

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11TH JANUARY 2024 COMMENCING AT 6.30PM AT BROADWAY HILL METHODIST CHURCH, HORTON.

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PUBLIC FORUM No members of the public were in attendance at the meeting. Cllr Sue Osbourne (Councillor – Somerset Council) was in attendance at the meeting. Please refer to **Appendix 1** for a copy of Cllr Osbourne’s monthly report.

4130 ATTENDANCE Councillors Ray Buckler – Chairperson, Barry Mosley – Vice-Chair, Ann Winter, Peter Babbington, Mike Schmidt, Julie Layzell, Andy Johnson and Robert Hutchinson.

4131 APPROVAL OF APOLOGIES Cllr Dave Johnson.

4132 DECLARATION OF INTEREST Cllr Robert Hutchinson reiterated his land/sewage ownership concerning minute number 4134 paragraph 5.1 below. No other interests were declared.

4133 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (NOVEMBER) The minutes of the meeting held in November, having previously been circulated, were approved, seconded, and unanimously agreed upon.

4134 PLANNING APPLICATION(S)

5.1 20/03277/FUL (Appeal Ref. APP/E3335/W/23/3324775) - Land North Of Broadway Hill, Broadway Hill, Horton - Erection of 49 dwellings and formation of vehicular access.

Cllr Ray Buckler had a meeting with Angus McDonald from Gallion but did not meet in the capacity of the parish council. Cllr Buckler did not provide any opinions nor discuss the parish council's objections to the application.

Current planning application appeal – All previous comments made by the parish council will be forwarded to PINS by Somerset Council therefore if the parish has any additional comments to make these need to be sent by the parish council directly to PINS. It was considered and decided that the only additional comments to be sent to PINS should be those relating to the inconsistencies made by Somerset Council Highways stating a traffic count was required but when questioned by the Planning Officer this requirement was withdrawn. to make re The parish council will provide PINS with the latest SID data and independent highways report commissioned by the parish council.

Action: Cllr Buckler to provide additional comments and data to PINS.

5.2 23/03017/OUT - Land Between Pound Road And Paulls Lane, Broadway - Outline application with some matters reserved except for access and layout for the construction of 47 No. dwellings.

Somerset Council have not formally notified Horton Parish Council of the planning application even though Horton parish adjoins the subject site. The application was considered and discussed during the meeting and all councillors voted to unanimously object to the application based on the same reasons as to the Broadway Hill development in Horton.

Action: Cllr Buckler to provide comments to Somerset Council.

4135 PLAYING FIELD UPDATE

- General update – GB Sports has now finished all the works identified in the annual playing field audit.
- Cllr Peter Babbington raised concerns over the slippiness of the platform on the slide. Cllr Buckler will distribute some play sand on the platform which will resolve the issue.

Action: Cllr Buckler to distribute play sand of slide platform.

4136 SPEED INDICATOR DEVICE – UPDATE

- SID still needs to be updated to say ‘thank you’.
- SIDS to remain in place as new drivers are always driving through the village.
- Additional pole – No further updates at the moment. Cllr Andy Johnson to obtain a quote for a pole and its installation.

Action: Cllr Andy Johnson to obtain a quote for a pole and its installation. Cllr Buckler to update SID.

4137 DEFIBRILLATOR

- 8.1** Bus Shelter update – The cabinet is installed however Cllr Dave Johnson had concerns regarding the exposed terminals and emailed the supplier who have since confirmed that the terminals comply with the necessary safety requirements.
- 8.2** Horton Village Hall update – Defibrillator has been installed over the Christmas break and is all setup and ready for use. Cllr Barry Mosley to provide Cllr Ann Winter with the contact details so the unit can be registered with the ambulance service.

Action: Cllr Barry Mosley to provide Cllr Ann Winter with the contact details for the ambulance service.

4138 MAINTENANCE AROUND THE VILLAGE – UPDATE

- 9.1** Email from Ilminster Town Council – Please refer to **Appendix 2** for further details of the email. The email was considered and discussed during the meeting. The council will be producing a list of works that are required around the village and will issue this to contractors and Ilminster TC for a quote to carry out the required works.
- 9.2** Tender Opportunity - Emails from local contractors – the clerk has received various emails from local companies offering maintenance services, further action concerning this as the point above.

Action: Cllrs Ray Buckler and Robert Hutchinson to produce a schedule of works.

4139 LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORK – UPDATE

- Cllr Sue Osborne confirmed that there is no planned reduction in LCN staffing numbers following the announcement of service devolution of some of Somerset Council services.
- Cllr Ray Buckler has still not received a response to his complaint (refer to November 2023 minutes).

Action: Cllr Buckler to contact Jo Wilkins at Somerset Council with his concerns regarding the lack of advertising of the consultation.

4140 FINANCE

Proposal – To approve the following:

- 11.1** 2023/24 financial statement – Unanimously Approved.
- 11.2** 2024/25 budget – Unanimous Approved.
- 11.3** 2024/25 precept – Based on the 2024/25 budget, it was unanimously decided that £16,000 would be requested for the 2024/25 precept.

