish.

Councillor Reeson addressed the members, knowing the item must be deferred until the next meeting, he says, now more than ever the council should be looking at ways to help the parishioners save money where they can, and this tool could be very effective. Councillor Candy agreed, that this needs to be resolved as soon as possible to make a difference.

**ACTION: The Clerk will defer this agenda item until the extraordinary meeting.**

* + 1. **to adopt the lga model code of conduct policy**

Councillor Farley addressed the members and asked if they had all had the opportunity to read the document. All agreed they had read the document and Councillor Beacom advised that some members had attended the training recently. She went on to propose that the LGA Model Code of Conduct be adopted. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Reeson.

**ACTION: Clerk to advise SALC that the LGA Code has been adopted.**

* + 1. **to adopt the wedmore emergency plan document**

The clerk gave an update on the importance on the emergency plan after attending the Somerset Prepared Community Resilience Day. She explained the importance of having a plan in place for specific emergencies such as flooding and power outages.

Councillor Farley asked if there was a proposal, Councillor Thorogood proposed to adopt the document as a working document. this proposal was seconded by Councillor Smith

* + 1. to agree the draft budget

**ACTION: The Clerk will defer this agenda item until the extraordinary meeting.**

* + 1. **financial matters**

(A) Audit of Accounts 01/09/2022 – 30/09/2022

The Audit of accounts was tabled by the Clerk, and they were accepted as an accurate record to date.

(B) Approve payment of invoices and spending of Section 137 money.

The recommendation to approve payment of invoices were approved.

**Because the council are currently not constituted, discussion around future spending cannot be discussed. The Section 137 payment will need to go on the next agenda.**

**ACTION: Clerk to pay outstanding invoices**

**ACTION: The Clerk will defer this agenda item until the extraordinary meeting.**

* + 1. **to discuss possible dates for the ‘have your say event’**

Councillor Farley reiterated that this is an important event for the interaction of parishioners in setting out priorities, but with the low numbers of members at the current time, and their availability, they need to give serious consideration as to how this event is held. Councillor Reeson suggested that the ideal opportunity would be the warm rooms project. Perhaps the posters that have been created could be displayed, so at least people can see what the council are working towards.

* + 1. **to consider the application for co-option of a new councillor from oliver rant**

**ACTION: The Clerk will defer this agenda item until the extraordinary meeting.**

**ACTION: Clerk to speak to the Monitoring office about how best to advertise the remaining seats**

* + 1. **issues and questions raised by councillors –** *note: for information only as resolutions cannot be agreed at this agenda item*
* Councillor Smith addressed Councillors T. and H Munt and raised the Pilcorn Street project. He reiterated his frustration the Somerset County Council seem dismissive of the project despite the parish council having the funds ready. Councillor T Munt confirmed that Mike Rigby is now aware of the project, and she is hopeful that the value of this project means it makes progress finally.
  + 1. **committee reports correspondence** *– For information*
* Cemetery – NIL
* Facilities and Allotments - NIL
* Finance and General Purposes – A draft budget has been done; this will need refining over the coming weeks. The Parish Council will need to be realistic with the budget, considering the uncertainty of the new unitary council. Councillor T. Munt asked if she was able to address the council. She implored the council to be bold when setting the Precept. Parish Councils are the only body that can raise funds without limits. She advised that the current statutory services will be delivered, beyond that it is very uncertain. Councillor Beacom stated that the council are very aware that the cost of living will affect everyone, but they do need to try and be bold.
* Housing – Housing – Councillor Beacom highlighted that she had been in touch with Councillor Costello about the Holden Gardens development. Councillor Beacom had emailed Duncan Harvey, but to date had not received a reply. She had also spoken with David Cox who has provided another contact that Councillor Beacom will pursue. The agreed sum of £250,000 needs to be located. Timing is key if it’s at Sedgemoor it will be going soon.
* Councillor Smith suggested that parishioners need to be more aware of what money is ringfenced for future projects, and the impact this has on generalised spending.
* Councillor Reeson asked if we should have put a formal notice out to say the recent consultation about affordable housing needs within the parish was not from the Parish Council.
* Highways, Car Park & Brook – Councillor Smith highlighted that the carpark appears to be busier than ever. Largely due to the building works and vaccine centre located in close proximity. Following on from complaints from residents Councillor Smith has asked that numbers for the vaccine clinic be considered. To which the reply had been positive. He had also asked that more consideration was given to parking especially in the Manor Lane area.
* Planning – Councillor Beacom meeting summarised the meeting held last week. She advised she is attending the Development meeting tomorrow (Thursday 20th October) to speak on two applications, where comments have previously been submitted to the planning portal. Application number 50/22/00052/EC speaking in SUPPORT and Application number 50/22/00040/EC speaking with OBJECTIONS. She also advised that there is another planning meeting scheduled for Wednesday 2nd November as applications are arriving thick and fast, after what appears to have been a very quiet August and September.
  + 1. **reports from representatives on committees–** *For Information*
* IOW News -Councillor Tinny and The Clerk advised they had attended the most recent meeting, and all was well. They have appointed a new Secretary.
* Play Areas – Already mentioned during minute 22.10.9
* SALC – Update from the Clerk in relation to the most recent training dates.
* Wedmore Playing Fields Management – Councillor Loughery highlighted that afore tabled documentation from Wedmore Playing Field Management Committee saying that it needs to be addressed. This will be discussed in November, when Councillor Banwell submits a proposal for the agenda, Councillor Loughery raised concerns about whether Councillor Banwell should announce a declaration of interest in this matter going forward.

**ACTION: Clerk to establish the parameters of Declaration of Interests on agenda items.**

* Village Halls –

1. Wedmore – Councillor Smith reported all is good.
2. Blackford – Councillor Tinny advised he had attended the latest Café and thought it was the busiest yet.
3. Theale – Councillor Thorogood provided an update about the lease. The Diocese has now been presented with a lease to sign. The village hall committee have also commissioned an extensive study, by B2 Architects which has concluded that big spends are needed. Councillor Thorogood advised that he will be putting in a grant application soon. Councillor Farley reiterated that there is a need for some investment there.

* Twinning – NIL
* Green Wedmore – The Clerk updated the members on a meeting held with Steve Mewes and Bab’s Lloyd prior to her resignation. There were many things discussed including ways of working together collaboratively to enhance the villages, such as water conservation at the Allotments, more user-friendly litter bins / recycling bins. The ongoing drive for an overall ‘greener’ place to live. Steve Mewes also confirmed that the recent push to consider the ‘20’s plenty’ initiative is not a Green Wedmore project, instead a few members are pursuing this independently.
  + 1. **matters of report, correspondence, and items for next meeting**

Chairman - NIL

Clerk – Overview of received correspondence since the last meeting.

Members – NIL

**Extraordinary Meeting Date set for Thursday 27th October 7:30pm**

**ACTION: Clerk to Compile and Distribute Agenda**

**All business conducted the meeting was closed – 9:45 pm**