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WEDMORE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting**

**Held at:** The Council Rooms, Grants Lane, Wedmore, BS28 4EA **on:** Wednesday 18th January 2022 **at:** 7:30pm

**Present:** Councillor Farley (Chair), Councillor Beacom, Councillor Loughery, Councillor Smith, Councillor Banwell, Councillor Candy, Councillor Tinny, Councillor Thorogood.

**In Attendance:** Mrs Lindsey Baker (Clerk), Councillor Harry Munt, Councillor Polly Costello, Members of the public – Emma Tovey, Andy Daintree and Pete Brown.

## to receive any apologies for absence (and record approval if appropriate)

Councillor Reeson and Councillor Rant.

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

**Councillor Harry Munt** provided an update to the Parish Council on the new Somerset Council.

-The Council will be proposing the budget in April. Overall, they are happy with what they have managed to achieve under current pressures. There is still an overspend on both adult and children’s Social Care.

-The LCN (*Local Community Network*) papers have been published today (*Wednesday 17th January 2023*) – Broadly these set out the geography and the terms of reference. They are accessible here([*https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=433&MId=1736*](https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=433&MId=1736))

-Recruitment still going on for the new council and is progressing at pace. The new logo and branding for Somerset Council has been agreed and will be rolled out over the next couple of years.

-Finally, he spoke of bus users in Somerset will be able to travel on most routes in the county for just £2. The major fare cut is part of an initiative funded by the Government aimed at boosting bus use while helping passengers to save money as the cost of living crisis continues to bite, fuelled in part by high petrol and diesel prices. The £2 single fare is available from all participating operators from 1 January to 31 March. The initiative will apply to most routes in Somerset.

Councillor Costello raised with Councillor Munt that Somerset Highways should look at Wellsway, Blackford – the potholes are really quite awful now and posing a real hazard to all users. Also, the road markings outside of Hugh Sexey’s need to be addressed to ensure they are clear to road users.

**Councillor Polly Costello** provided and update on the licencing panel.

-Attended a Licencing Panel meeting. She has been on the panel for 8 years. The panel had been looking particularly at an outdated policy on Charity Street collections. It was resolved that there needs to be an update to the policy, this will be presented to the full council in March for acceptance. She poses ‘What will licencing look like for the new council?’

-Really positive meeting with Wicksteed *(agreed contractors for Cross Farm Play space)* on Monday 16th January. A further £50,000 from CIL *(Community Infrastructure Levy)* has been secured from Sedgemoor District Council. This takes the total secured towards the space to almost £100,000, She confirmed that the prices have been held for many months, but they have now risen 5%. However, after some jiggling and a slightly amended design, the project is projected to cost between £125,000 and £130,000 so the contribution from the Parish Council can be reduced. Wicksteed will be facilitating a meeting for the Parish Council to present the amended plans and answer any questions raised prior to the next Parish Council meeting on the 15th February.

Councillor Banwell confirmed the amount being sought, will be finalised prior to the meeting for decision. Councillor Costello agreed this should be achievable, however there will need to be some consideration at a later stage for the reseeding of the space. **Councillor Costello left the meeting 19:43pm.**

1. **to record any declarations of interest**

Nothing to report.

1. **to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 14th december 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 20th december 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)*

Wedmore First School Academy Head Teacher Emma Tovey addressed the Parish Council first, she introduced herself and asked the Councillors ‘How can we (*the school*) get more involved in the community?’. She has had very positive meetings with representatives from Green Wedmore and The Arts Festival and are looking at running collaborative projects in the near future. She advised that The Power Co-Op are looking to help with the school environment and have offered to carry out an audit will be carried out focussing particularly on the swimming pool. She is hopeful that the facility will be available for Scholl and Community use from Easter until October half term annually. The ‘Wilder Wedmore’ festival will be kicked off at the school, on the week leading up to the festival linked to the curriculum through science / forest school. A big focus for the school is sustainability and involvement in the community. The Men’s shed are going in to make bird boxes with the children. There are plans for a memorial for The Queen within the grounds with a ‘nectar bar’ for wildlife.

Councillor Thorogood congratulated Emma on coming and welcoming the community back into the school.