Proposal – To approve the following cheques:

- 11.4** D White – Wages and expenses - £732.97 - Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000883.
- 11.5** GB Sport & Leisure – Playing field - £2163.60 - Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000884.
- 11.6** Michelle Salaman – Playing field maintenance - £240.00 - Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000885.
- 11.7** BluBook – Payroll services - £144.00 - Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000886.
- 11.8** SSE – Electric Bill - £25.88 - Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000887.
- 11.9** Additional payment to be issued but not included on agenda - G D Spiller - £125.00 - Unanimously Approved - Cheque No. 000888.

Payments to be noted

11.10 ICO – Data Protection – Direct debit set up – Annual payment of £35 - Unanimously Approved.

4141 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

12.1 Hedgehog Highway Project – Noted. Include it on the website and noticeboard.

12.2 Insurance Considerations for Local Councils - Free Zoom Briefing – Noted.

4162 ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIRMAN

13.1 Cllr Ann Winter informed the council that following the hedge being cut along Broadwa Hill a member of the public fell over some of the debris that was left behind. It was also noted how unstable the footpath is due to weed growth. Cllr Robert Hutchinson has previously complained to Somerset Council about the condition of the footpath but did not receive a response

13.2 Cllr Ray Buckler informed all Cllrs that new parish council email addresses are to be provided to all shortly.

4143 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 8th February 2024 commencing at 6.30pm.

Meeting closed: 20.18

APPENDIX 1 – Cllr Osborne’s Monthly Report

Budget Papers, plus detailed list of proposals: Published tomorrow(Friday)

As you will be aware, the process of setting the 2024/25 is well underway and is now entering an important stage. The papers for the 15 January Executive Committee meeting are due to be published at the end of the day tomorrow (Friday 5 January) and will be of interest to everyone at what is a time of severe pressures on our budgets, not least elected members.

The papers should be published at 5pm and you will be able to find them on this page [Agenda for Executive on Monday, 15th January 2024, 10.00 am - Modern Council \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)

We expect there to be media interest and coverage from Friday evening onwards.

The Council declared a financial emergency last year as it, like authorities across the country, looks to cope with the pressure of increased demands and costs, particularly in care services.

We continue to make representations to Government, and the dialogue continues with city, town and parish councils around where they may be able to step up where Somerset Council cannot afford to support services in the way it has done previously.

In the meantime, the Budget Paper published tomorrow sets out the Council’s approach to bridging a £100m budget gap for 2024/25.

In short, the plan to bridge the gap includes use of reserves, significant savings, increasing Council Tax to the maximum allowed by Government, and capitalisation - which allows a council to use capital receipts or borrowing for revenue spending on services.

The papers will include a list of proposals to raise income and make savings by reducing what we spend.

These are not recommendations at this stage, they are the available options.

As part of the work to keep decision-making in the Council’s control and avoid a Section 114 notice, officers were asked to look at ways that we can spend less and increase income. That is what these proposals are, published on 5 January.

No decisions have been made and will not be made until the budget-setting meeting of the **Full Council on 20 February**.

As a reminder, the process regarding budget setting in the coming weeks is as follows:

- 15 January. Meeting of Executive Committee will discuss Budget Update report, including savings proposed approach to bridging the funding gap.
- 22 January. Budget consultation closes.
- 25 January. Audit Committee to discuss technical budget papers and make recommendations to the Executive Committee.
- 1 February. Meeting of the Corporate and Resources Scrutiny Committee. Due to discuss the budget, including savings proposals and make recommendations to the Executive Committee.
- 7 February. Meeting of Executive Committee to consider feedback from Scrutiny Committee and results of budget consultation before recommending budget for decision at Full Council.
- 20 February. Full Council meets to agree final budget for 2024/25.

Persimmon planning application Canal Way Ilminster. This application is going to the Area South Planning Committee on Tuesday 9th January. The meeting will be held at Council Offices Brympton Way Yeovil starting at 2:00. If you wish to speak about the application to the committee you will need to register by 12:00 Noon on Monday 8th January 2024. This is a major housing application for Ilminster and it's outcome will have an impact on Ilminster and the surrounding villages for years to come.

Council's Financial Position: As part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, the Government announced a 6.1% increase in Core Spending Power for Somerset Council. The provisional settlement is less than being forecast mainly due to reductions in Service Grant and New Homes Bonus but partially offset by a higher than forecast increase in Social Care Grant. In November, Somerset Council's Executive declared a financial emergency with a projected budget gap of £100m for 2024/25. The Council is currently inviting the public to have their say on finances and council services. The consultation is open to everyone and can be found at www.somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/comms/budget-consultation-2024-2025/ or can be completed in libraries across Somerset. The consultation closes on 22 January.

