

West Crewkerne Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held 23rd November 2023

Present: F. Freeman, C. Broom, J. Archer, and J. Holt. Also in attendance was one resident, and Clerk to the Council R. Richards (no County Councillors were able to attend)

148 To elect a chairperson to preside over the parish council meeting

Resolved: Members elected Cllr Frank Freeman as chairperson to preside over the meeting

Proposed: Cllr Archer **Seconded:** Cllr Broom **Vote:** 3-0-1

149 To receive a signed declaration of acceptance of office from the meeting chairperson

Cllr Freeman signed the declaration of acceptance of office of Chairperson

150 To consider applicants and resolve to co-opt [2] councillors to the parish council

Resolved: Members co-opted Julia Borland to fill one of the vacancies

Proposed: Cllr Freeman **Seconded:** Cllr Broom **Vote:** 4-0-0

151 To receive signed declarations of office from the co-opted councillor/s

Cllr Borland signed the declaration of acceptance of office

152 To acknowledge that the meeting chairperson will resign the chair

Cllr Freeman resigned the office of Chairperson of the meeting

153 To elect a chairperson of the parish council

Resolved: Members elected Julia Borland as chairperson of the parish council

Proposed: Cllr Freeman **Seconded:** Cllr Holt **Vote:** 4-0-1

154 To receive a signed declaration of acceptance of office from the chairperson

Cllr Borland signed the declaration of office of Chairman

155 To elect a Vice Chairman following the recent resignations

Resolved: Members elected Julie Archer as Vice Chair of the parish council

Proposed: Cllr Borland **Seconded:** Cllr Freeman **Vote:** 4-0-1

156 To receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Cllr Archer signed the declaration of acceptance of office of Vice Chair

157 Members to receive apologies for absence and to approve the Reasons given (LGA 1972 s85(1))

No apologies as all members were in attendance

158 To receive any Declarations of Interest (pecuniary or non-statutory Interests) - None received

159 Approve the Minutes of the Council Meetings held 27th July and 12th October (LGA 1972 sch 12, para 41(1))

Resolved: Members approved the Minutes of the July meeting, the October Meeting was not quorate

Proposed: Cllr Archer **Seconded:** Cllr Freeman **Vote:** 5-0-0

160 Outstanding Items Update

- a) Update on the caravan at Portway Cottages – This has now gone
- b) Update on the Enforcement Report re Caravan at Clapton Farm – This has also gone
- c) Members to approve the cost of the Chapter 8 Training for Cllr Freeman

Resolved: Members approved the cost of the Chapter 8 Training

Proposed: Cllr Borland **Seconded:** Cllr Broom **Vote:** 4-0-1

- d) Members to agree the clerks offer to extend her Notice Period from one month to six months

Resolved: Members approved the clerks offer to extend her notice period

Proposed: Cllr Borland **Seconded:** Cllr Archer **Vote:** 5-0-0

161 Planning Matters

West Crewkerne Parish Council is a Statutory Consultee for Planning Applications and as such does not make the final decision on any application. Any decisions and comments made by the Parish Council will be reported to the Planning Officer. South Somerset District Council is the Planning Authority and will issue the final decision notice.

a) Members to resolve Applications received:

- Application Reference: 23/02509/HOU

Applicant: Mr & Mrs D Oldridge

Location: Horwill House Axe Road Drimpton Crewkerne Somerset DT8 3RJ

Proposal: Proposed Extension and Alterations

Observations Required by: 26th October 2023

The response of no objection was sent to Planning before the deadline

b) Applications Decisions received

22/02315/HOU Boughbeeche Clapton Road West Crewkerne TA18 8PS – Permitted with Conditions

c) Applications Awaiting Decision - None

162 Finance

Proposals:

a) Members to approve the October and November payments and sign cheques

Resolved: Members approved the October and November payments totalling £1,559.68

Proposed: Cllr Borland **Seconded:** Cllr Freeman **Vote:** 5-0-0

b) Members to approve the bank reconciliations for August, September, and October