Councillor Candy asked about the Forest school provision. Emma replied that they have a qualified and practising Forest School trained practitioner onsite who carried out Forest school sessions for all of the children on a weekly basis.

Councillor Banwell suggested the school may wish to reinvestigate the facilitation of Farm visits. Emma invited her for a coffee to explore this further. In all a very exciting time for our school!

**Emma Tovey left the meeting 19:58pm**

Men Shed Representative Andy Daintree provided an update on Men Shed, He confirmed that they have been using the Methodist Church and membership has been steadily climbing with around 50 members regularly attending across the week. He stressed the problem they are now encountering is what the future home look like. The Methodist Church have now confirmed that the building will be sold imminently. He would like to put a plea for help with finding a new space.

Councillor Farley clarified to the other Councillors, that the time element has always been an issue.

Councillor Beacom reiterated that the viability of the refurbishment of the building project will be costly. And a large revenue generation is required.

Further suggestions have been made by the wider community including potential uses for the space including a wellbeing hub? Allowing the potential for users to share costs.

Councillor Banwell asked if there is a possibility of joining up with other local Men Sheds in the area?

Andy confirmed that what they are looking for is an enclosed shed that can be a flexible workshop type space.

Councillor Farley reassured him that they will all do what they can to help the group to continue.

**Andy Daintree left the meeting at 20.06pm**

1. **matters arising and questions raised by councillors –** *note: for information only as resolutions cannot be agreed at this agenda item*

Councillor Thorogood advised that he had used the Infra-Red camera to gather data and understand the imaging and recording system better, in preparation for the roll out to parishioners. He reiterated the importance of getting this launched soon before another season passes.

1. **financial matters**
2. audit of accounts 01st december – 31st December 2022 *(to receive a report from cllrs beacom and smith)*

Councillors Beacom and Smith, confirmed they had carried out the monthly checks and they were accepted as an accurate record to date.

1. to approve payment on invoices, including those listed on attached document

It was resolved to approve payment of all invoices until the next meeting.

**ACTION: Clerk to pay any outstanding invoices**

1. to resolve in principle, funding of professional fees for theale village hall rebuild.

Councillor Thorogood presented an update on the Theale Village Hall project. The committee have now secured £48,000 from Sedgemoor District Council towards the refurbishment. Other funding applications are still in consideration, but the committee are hopeful these will also be successful.

Councillor Smith raised concerns that ideas may run away with the project without proper consultation and plans. Others also mirrored these comments.

Councillor Banwell asked for clarification about the actual sum being sought at this point in time. Councillor Thorogood provided the sum of £2700.

**RESOLVED:** Councillor Smith proposed that the £2,700 be paid for the initial professional fees which includes robust consultation with all interested parties and the preparation for the tender process. This was seconded by Councillor Loughery, all agree.

**ACTION: Councillor Thorogood will advise the Architects that they are willing to proceed and present the clerk with the relevant invoice**.

1. to discuss and resolve a grant application presented by green wedmore in relation to the wilder in wedmore event taking place in june 2023.

Councillor Farley addressed the Council and said it was unfortunate that no one from Green Wedmore were able to attend the meeting as some questions had been raised about the application. Councillor Farley proposed that in the absence of a representative and given the timescale the application should be deferred. All Councillors agree.

Councillor Farley asked Councillors to send through any questions about the application that require clarification to the Clerk who will forward them to the applicant.

**RESOLVED:** The was agreed unanimously, The Item will be added to the agenda for February.

**ACTION: Councillors to send question requiring clarification in relation to the grant application to the Clerk**

**ACTION: Clerk to add this deferred item to next month’s meeting.**

1. to discuss and resolve a grant application presented by Wedmore Playing Field Management Committee for a contribution towards the purchase and installation of electricity battery storage

Councillor Farley thanked Pete Brown for his patience in waiting. Councillor Smith raised a question about funds used for the purchase of the battery so far. Pete Brown confirmed that some ringfenced funds from the Wedmore Playing Field Management Committee accounts have been placed as a deposit in order to secure the battery storage unit as the company are not currently offering lead times which may result in delays with supply. Pete reiterated that support from the local community in whatever form, shows the national funders that the community are behind the project. Councillor Banwell asked if only 1 battery is required, Pete said that further data is required but they need to start somewhere.