End of Charges for DIY Waste: Following a recent change of Government legislation current charges for disposing of construction and demolition materials including: asbestos, plasterboard, hardcore and rubble from household DIY projects have been removed. Each calendar month every household will be able to take up to eight, 50 litre sacks (or equivalent 2m sheets of asbestos or plasterboard) free of charge to a recycling site over a maximum of four visits in a month. Households will need to pre-book trips to dispose of this DIY waste, telling the council the amount of material they are disposing (up to 8x50 litre sacks per month) and the number of times they will need to visit (up to four visits per month). Disposal of asbestos, plasterboard or hardcore/rubble in excess of the free allowance can be paid for online.

Changes to waste collection days: Somerset Council recycling and rubbish collection days change for more than 120,000 households in western parts of the county in February. New collection routes are being introduced for homes in the former Sedgemoor and Somerset West and Taunton areas, as well as a small part of South Somerset. This means many homes in these areas will have a change in collection days from the week beginning Monday 12 February 2024. Changes will be made for the rest of the county later in the year. If a household's collection days are changing, they will receive a letter in early January making this clear. This will be followed by a service guide – including a collection day calendar – arriving near the end of January.

Phosphate Mitigation: The Government has awarded Somerset Council £9.6m of funding to deliver phosphate mitigation measures which will unlock the delivery of new homes across the area and provide for long term nature recovery. The funding will be used to expand the Council's existing phosphate credit scheme and deliver both interim and long-term phosphate mitigation measures including the use of new energy efficient water processing technology trialled at the Fivehead Wastewater Treatment Works near Taunton earlier this year.

Health Research Grant: The National Institute for Health and Care Research has awarded Somerset £5m over five years to form a Health Determinants Research Collaboration – a new research partnership to improve health and reduce health inequalities across the county. Somerset's HDRC, which is expected to launch in January 2024, will focus on the building blocks of good health such as housing, education and the physical environment to tackle the root causes of health inequalities and wider deprivation. Through the programme, the council will involve communities in applying evidence about the building blocks of health to local decisions, and in doing new research where there is not enough evidence.

The Range: A Taunton superstore has been fined £960,000, reduced to £640,000 for an early guilty plea, for food hygiene offences following a successful prosecution by Somerset Council. Guilty pleas were entered by CDS (Superstores International) Ltd, operating as The Range Home and Leisure at Hankridge, Taunton, for seven food hygiene offences in September 2023. An Emergency Hygiene Prohibition Notice was served in August 2022 to prohibit the business selling food for human consumption. During monitoring visits made to the premises, it was found that food was being sold in contravention to the Order which could have caused an imminent risk to health.

School Appeals Panel Members: Somerset Council is looking for new volunteers to become Independent Panel Members for School Appeals. Independent Panels hear and decide on admission, exclusion and transport issues for maintained schools and Academy schools in Somerset. A panel meets when a parent or school lodges an appeal against a decision related to a child's education. These panels are independent of Somerset Council and the governing bodies of the school. The Panels meet online so there is no need to travel, and applications are welcome from across Somerset. No qualifications are needed and full training is provided. For more information, and to apply, please visit www.assemblevolunteers.somerset.gov.uk/opportunities/50638-independent-school-appeals-panels-member-2023-07-17 or email neil.milne@somerset.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2 – Ilminster TC Email

From: Mark Tredwin
Sent: Wednesday, December 20, 2023 2:32 PM
To: Julie Earp <deputy.clerk@ilminster.gov.uk>
Subject: Draft message

Good afternoon,

Yesterday Ilminster Town Council set their Budget for 2024-25. As part of the budget they have allocated funding for Ilminster to be able to deliver a steward service that will cover some of the services that Somerset Council offer.

At this point we are hoping that we will be in a position to work with a neighbouring town to employ between us a Steward that could come out to Parishes and assist them with various maintenance and grounds work tasks. The time scale for this is yet to be agreed as we need to understand what the take-up is likely to be from various parishes.

I have already had a number of Parish Councils contact me expressing an interest and for that reason I am attaching a spreadsheet that if you are interested I would ask you to return as soon as possible.

Whilst it is early days at this point to be able to quote a confirmed charge, I believe that we will be able to do something around the £30-40 per man hour mark.

Some parishes may already be aware that a scheme will going live on the 1 April 2024 through Somerset Council whereby Keir will provide a Highways Steward for £50,000 per year. They have yet to confirm what they will charge for a daily rate, but the guestimate is that it will be significantly higher than the £26 per hour that an annual contract works out at. From my perspective we would be offering a 7.5 hour working day dependent upon where you are located in relation to Ilminster. Ideally the warden would spend a half day minimum in your parish with a full day being preferable.

If your council is interested please send back the attached spreadsheet filled out with the services that you anticipate a Warden may be asked to tackle. If there any that are not on the sheet please add them at the bottom. I would also ask if you would please indicate the number of days a month that you would require the support.

Please bear in mind this is still in the early conception stage but hope that you can see the benefit of working with a local Town Warden. Feel free to email me with any questions and I will do my very best to provide you with answers.

I hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Regards
Mark

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