Resolved: Members approved the August, September, and October bank reconciliations

Proposed: Cllr Freeman **Seconded:** Cllr Holt **Vote:** 5-0-0

163 Document Review

Proposal: Members to review and adopt the following policies:

- Information and Data Protection Policy
- Training Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Abusive, unreasonable, and vexatious complaints Policy
- Freedom of Information
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Grievance Procedure
- Dignity At Work

Resolved: Members approved all eight policies **Proposed:** Cllr Borland **Seconded:** Cllr Freeman **Vote:** 5-0-0

164 Report from the Joint Burial Committee

Next meeting of the Burial Committee is on 4th December

Resolved: Members elected Julia Borland to fill West Crewkerne's vacancy on the Joint Burial Committee

Proposed: Cllr Freeman **Seconded:** Cllr Broom **Vote:** 4-0-1

165 Highways Matters including the block drains along Clapton Road

It was reported that some of the drains within Clapton had been flushed in the last few weeks, however the blocked gullies/drains along Clapton Road were not touched. These drains are a major problem when we have heavy rain, causing flooding along this stretch of road.

There is also flooding under the railway bridge in Hewish. A large pothole in this area has been recently reported and is now repaired. However, the road surface in this area is being eroded due to the excess water, when it floods.

The single road from the junction of the B 3165 to Woolminstone does have adequate ditches on each side of the road, however the channels to drain the water from the road into these ditches need the vegetation blocking them to be cut away. This should then prevent some road surface erosion and potholes.

Action: Clerk to ask highways about the 10 gullies along Clapton Road B3165 from Clapton to the junction with the road to Woolminstone. These if cleared of vegetation and debris should allow the water to enter the drains. These gullies, put in place by highways, require regular maintenance, how often are they flushed by highways? Is there a proposal from highways which would improve the flooding on this road. Was there any reason why with the recent availability of a jetting vehicle being used within Clapton that these gullies/drains were not cleared?

166 Members to consider a request for funding support from the Citizens Advice Somerset

Resolved: Members elected donate £150 as they support residents in the Parish

Proposed: Cllr Borland **Seconded:** Cllr Archer **Vote:** 5-0-0

167 Brief report from the LCN Meetings held September and November

Cllr Freeman gave a short report from the meeting including the current financial difficulties of Somerset Council and the expected council tax increase to raise much needed funds.

168 Members to consider Somerset Council's letter regarding Asset and Service Devolution

Members to decide before the budgets are finalised if they need to make provision for any services

169 Clerk's Report and Correspondence

- Photos and a map of the desired location for the SIDs in Roundham sent to Highways
- Email sent to Avon and Somerset Police asking them if can provide any reports from the SIDs used in Clapton. They have responded that there is no data available.
- Deterioration of 30mph road markings reported to Highways asking them to repaint the signs to remind motorists of the speed limit.
- Details of the Elan specifications for the SIDs sent to Highways
- Application for funding for the SIDs in Roundham submitted to Avon and Somerset Police

Confidential Items

Proposal: Under Standing Orders 3d and 10xi the Parish Council resolves that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted (legal, personal or commercial), the press and public be excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.

170 Members to decide whether to accept the quote from Elan City for Speed Indicator Devices

Postponed until the January meeting as we should know by then if the application for funding from Somerset and Avon Police has been successful

171 NJC 2023/24 Pay Agreement to be discussed and salary agreed for the Clerk

Resolved: Members agreed a new salary rate based on Scale Point 20 for the clerk

Proposed: Cllr Borland **Seconded:** Cllr Freeman **Vote:** 5-0-0

172 Employment Terms for the replacement Clerk to be agreed so that the vacancy can be advertised

This was discussed in full with a decision reached to advertise in January via the Democratic Services, Facebook and local notice boards

173 Date of Next Meeting: 25th January 2024

Meeting closed 8.50pm