**RESOLVED:** Councillor Farley asked for a proposal. Councillor Banwell proposes that the full £500.00 requested be awarded. Councillor Candy Seconded, and by show of hands all agree.

**ACTION: The Clerk will write to Wedmore Playing Field Management Committee and confirm the £500.00 will be awarded.**

**Pete Brown left the meeting at 20:42pm**

1. to consider a request for a contribution towards the a fundraising performance for Ukraine being put on in wedmore village hall on 24th February.

The Clerk asked if all councillors had had the opportunity to view the video sent through by the organisers. It was agreed they had. The Clerk clarified there was no grant application supplied but if a decision was made, money could be given under Local Government Act 1972, Section 145.

**Decision:** Councillor Banwell proposed that the Parish Council pay for the hall hire as a contribution towards the expenses of putting on the performance. By way of raised hands this was unanimously agreed.

**ACTION: Councillor Smith to liaise with the Village Hall Committee and establish the number of days requested for the performance.**

**ACTION: Clerk to contact the organisers and present the offer, if accepted she will pay the Village Hall Committee directly.**

1. to discuss a financial contribution towards the cross farm play area.

Following Councillor Costello’s update and correspondence presented by the clerk, Councillor Farley proposed that this agenda item be deferred until after Wicksteed have presented the new plans and updated costings.

**RESOLVED:** The was agreed unanimously, The Item will be added to the agenda for February.

**ACTION Clerk to arrange a suitable time for Councillors to meet with Wicksteed prior to the next full council meeting scheduled for Wednesday 15th February 2023.**

**ACTION: Clerk to add this deferred item to next month’s meeting.**

1. to resolve the formation of a subcommittee and approve the gathering of tenders for the regeneration for the public toilet facilities.

Councillor Farley explained the initial idea for the project and highlighted the current condition of the public toilets is largely due to lack of investment over the years. Councillor Smith suggested this may be a good project for CIL money providing the criteria for spend can be satisfactorily met.

**RESOLVED:** Councillor Smith and Councillor Farley are happy to progress the project.

**ACTION: Councillor Farley and Councillor Smith to meet at the public toilets and discuss first steps.**

1. to resolve the future of the ‘orchard’ on allotment 28b

The Clerk advised that after the passing of an allotment holder there is no policy in place that would protect or offer the opportunity to interested parties in the instance of an established allotment becoming available. It had been suggested that the Scouts may be interested in taking this plot on. A discussion ensued.

**Decision:** The Scouts will be offered the opportunity to take on the tenancy for this allotment in the first instance. Proposed by Councillor Candy and seconded by Councillor Farley.

**ACTION: The clerk to write to the Scouts and ask if they would like it in the first instance.**

1. to discuss ideas to mark the kings coronation

Councillor Farley asked if any of the Councillors had any ideas of ways to mark the Kings Coronation. There were no initial ideas other than an agreement that something should be done. Councillor Farley asked the other Councillors to have a think and come back next month.

**ACTION: Councillor Banwell will ask within the community to see if anything is already being planned**

1. **committee reports correspondence** *– For information*

* Cemetery – Scribe have now installed the Cemetery software. The Clerk has undergone the initial training and will now need to spend some time installing the current layout and historical records.
* Facilities and Allotments – Several allotments are currently available; this will be advertised in the March edition of the Wedmore News.
* Finance and General Purposes – Nothing to report.
* Housing – Nothing to report.
* Highways, Car Park & Brook – Councillor Banwell provided an update on the investigative work carried out on the property at the West End junction with Blackford Road.
* Planning – The next meeting is scheduled for 31st January.

1. **reports from representatives on committees–** *For Information*

* IOW News – Nothing to report.
* Play Areas – Update received at agenda item 23.01.02
* SALC – Nothing to report.
* Wedmore Playing Fields Management – Nothing to report.
* Village Halls – wed. snug project has appointed a contractor so should make progress. Blackford all is well. Theale as earlier.
* Twinning – Nothing to report.
* Green Wedmore – Nothing to report.

1. **matters of report, correspondence, and items for next meeting**
   1. Chairman – Nothing to report.
   2. Clerk – Overview of received correspondence since the last meeting.
   3. Members – Nothing to report.

**All business conducted the meeting was closed at - 21:15pm**