

WINSHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 2nd May 2012
At the Jubilee Hall, Winsham.

2380 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Those present: -	Mr John Chance	Chairman
	Mr John Gapper	Vice Chairman
	Miss Trish Baxter	
	Mrs Mary Haggard	
	Mr John Sullivan	
	Mr Michael Dunkin	
	Mr Andrew Partridge	
	Mr Nathan Mode	
Parish clerk:	Mrs Elaine Willis	
District Councillor:	Mrs Sue Osborne	
County Councillor:	Mrs Kim Turner	
Public:		
Apologies:		

2381 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

2382 DISTRICT & COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS

Councillor Sue Osborne welcomed back Councillor Kim Turner after illness. She then went on to comment on The Local Plan which had been presented at a full Council meeting. It details how many houses etc need to be built. The Council are unsure how this plan will fit with the National Plan, it will also have to go to public consultation and then be scrutinised by a strategic planner.

The new bus service timetable has now been published. Councillor Trish Baxter reported that she is currently trying to find out how many people need an early bus as this has been withdrawn. The first bus is now at 8:30am and will arrive in Taunton at 10am. Councillor Kim Turner asked if that information could be passed onto her and she will take it to a meeting with Nigel Collins and John Parret. Councillor John Chance thanked Councillors Kim Turner and Sue Osborne for their help with the bus service review.

Councillor Kim Turner reported on the The Service Reviews – we are looking at every one of the 170 services provided by Somerset County Council and this is going ahead quite slowly. At Full council on 15th February the Conservative Administration voted down our proposal to keep good and excellent services in-house, offering services across the region. They prefer to see everything outsourced or commissioned from elsewhere. The budget for this work – which will be done a lot by consultants - is £3 million for 2012-2013!

During February there was a series of Local Choice Events – which Somerset County Council organised. Fronted by the SCC Chief Executive, the purpose of the events was to explore what Parish/Town Councils and local communities may be able to do for themselves due to SCC being no longer able to afford to provide its current level of services!

There has been a **staff survey** at County Hall and the results have been appalling. Morale is at rock bottom, and although officers enjoy the work, they are frustrated at the lack of leadership at the top. To look at the results click on:- <http://change.somerset.gov.uk/home/say/>

13m investment for schools - Somerset County Council is set to invest millions in building new classrooms, and repairing and maintaining the county's schools and autism units. A £13m capital investment funding programme given by the Government to support children and young people comes into force this month for the 2012/13 financial year. Nearly £6m has been allocated to repair and maintain 172 schools across the county; £3.5m has been set aside for the replacement of Penrose School in Bridgwater, while £1.4m will go to providing more school places and up to £1.2m to replace temporary buildings. Four new classrooms will be built at St. Mary's School in Bridgwater, an additional temporary classroom will be provided at St Nicholas's School in Henstridge, along with two additional temporary classrooms at Westover Green School. In addition, £450K has been set aside to maintain and repair Somerset's Autism units and accommodation for children in care. In past years the County Council had to borrow money for school repairs and building new classrooms. We are really lucky that the Government sees this as a high priority.

Somerset's museums, historic castles and ancient monuments have entered cyberspace, with the launch of a new website and social media platforms. Somerset Routes, a scheme that celebrates Somerset's heritage in one touring map, has this week launched its website - www.somersetroutes.co.uk - making it even easier for the public to explore the county's historic attractions. Originally created in 2009 by Somerset County Council and the Museums in Somerset group, the 'tube map' style design breaks the county into seven different travel lines, taking in over 120 of the county's best heritage attractions. The new website allows you to search for places to visit via the 'tube map' or by criteria, such as historic period or collection type. It also contains information on each attraction, events, itineraries and volunteering opportunities, as well as links to social media platforms Facebook, Twitter and You Tube. I hope that the new website can take the project to an even wider audience, encouraging yet more people to explore the county's hidden gems. Bakelite coffins, the oldest manmade road in Britain and early Victorian prosthetic limbs are just some of the treasures that can be found in Somerset. It boasts an amazing number of museums and heritage attractions, and the website celebrates the fascinating, quirky, important and often intriguing heritage locations in the county. Highlights from the Somerset Routes map include the recently opened Museum of Somerset, Coleridge Cottage, Glastonbury Abbey, Ham Hill Country Park, Montacute House, Hestercombe Gardens and the site of the Battle of Sedgemoor. To find out more visit www.somersetroutes.co.uk

warning for the 15th November 2012. There will be elections across the UK on that day for the posts of Police Commissioner in each policing area. Discussions are underway about the sad demise of the Police Authority on 20th November and the setting up of Police and Crime Panel to scrutinise the Police Commissioner. You will no doubt be hearing more about this very soon.

Ken Maddock Leader of the County Council is stepping down. He is hoping to be selective as the candidate for the Conservative for the post of Avon and Somerset Police Commissioner. The new leader in May will be John Osman. He was the cabinet member for Children and Young People.

I have been contacting officers at District and County with my concerns of the First bus changes in Ilminster. I am worried that the Town has been split into two. You cannot pick First Bus outside the Market house anymore. You have to use the bus stops in Canal Way. Which I feel is wrong. I have asked that a meeting can be arranged with officers from both District and County, Also member from the Town Council to have talks to sort these urgent issues out.

Councillor John Chance asked whether there were still any County farms and if so were there plans to sell them? It was explained that there are a substantial number but none in our immediate area, the nearest being around Ilminster and throughout the County they are being sold off as the tenancies fall vacant.

Councillor John Chance commented that the land in the Quantocks which has been sold to the Forestry Commission will now presumably stay in public ownership for the foreseeable future..

