

Minutes of the Annual Cutcombe Parish Council Meeting held at 7.30pm on Tuesday 16th May 2023 at the Moorland Hall

Present: Councillors Jon Levenson (Chair), Eric Norman, Roger Foxwell, Sarah Cook, Claire Rooke, Jon Davis

In attendance: Liz Stitt – Clerk, Cllr Pugsley, Cllr Nicholson

Also Present Three members of the public

Item	Minutes	Action
23/29	To Elect the Chair for 2023-24. Nominations, properly proposed and seconded, and endorsed by the candidate(s), are invited for the office of Chair. Nominations were proposed and seconded for Cllr Levenson who accepted the nominations and with a unanimous show of hands was voted as Chair.	
23/30	To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office from the Chair. The declaration was signed by Cllr Levenson.	
23/31	To Elect the Vice Chair for 2023-24. Nominations, properly proposed and seconded, and endorsed by the candidate(s), are invited for the office of Vice Chair Nominations were proposed and seconded for Cllr Norman who accepted the nominations and with a unanimous show of hands was voted as Vice Chair.	
23/32	To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office from the Vice Chair. The declaration was signed by Cllr Norman.	
23/33	Public Question Time A member of the public said Thank you for the Coronation Lunch donation. Cllr Levenson said that the Coronation lunch was a brilliant day, the catering and entertainment was fantastic, and everyone enjoyed themselves, he asked for thanks for be passed onto the committee for organising it all. Cllr Levenson also thanked the Trustees of Moorland Hall for the use of the hall on the day. The member of public also asked for thanks to be given to Mrs Nieve for putting flowers on the war memorial. The Parish Council gave a vote of thanks to Mrs Nieve for doing this.	
23/34	To receive Apologies for Absence No apologies were received by the Clerk.	
23/35	To receive Declarations of Interests Cllr Norman declared an interest in item 21 iii)	
23/36	To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of 18 April 2023 Cllr Foxwell asked for Clarification of whether Cllr Norman and Cllr Levenson had spoken to the adjacent neighbour regarding the shipping container under item 23/22. Cllr Levenson said they have not been able to do this yet. Cllr Foxwell also asked for the recorded vote to be clarified under item 23/25 iii) as to who voted. Under this item Cllr Davis proposed, Cllr Norman seconded, when asked for a show of hands Cllr Levenson, Cllr Norman, Cllr Davis, Cllr Cook and Cllr Rooke all raised their hands in favour of the proposal, Cllr Foxwell did not note. After this clarification it was proposed and agreed to accept the minutes and they were signed by Cllr Levenson.	
23/37	To receive and discuss the Clerk's report The report was received and noted by Councillors.	
23/38	To receive the Chair's report <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) It was fantastic that the first cricket match was held on the sports field, which was great. Well done to Cutcombe Cricket club who won. ii) It was recommended that councilors read the Good Councillors Guide as it's really useful. iii) There is an award scheme by Somerset County Council called the Chair's Award for service to the community 2023 where you can nominate an individual or group who has served the community. The Clerk to ask Cally if details about it can go on the website. iv) There has been no reply from the Exmoor National Park Authority regarding the transformer issue. 	Clerk
23/39	To receive reports from Somerset Councillors. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) The first LCN board will be meeting on the 8th of June, more than one councilor can attend but will only have one vote. Members of the public can attend too. ii) It is important to have a strong representative on the ENPA Board. There is potentially a lot of change happening at the ENPA with new members. 	

