



Wedmore Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Held at: The Council Rooms, Grants Lane, Wedmore, BS28 4EA **on:** Wednesday 20th March 2024 **at:** 7:30pm

Present: *Councillor Farley, Councillor Tinney, Councillor Smith, Councillor Blackshaw, Councillor Banwell, Councillor Loughrey, Councillor Weale, Councillor Thorogood.

In Attendance: Mrs Lindsey Baker (Clerk), Councillor H Munt, 4x Members of the Public,

Public Participation: 1x Member of the Public addressed the Parish Council with regards to the Flood Resilience group. He is asking that the Parish Council make a formal request to other affected parishes, to make a formal approach to the Drainage Board to request dredging in the affected areas.

24.03.1. RECEIVE ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (and record approval if appropriate) lga1972 s85 (1))

Councillor Beacom.

24.03.2. RECORD ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None to record

24.03.3. CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21ST FEBRUARY 2024

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 were signed.

24.03.4. 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 clerk's report, it was confirmed they had, and no action was required.

24.03.5. MATTERS ARISING AND QUESTIONS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS – NOTE: FOR INFORMATION ONLY AS RESOLUTIONS CANNOT BE AGREED AT THIS AGENDA ITEM

- **Councillor Farley:** LCN Meeting at Draycott – overview (focus on Highways) What Somerset will continue to provide within their service requirement. All other responsibilities will be devolved to the Parish Council.
- **Councillor Thorogood:** Met with a parishioner who is keen to get involved with the footpaths, Councillor Thorogood has suggested an application to the Parish Council.
- **Councillor Weale:** Has been approached by several parishioners about the current state of Wedmore Pharmacy (Allied Pharmacy) the condition of the building externally is dire and as a listed building this needs to be addressed.
- Councillor Weale gave a brief overview of the updates received from Bel Deering (RA) concerning the ongoing dialogue proactively with the EA, RA etc this includes what resources are available for the Parish Council to access to help prepare for flood resilience. He will continue to pursue this line of enquiry and update as necessary. There are two 'Flood Café' events on 26th March from 10:30 am – 12:00 and 4th May from 2:00 – 3:30 pm.

19:51 2x Members of the Public leave the meeting.

- **Councillor Tinney:** Announces his resignation on the Isle of Wedmore News after many years.
- **Councillor Banwell:** A remarks on the noticeable increase in the use of bollards by residents to prevent parking outside their residences or businesses, this is not acceptable, and suggests contacting the traffic warden.
- No signage on the crossroads at Quab Lane and Eastfield Road (Councillor Smith will follow up). Leaning telegraph pole on Quab Lane. (Councillor Banwell will self-report)
- **Councillor Smith:** - Update on the Heath House crossroads, this will continue to be reported on as accidents occur.
- Following on from the complaint from parishioners about the use of Plud Street following the emergency road closure.



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24.03.6. REPORTS FROM SOMERSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS *(by invitation)*

Councillor Munt reports the latest updates from Somerset Council.

- **Momentous day for Somerset as gigafactory plans moves forward. The Leader of Somerset Council has welcomed a £4 billion investment which will create jobs and put Somerset at the centre of the UK's green energy revolution.**

The Leader of Somerset Council has described plans which could see Somerset become the UK's biggest producer of electric vehicle (EV) batteries as 'momentous' and of global significance.

Agratas, a new business within the Tata Group, has today started writing to thousands of local residents to confirm its plans to build a gigafactory producing EV batteries at the Gravity Smart Campus site in Puriton, near Bridgwater.

A £4 billion investment, the Agratas factory will create up to 4,000 jobs and many more as part of the supply chain. It will put Somerset at the centre of the UK's green energy revolution with the potential to kick-start countywide and regional economic growth and jobs.

- **The tenth anniversary of the devastating 2014 Somerset floods. Somerset Council is marking the 10th anniversary of the 2014 floods with the message that resilience and adaptation are more important than ever.**

It's 10 years since the wettest winter for 250 years left large swathes of the county underwater for weeks, devastating communities, businesses, and farming. Much flood defence and risk management work has taken place since 2014, at a cost of around £80m as part of a 20-Year Flood Action Plan (FAP) delivered by local authorities, the Environment Agency (EA), the Parrett and Axe Brue Internal Drainage Boards which are all part of the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA) partnership set up to give Somerset an extra level of flood protection. Work has included:

- the award-winning raising of a 500-metre section of a road into Muchelney
- dredging stretches of the River Parrett
- enhancements to the River Sowey and King's Sedgemoor Drain system, for example with new river channels under the A372 at Beer Wall near Othery
- development of plans for a Bridgwater Tidal Barrier
- hundreds of natural flood management works to 'Slow the Flow' of water as part of Hills to Levels

As a result, even though this winter has been the wettest since records began in 1910, the areas devastated in 2014 have not been badly affected.

More flood risk management works are planned, and the SRA is currently developing a new Strategy and Flood Action Plan for the next ten years.

