



Wedmore Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Held at: The Council Rooms, Grants Lane, Wedmore, BS28 4EA **on:** Wednesday 15th November 2023 **at:** 7:30pm

Present: *Councillor Farley, Councillor Beacom, Councillor Smith, Councillor Loughrey, Councillor Tinney, Councillor Blackshaw, Councillor Banwell,

In Attendance: Mrs Lindsey Baker (Clerk), Mr Phillip Weale (Councillor in waiting), Councillor Harry Munt, Councillor Tessa Munt.

Public Participation:

No Members of the Public present.

23.11.1. TO RECEIVE ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Rant (Sabbatical), Councillor Sampson, Councillor Thorogood, Councillor Martin

23.11.2. REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS (BY INVITATION)

- Councillor Tessa Munt reported that in a letter to the Minister for Net Zero, Somerset Council's Lead Member for Climate and Environment has voiced her "frustration" at recent changes to green policy. Writing to the Rt Hon Graham Stuart MP, Minister for Energy Security and Net Zero, Councillor Dixie Darch said she fears the changes announced last week will "seriously jeopardise Somerset's and the UK's ability to reach Net Zero." In it she said Somerset was at the "sharp end" of the effects of climate change and urged a rethink to the changes which included a delay to the ban of new non-electric vehicles and a removal of the need for landlords to make properties energy efficient.
- Somerset Council's fleet of 23 gritters is ready to be mobilised across 900 miles of road as soon as the temperature drops below zero this winter.
- Somerset Council has signed a new eight-year contract with Kier Transportation Ltd to deliver core maintenance across its road network. The £225m agreement covers key maintenance works – including road repairs, drainage, verge cutting and winter service, such as gritting and other emergency functions in adverse weather.
- Councillor Harry Munt gave further update on the serious financial situation that Somerset Council faces. Latest budget figures show Somerset Council is facing a funding gap of £100m for 2024/25 due in large part to an expected increase of £70m in the cost of adult social for 2024/25. Without immediate action this could lead to Somerset being forced to follow the likes of Birmingham and Woking councils by issuing a S114 notice – effectively declaring the council bankrupt. Somerset Council have declared a financial emergency and controls are being put in place across the organisation to limit spending. In response to various questions from members relating to the current financial crisis Councillor Tessa Munt advised the Parish Council must bold with the request for Precept!
- Councillor Beacom asked Councillor Tessa Munt if there was any further update on Combe Batch development at the application seems to have lost momentum since the July committee meeting. There has been no further update for several weeks from either the case officer or the principal planning officer despite Councillor Beacom's best efforts. Councillor Tessa Munt assured the Parish Council she will chase for an update.

23.11.3. TO RECORD ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Smith declared an interest in agenda item 23.11.10 as he is a Trustee on Wedmore Village Hall Management Committee. He will not vote on the resolution for this agenda item.

23.11.4. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18TH OCTOBER 2023

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

It was accepted as an accurate record and the minutes signed.

23.11.5. TO RECEIVE THE CLERKS REPORT AND RESOLVE ANY SUITABLE ACTION REQUIRED.

Councillor Farley asked if all the councillors present, had had the opportunity to read the clerks report, it was confirmed they had.



Wedmore Parish Council

Many of the councillors are concerned about the recent localised flooding following the abysmal weather. Many of the drains have become blocked due to fallen leaves and debris. It was discussed that many residents may not realise the importance and responsibility of clearing drains on or near their properties.

ACTION: The Clerk will schedule social media info posts about helping with drainage for the coming weeks.

23.11.6. MATTERS ARISING AND QUESTIONS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS

Councillor Smith: Updated the Councillors on the Highways actions from the last meeting.

Councillor Banwell: Junction between Quab Lane and Snipefield Lane – No signage or road markings.

ACTION: Councillor Smith will follow this up.

The parked car at the top of Quab Lane is causing an issue with the current road works.

Antisocial behaviour appears to be on the increase (mainly suspected drug dealing) in Quab Lane, Councillor Banwell has reported to the police and will continue to follow up.

Councillor Loughrey: Is very concerned about the condition of the roads around Quab Lane and Snipefield (mud on the road constantly) little effort seems to be made to keep these roads safe for users.

ACTION: Councillors must continue to report hazards to the highways department)

Councillor Tinney: The telegraph pole on the Quab Lane and Snipefield Lane is looking dangerous due to the position. (Clerk Report)

Councillor Beacom: Warm in Wedmore, the Parish Council needs to man a session on 13th and 14th December. Councillor Farley has said she will be available. Councillor Beacom will be sending around a round robin to get further volunteers. She also addressed the Parish Council members to express her disappointment with the Parish Councils representation at the Remembrance Sunday service.

23.11.7. TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR REESON, AND THE DUE PROCESS FOR CO-OPTING A NEW COUNCILLOR

Councillor Farley advised that she had received a resignation letter from Councillor Reeson.

She thanked Andy for his time on the Parish Council and acknowledged the projects and progress he has been part of since joining. She urged the Councillors to consider asking those they know if they would be interested in joining the Parish Council, the load is still heavy to bear with so few.

