West Huntspill Parish Council

**Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at 7:00 pm on 11th December 2023 at The Balliol Hall, Church Road, West Huntspill.**

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| **i)** | **Members present:** Cllr J Wakefield**,** Cllr M Saunders, Cllr A Clapp, Cllr R Keen, Cllr A Higgs & Cllr J Wilks  The Clerk – Mrs Alex Harris | **Action** |
| **ii)** | **Members of public present:** 2 members present. |  |
| **iii)** | **Somerset Councillors present**: None |  |
| **1.** | **Apologies for absence**: Cllr R Shaw- Holiday |  |
| **2** | **Dispensation requests**: None |  |
| **3.** | **Minutes and Clerks Report**  Cllr M Saunders proposed the Minutes were a true record of the meeting on the 13/11/23. Cllr J Wilks seconded this, and the Council **resolved** this was a true record. Cllr Clapp and Cllr Saunders approved the Clerks report, and the Council **resolved** this was accepted. |  |
| **4.** | **Matters Arising: None** |  |
|  | Meeting closed at 19.05 for Members of the Public |  |
|  | Meeting re-opened at 7.09pm |  |
| **5.** | **Report from Cllr M Healey (Somerset Council) – report received by email.** |  |
| **6.** | **Planning**  **Brue Farm update:** Landscaping along A38 has started – several new trees and hedges has been planted.  **New Road-** Planning has been submitted for 45 homes. Documents are available at the community hub in the Church for all to view.  **52/23/00012 Land Opposite, 19 Old Pawlett Road – National Grid**  **Overhead Electric Line**  Notification under the Overhead Lines (Exemption) (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 for the erection of a high voltage pole and associated stay.  **Noted – no objections.**  **Public Consultation – Hinkley Point**   1. Water discharge activity 9WDA) permit variation application (EPR/JP3122GM/V011) 2. Water discharge activity (WDA) permit variation application (EPR/XP3321GD/V005)   Public consultation will run from 5/12/23 to 14/1/23 – Published on GOV.UK  **Noted** |  |
| **7.** | **Somerset Council asset and service devolution**  Cllr J Wakefield and the Clerk have attended various meetings regarding the above.  An email stating which assets and services may be affected has been distributed to all Council members.  The Council agreed to look at this list and then plan the Parish Council budget around this for the next financial year.  This could be a possible increase to the precept of £10,000.  Several services the Council may take on are as follows:  Emptying of dog bins  Lollipop crossing – grant funding to the school each year rather than employing direct.  Footpath maintenance.  Grit bins.  The Parish Council Standing Orders would need to be adjusted.  Further discussion is need at January’s meeting before setting the precept. |  |
| **8.** | **War Memorial playing field and Cricket Club**  Trees have not yet been done as the ground is too wet for the machinery.  Scalping’s have been delivered for the new carpark but not yet spread due to the awful weather. Ashley Edwards has the invoices for this and will email them to us to pay as agreed.  Plaque for the pavilion has been ordered but not yet delivered.  Brambles and hedges will not be removed at present. The Council to discuss at a further date if required. |  |
| **9.** | **Ilex Park**  A site meeting was held, and Cllr Clapp, Cllr Wakefield and Cllr Saunders attended.  The following was advised and agreed by the Council:  Ilex Park signage on Main Road  Doggy walk area to be sign posted.  Dogs on Lead sign required.  Mr Mark Fiddess will remove the old maypole equipment and quote for 12inch depth safety sand around equipment that is being kept.  Purchase large tractor tyres and maybe concrete them in place. – Cllr Higgs will enquire  Mr Mark Pugsley has filed existing holes and levelled the ground where needed and completed repairs to equipment.  Spinner has been removed and agreed to quote for a new replacement as a well-used item, approximately £4000 CIL Funds.  2 x junior goal posts have now been installed. |  |