24.03.7. FINANCIAL MATTERS

- A. *AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 01ST FEBRUARY – 29TH FEBRUARY 2024 (TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM CLLR'S SMITH AND FARLEY)*

Councillor Smith 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 THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT*

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

ACTION: Clerk to pay any outstanding invoices

24.03.8. ACKNOWLEDGE THE RECEIPT OF A DONATION OF £85.90 FROM THE SWAN, AS A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS NEXT YEAR'S WARM IN WEDMORE INITIATIVE *(Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.)*

ACTION: The Clerk will write a thank you letter to the Swan for the donation.

24.03.9. DISCUSS AND RESOLVE AN APPLICATION FOR CIL FUNDING TOWARDS THE THEALE VILLAGE HALL RESTORATION AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT *(Localism Act 2011, Section 215 of the Planning Act 2008, CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended))*

Councillor Farley gave an update on progress since the last meeting.

A lengthy and considered discussion ensued lasting over an hour – The councillors are sympathetic to the circumstances, and in agreement that Theale Village Hall requires a great deal of work to ensure the continuation of its usage.

Councillor Farley opens the meeting to move a motion.



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1st Proposal: Proposed by Councillor Blackshaw and Seconded by Councillor Weale the Parish Council will award £40,000.00 of CIL funds towards the project as agreed in the Council's priorities in 2021. Councillor Farley presents the motion for voting.

4x Councillors vote 4x do not.

There is a stalemate, the floor is opened for an amendment to the motion to try and break the tie.

2nd Proposal: Proposed by Councillor Loughrey and Seconded by Councillor Smith the Parish Council will award £71,000.00 of CIL funds towards the project taking into consideration the application presented by Theale Village Hall Committee.

Councillor Farley presents the motion for voting.

4x Councillors vote 4x do not.

There is a stalemate, the floor is again opened for further amendments to try and break the tie.

3rd Proposal: Proposed by Councillor Blackshaw and Seconded by Councillor Loughrey the Parish Council will award £52,000.00 of CIL funds towards the project taking into consideration the application presented by Theale Village Hall Committee.

Councillor Farley presents the motion for voting.

3x Councillors vote 5x do not.

The motion is overturned – A new proposal is sought, and the floor is again opened to try and break the tie.

Councillor Tinney abstained from further votes for this agenda item.

4th Proposal: Proposed by Councillor Banwell and Seconded by Councillor Smith the Parish Council will award £60,000.00 towards the project taking into consideration the application presented by Theale Village Hall Committee, Councillor Banwell suggests that £60,000.00 is fair and reasonable given the inflation costs since the original priority figure was agreed. Councillor Banwell continues that the remaining £11,000.00 sought by the Theale Village Hall Committee will be easier to obtain from other funding sources.

Councillor Farley presents the motion for voting.

4x Councillors vote 1x Abstained 3x do not vote.

The motion is carried by a majority vote.

RESOLVED - The Parish Council will award £60,000.00 towards the Theale Village Hall project achieved by a majority vote.

ACTION: The clerk will write to confirm the decision and lay out the payment schedule.

21:10 2x Members of the Public leave the meeting.

24.03.10. RESOLVE THAT SOMERSET COUNCIL SHOULD UNDERTAKE A FEASIBILITY STUDY TO INCLUDE A TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT OF TRAFFIC DATA TO PROGRESS THE PILCORN STREET PAVEMENT PROJECT AT AN ESTIMATED COST OF £10,000.00 (Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972)

Councillor Farley gave a brief overview of the circumstances and opened the floor to move a motion.

A short discussion ensued.

A motion is put forward by Councillor Smith and Seconded by Councillor Banwell that the Parish Council will instruct Somerset Council to undertake the feasibility study, topographical survey, and assessment of traffic data to progress the Pilcorn Street Pavement project at an estimated cost of £10,000.00.

The motion is moved to a vote.

Councillors voted unanimously to resolve the motion.

ACTION: CLERK TO WRITE TO SOMERSET COUNCIL AND INSTRUCT THE FEASIBILITY STUDY.

24.03.11. RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON LOCAL FLOODING IMPACTS, AND CONSIDER NEXT STEPS

Councillor Weale had given a brief overview of the updates received from Bel Deering (RA) concerning the ongoing dialogue proactively with the EA, RA etc earlier in the meeting. This includes what resources are available for the Parish Council to access to help with flood resilience. He will continue to pursue this line of enquiry and update as necessary.



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Following the update from the Member of the Public during Public Participation, Councillor Farley as chairman and in response to the presentation is now minded to ask Councillors to suggest a motion for action.

Councillor Weale proposes that The Parish Council make a formal request to other affected parishes, to make a formal approach to the Drainage Board to request dredging of the rivers in the affected areas. This motion is Seconded by Councillor Smith

The motion is moved to a vote.

Councillors voted unanimously to resolve the motion.

RESOLUTION: The Parish Council will make a formal request to other affected parishes, making a formal approach to the Drainage Board to request dredging in the affected areas.

ACTION: The Clerk will draft a letter for the councillors to agree

24.03.12. COMMITTEE REPORTS – *For information*

- Isle of Wedmore News Update – Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council scheduled for Tuesday 26th March 2024 7:30pm

24.03.13. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

All business conducted the meeting was closed at 9:21pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday 17th April 2024