ACTION: The Clerk will notify Somerset Council (Monitoring Officer) of Councillor Reeson's Resignation and request an advertisement for Co-Option.

ACTION: Clerk to write to Andy Reeson and thank him for his time and contributions.

23.11.8. TO FORMALLY CO-OPT A NEW COUNCILLOR – MR PHILLIP WEALE

Councillor Farley addressed Mr Weale and welcomed him officially to the Parish Council.

Mr Weale signed the Acceptance of Office Register and signed the relevant acceptance forms.

ACTION – Councillor Weale and the Clerk will sign the Declaration of Interest forms and return to the monitoring office within 28 days.

23.11.9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(A) AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 01ST OCTOBER – 31ST OCTOBER 2023 (TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM CLLRS BEACOM AND SMITH)

Councillor Beacom agreed they had carried out the monthly checks and they were accepted as an accurate record to date.

(B) INVOICES PAID SINCE THE LAST MEETING – AS SHOWN ON THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT

It was agreed that the invoices paid were authorised.

(C) TO APPROVE PAYMENTS TO BE MADE - 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

23.11.10. TO RESOLVE TO GRANT BLACKFORD, THEALE AND WEDMORE VILLAGE HALLS WITH £500.00 FOR THE YEAR OF 2023.

Councillor Farley acknowledged Councillor Smiths Declaration of interest for this agenda item.

For the benefit of Councillor Weale and Councillor Blackshaw an explanation was given the the history of the grant to the village halls.



Wedmore Parish Council

RESOLVED: The Parish Council agree that the grants will be given to all the village halls within the Parish, each receiving £500.00 for the year 2023. Councillor Beacom Proposed with Councillor Banwell seconding.

ACTION: The Clerk will advise each of the Hall Management Committees that the grant will be made.

ACTION: The Clerk will transfer the funds to the named Treasurer Accounts

23.11.11. TO ELECT A NEW PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE FOR THEALE VILLAGE HALL.

Following Andy Reesons' resignation, a new representative must be appointed as per the wording of the lease for Theale Village Hall. A short discussion ensued.

Councillor Banwell proposed herself Councillor Beacom seconded.

ACTION: Clerk will write to the VH committee advising of the new lease.

23.11.12. TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE AGREED PAY AWARD ON ALL NJC PAY POINTS 1 AND ABOVE OF £1,925.00 FOR 2023-2024, BACKDATED TO 1ST APRIL 2023, AND TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WITH EFFECT FROM THE 1ST APRIL 2023 AN INCREASE OF ONE DAY TO ALL EMPLOYEES ANNUAL LEAVE ENTITLEMENT, IN LINE WITH CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL STAFF.

ACTION: Confirm with the Monitoring Office that the pay award has been agreed.

ACTION: To update the clerk's salary, pay for November to the agreed rate and include the back payment amount.

23.11.13. TO RESOLVE TO ACCEPT THE QUOTATION PREPARED BY ENCORE ELECTRICAL LIMITED FOR THE ANNUAL PULL AND ANCHOR TESTING IN PREPARATION FOR THE ERECTION OF THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS.

Councillor Farley outlined the background information on the requirement of the pull testing.

RESOLVED: The Parish Council agreed unanimously to carry out the pull testing for 2023. This was proposed by Councillor Banwell and seconded by Councillor Smith

ACTION: The Clerk will advise Encore Electrical Limited of the resolution and arrange a suitable date for testing.

23.11.14. TO RESOLVE TO ACCEPT THE QUOTE PREPARED BY C&T MAINTENANCE TO CARRY OUT THE NECESSARY ELECTRICAL WORK AT THE CARPARK.

The Clerk provided the background information on the requirement of the additional electrical work. The Parish Council agree it is essential.

RESOLVED: Councillor Banwell proposed, and Councillor Smith seconded the proposal that the electrical work be carried out at the earliest convenience.

ACTION: The Clerk will advise C&T Maintenance of the resolution and arrange a suitable date for the work to commence.

23.11.15. TO REVIEW THE LETTER RECEIVED FROM SOMERSET COUNCIL IN RELATION TO ASSET AND SERVICE DEVOLUTION.

The clerk advised that she had received an invitation to attend a seminar about the asset and service devolution proposals which she will attend on Wednesday 22nd November, after which time she will have a clearer idea of what is needed to resolve action.

ACTION: The Clerk will update the Parish Council at the next meeting.

23.11.16. COMMITTEE REPORTS – For information

The next meeting of the Planning Committee will take place on Thursday 23rd November at 7:30pm.

23.11.17. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

1. Councillor Banwell would like to add a proposed Grant Application for Wedmore Young Farmers Club
2. The Clerk will provide an update on the Asset and Service Devolution situation.
3. The Clerk will present the budget for Agreement from the Parish Council
4. Councillors Farley and Beacom will feed back relevant outcomes from the Clerks appraisal.

All business conducted the meeting was closed at 20.35pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday 20th December 2023