| **10** | **Common, Trees and Footpaths / Green areas**  Ditches on Common are running and now blockages seen – no further action at present.  Mrs Thompson has requested a further dog bin for the Common. The Council agreed this was not needed at present as there is already one there.  The Council agreed that the conifer trees that boundary the Common and Mr Mullins property should be reduced in height and maintained as a hedge. Cllr Higgs will a arrange a quote.  The dead Ash trees that have been reported on Stoney path have been fenced around by the property which abuts the path. This property has extended their boundary without consent to the edge of the footpath. Legal advice will need to be sought on how to deal with the two issues that have arisen – encroachment and 2 x dead trees.  A breeze block wall is at risk of falling along the footpath in Grove Road. This has been reported with photos to Somerset Council.  Old Pawlett Road – The area which has the bus stop and bench installed has a covenant, according to the residents who live on the house on this land. They inform they have duty to maintain these areas and the ditches, yet this is not recorded with the land registry. Cllr Wakefield will talk to the occupiers and ask for a copy of the covenant.  Flooding of the Hams – This may be the result of a tidal gate analysis 2 years ago. No further information has been gained at present. | JW/MS/ Clerk |
| **11** | **Village Plan and Neighbourhood Plan**  The Council agreed for Cllr Wilks to research this further and then discuss his finding with the Parish Council.  Grants will need to be sought. By completing a Neighbourhood Plan the Council will receive 25 % of any CIL funds for new planning instead of the lower amount and will have more say over village development and design. |  |
| **12** | **Projects**  **Clean Sweep** planned for March 2024.  **Carols on the Common** – Cancelled due to weather.  Payments for purchased refreshments and carol sheets will still need to be funded.  **Christmas Tree** has been installed and both trees have been lit. | Clerk/All |
| **13** | **CIL Funds**  Solar Speed Signs – Awaiting a date from Somerset Council for a site visit.  Planter x 1 has been built and the second currently under construction. They will be installed in the spring.  Map area on Common – Cllr Clapp will contact Don Bishop regarding photographs for a new map.  The wooden bench from the Common has been removed for refurbishment – Cllr Saunders & Cllr Higgs.  Metal benches (Post Office and White Cottage) still need to be refurbished. Cllr Higgs will arrange.  Land at Old Pawlett Road need clearing and tidying.  Ilex Park Finger post sign directional sign needed from A38.  The Clerk has contacted Rachel Gundry regarding 2 x mosaics at the boundary markers for the village. Ms Gundry is drafting ideas and will be in touch in January or Feb to discuss further. | All |
| **14** | **Area Report:**  **Ringstone/Withy Road –** No Issues.  **Church Road** – 2 x residents who attended the meeting tonight inform on no lighting from Caramia to Main Road. The Council agreed this is dangerous due to deep rhynes. The Clerk to contact SC/Highways.  Also, several streetlights along A38 are also not working – report to SC.  **Main Road** – Chapel Forge close and the Main Road experienced some flooding to the roads. Storm drains need to be cleared.  **Alstone** – During recent heavy rain the roads flooded around Taunton Kitchen area. | Clerk |
| **15** | **Financial items:**   * Statement of Accounts * To agree the following payments:   Mrs Alex Harris £724.67 – Clerks salary  Mrs Alex Harris £45.97 – Telephone, website, and Office 360  EDF – Common £59.10  Somerset Council – dog bin emptying form Oct 23- March 24 £167.23  Mr Steve Chick £300 – 2x Clearance around bus shelters on A38  SPFA Annual Membership £15.00  The Council **resolved** the banking statement, and all payments were a true record and approved.  **Budget and Precept**  The Council discussed increasing the precept by approximately £10,000 to cover the new duties that the Parish Council would need to cover due to SC financial issues. The Council agreed social media coverage would be needed to inform residents why this was happening as SC advise residents in percentages rather than figures. The precept would increase by approximately 50%.  The precept will be set at January meeting. | Clerk |
| **16** | **Matters of report: None**  Cllr Keen reported he attended a meeting regarding educational provision within our area. The officer representing SC had very old information and was not well informed of the new housing developments or what overcapacity the schools were at. |  |
| **17** | **Date & time of next meeting:**  8th December 2023 – 7pm – Balliol Hall |  |
| **18** | The meeting closed at: 20.30 |  |