Councillor John Chance thanked Councillors Kim Turner and Sue Osborne for their help with the bus

service review.

Councillor John Chance commented that the information publicly available about Localism and Parish plans is very vague and short on substance. The meeting agreed that passing responsibilities down from County and District level to the Parish was unlikely to lead to any improvements as the Council is volunteer run with limited time and experience. Realistically we would be unable to take on any more than we are doing at the moment. There is already difficulty recruiting councillors, any more tasks would not help to entice volunteers onto the Council

Councillor Michael Dunkin asked how much the Parish Council would be listened to, with regards to planning, under the new proposals.

2383 MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Andrew Partridge declared an interest in item 10e.

2384 MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH MEETING held on 4th April 2012. The Chairman signed the minutes as a true record.

2385 MATTERS ARISING FROM THESE MINUTES NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE AND ANY SUBSEQUENT ACTION TAKEN

- a) The clerk reported that they had 2 quotes to re-bed the stones on the plinth of the War memorial. Councillor John Chance explained that it had been suggested by some councillors that we could re-bed the stones instead of renewing them. The clerk had therefore contacted firm who's lorry damaged the stones and asked them if rather than paying for new stones at approximately £1600 they would pay for the stones to be re-bedded (approx £200) and give a donation to the War memorial reserve fund. The clerk is yet to hear back from the company.
- b) Regarding the proposed purchase of the band hut and allotments, Councillor Mary Haggard commented that the subcommittee had not met yet to liaise with the District Council. *Action: clerk to confirm intent to take over the freehold of the bandhut and allotments with the DC*
- c) There is still one councillor vacancy to be filled
- d) With reference to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, Councillor John Sullivan reported that the time capsule, plaque, archive paper and gel had been ordered. The subcommittee would meet again before the event and collect items to be placed in the capsule. Roger Beer was supplying the beacon and stand; they have to confirm with the Sports and Social Club where to site it. Mrs J Weller will be the first aider. Councillor Mary Haggard commented that there would not be a useable water supply for the beacon / fire risk. Councillor John Chance suggested installing an outside tap which was frost and tamper proof. *Action: Councillors John Sullivan and Michael Dunkin to meet to discuss plans and risk assessment. This needs to be forwarded to the insurers 2 weeks before the event. Councillor Mary Haggard to investigate outside tap.*

2386 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- a) Application: 12/00662/FUL Erection of an agricultural building to house livestock, Greencombe farm Crewkerne Hill – granted by SSDC

2387 AMENITIES

- a) Councillor Andrew Partridge reported that he needed to pass on the assessment sheets to the clerk for storage. Councillors Michael Dunkin reported that he had devised a quarterly assessment sheet. The clerk confirmed that the last SSDC quarterly report was done in April.

2388 RIGHTS OF WAY

Councillor John Gapper reported that he had not heard about the progress with the gate behind Plum Tree.

2389 FINANCIAL MATTERS

- a) Cheques signed for Clerks salary & expenses, Came & Co, Time capsule and expenses, grass cutting.
- b) The audit was agreed and signed by the chairman and clerk
- c) The annual financial risk assessment was agreed. The clerk will continue to publish all

cheques on the agendas. Each Cheque requires 2 signatories. Quarterly bank reconciliations are reported to the councillors by the clerk. In the case that SSDC fail to pay the precept or another such emergency occurs the council will call an emergency meeting to deal with any financial concerns. The council agreed to hold a reserve fund of £4000. Councillor John Chance also asked to see the insurance policy details.

2390 CEMETERY

The clerk asked for confirmation that a memorial can be placed without the interment of ashes for example; if the ashes had already been scattered. The council confirmed that this would be allowed as long as the memorial fitted into the allocated memorial size and the plot was purchased. The council would also allow a dedicated bench to be placed in the cemetery.

2391 UPPER RECREATION GROUND

Councillor Mary Haggard reported that everything was going well, the planning for the Beacon party was in hand and they would be open from 5pm.

2392 JUBILEE HALL

Councillor John Sullivan reported that they were organising a party for the official unveiling of the Diamond Jubilee gate on Monday 4th June at 4pm. Mr and Mrs R Smart would be officiating. The Youth cafe looked to be a success. Councillor Mary Haggard congratulated Elaine Willis for getting this up and running. Councillor John Chance asked whether there had been enough community support. Elaine Willis confirmed that there had been good support and offers of help. There had been positive feedback from the first session.

2393 HIGHWAYS

Councillor Andrew Partridge reported that all the drains were blocked along the main road from Western Way up towards the cutting past the band hut. *Action: clerk to report.*

Councillor John Sullivan asked whether the County Council would refund parishes that employed their own lengthsman. Councillor Sue Osborne responded that funding had recently been cut.

Councillor John Chance asked whether the County Council contracted farmers to clear snow.

Councillor Kim Turner responded that they did but there were tight regulations.

2394 CORRESPONDENCE

a)

Most of this correspondence was circulated prior to the meeting & the rest was made available to all members who attended the meeting.

2395 MEMBERS QUESTION TIME & ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Councillor John Chance reported that we had had a letter of complaint from Mr Whitehouse, regarding planning Application 12/00407/FUL Change of use of land to equestrian Show Ground, 332 stables, judges boxes, pavilion, fencing, landscaping and parking. Higher Purtington. The clerk had sent a response.

b) Councillor John Gapper reported that there was some possibility of free first aid training in the village. Councillor John Chance suggested investigating the matter further.

2396 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Ordinary meeting of The Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 6th June for 7-30 pm meet in the Jubilee Hall.

a) Annual Parish Meeting 9th May 2012 @ 7:30pm

Signed.....Date.....