	<p>iii) Cllr Norman asked to liaise with Cllr Nicholson about the new road closure for Snowdrop Valley. To get it covered for the two years it needs to be applied at the right time as it lasts for 18 months. Cllr Nicholson is going to check when to apply as they need at least three months' notice.</p> <p>iv) Cllr Pugsley asked Cllr Levenson to copy him in on the letters regarding the transformer so that he could chase.</p>	<p>Cllr Nicholson</p> <p>Cllr Levenson</p>
23/40	<p>To consider Highways and transport matters</p> <p>i) There is a highways subgroup meeting coming up, they will be discussing road schemes, surfacing, surface dressing, grass cutting and vegetation. Cllr Foxwell is hoping to get an update at this meeting as to when they will be cutting the site lines at the junctions.</p> <p>ii) There were concerns where some of the signs for the 20mph speed limit were going to go which has been sent to Kate Brown to update the plan. Kate said that the tweaks we sent through were all in hand. Kate confirmed there has been one letter of objection so far..</p> <p>iii) Cllr Foxwell is hoping that they get some action at the next highways subgroup meeting as things get reported but they don't get actioned.</p> <p>iv) Cllr Pugsley said the key thing that is happening at the next highways meeting is the Bridges team are going to report on the landslip and what the process will be for dealing with it. That is our opportunity to quiz them closely about what they have to do and when they are going to do it.</p> <p>v) Cllr Pugsley understands Cllr Foxwell's frustrations but highlighted that these meetings are helping push things forward. A lot of parishes are managing to get work done rapidly but they recognise that they are behind with the united scheme regarding drainage.</p> <p>vi) Cllr Norman asked if a sum of money could be given to parishes to arrange for their own local companies to do things like drain clearing. Cllr Nicholson said that this would be tricky as smaller parishes don't even have a bank account. It would also change things like audits as the sum of money would put parishes over the £25,000 mark, but Cllr Nicholson took the point that if it could possibly be moved to a lower level then it would get dealt with more quickly.</p> <p>vii) Cllr Levenson asked that as the school is a church of England School and the children regularly walk to the church, could this section of the road be made 20mph for free. Cllr Nicholson and Cllr Pugsley said that it is only around the school gates. Cllr Davis highlighted that there is no pavement to the church. Cllr Nicholson suggested the Clerk write to Sam Murrell and add in about the children walking to the church.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
23/41	<p>Motion to discuss options for the Bus Shelter Clock and resolve to pick one It was proposed, seconded, and unanimously agreed to order the electric clock at £525 + VAT and the clock controller at £250 + VAT. The Clerk highlighted that this was over what was budgeted which was noted but still decided to go ahead. The Clerk will order the clock and mechanism and will update Cynthia who kindly offered to make a donation towards the clock.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
23/42	<p>Motion to discuss a Citizens Advice West Somerset donation and resolve whether to go ahead. It was proposed, seconded, and unanimously agreed to go ahead with a £250 donation coming out of the projects – community budget, the Clerk highlighted that this would take it over what was budgeted for this year which was noted but Councillors agreed to go ahead. The Clerk will contact Ian Atkinson regarding this.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
23/43	<p>Motion to put forward a Parish Council Member to be nominated for the ENPA Board Representative vote in June Cllr Levenson said Cllr White represented Cutcombe Parish Council on this board for many years and asked if there were any volunteers who would like to put their name forward for this. Cllr Foxwell said he would like to put his name forward as he attends a lot of the panel meetings and is vocal on behalf of the parishioners and the wider Exmoor. Cllr Davis objected to Cllr Foxwell being nominated as he believes he has supported open market housing that he is against and he believes is against park policy, and he doesn't feel he can support him due to this. Cllr Foxwell disputed what Cllr Davis said. Cllr Norman applauded Cllr Foxwell for putting his name forward, he said that Cllr White was an exemplary person and the whole Council valued his input and he put forward the councils' views. Cllr Norman agreed with Cllr Davis that the person the council puts forward has to be in</p>	

	<p>agreement to put forward the councils' views totally and he will not back Cllr Foxwell, Cllr Norman said Cllr Foxwell has voted against Snowdrop Valley in the past, therefore his views on Cllr Foxwell's thoughts do not follow the same views that Cllr White did. Cllr Norman said the council has been blessed with Cllr White representing them over many years and he does not think that Cllr Foxwell can fill that void. Cllr Levenson said things change and has found that whatever has happened in the past Cllr Foxwell has supported Snowdrop Valley recently and is now a supporter of it. Cllr Foxwell said every year is different, and it is the decision of the Parish Council whether the event goes ahead. The way it was run this year was very good with volunteers and is probably the way forward. Cllr Foxwell asked for everything that was said for this part of the minutes to be printed. Cllr Foxwell said if there is not the consensus from this parish to put his name forward then he will go to another parish. Cllr Levenson said we have heard the comments and it feels like the council would rather have no representative rather than Cllr Foxwell which was agreed by Cllr Davis and Cllr Norman.[A member of the public left the meeting] Cllr Levenson said if Cllr Foxwell is committed to doing this, he is very committed to the community here, he may have ruffled a few feathers quite considerably in his time as a councillor, but I think his heart is in the right place and I would support him as I would sooner have Cllr Foxwell on the board than no representative from Cutcombe. Cllr Davis said he disagreed and said Cllr Foxwell can be abrasive in his approach. Cllr Levenson asked Cllr Davis not to make personal comments and said we can speak our views but will not make personal comments. Cllr Davis argued that abrasive is a description and not personal. Cllr Davis said he has had many occasions where he has been voted against, but he has not asked for it all to be recorded in the minutes. Cllr Davis proposed that we do not put a representative forward for the ENPA board, Cllr Norman seconded this vote, a show of hands showed Cllr Norman, Cllr Davis and Cllr Rooke put their hands up in favour of this. Cllr Levenson proposed to put Cllr Foxwell forward as the Cutcombe representative on the ENPA board, Cllr Foxwell seconded it, a show of hands showed Cllr Levenson and Cllr Foxwell put their hands up in favour. Cllr Cook did not vote on any of the proposals. Therefore, it was decided to not put Cllr Foxwell forward.[Cllr Pugsley and Cllr Nicholson left the meeting]</p>	
34/44	<p>To review delegation arrangements to committees, working groups and portfolio roles: Cllrs reviewed the arrangements for delegation which are confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Finance & Risk Working Group Cllr Levenson, Cllr Norman, Cllr Davis plus Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer. Cllr Cook is backup in case of absences. ii) Snowdrop Valley Committee: Cllr Norman (Committee Chair), Cllr Levenson and Cllr Rooke plus Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer and other public representatives. <p>Portfolios and Representation on external bodies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Portfolios: Cllr Foxwell said he has enjoyed his time as Highways warden, but he is stepping down. Cllr Levenson thanked Cllr Foxwell for everything he has done as Highways Warden. Cllr Norman said he will stand in as Highways Warden temporarily and we can bring forward this decision again when we have a full council. ii) Representation: Moorland Hall Committee - Cllr Davis <p>Other committees to be established on an ad hoc basis.</p>	
23/45	<p>To review the committee's Terms of Reference and the Code of Conduct. These were circulated to councillors before the meeting. The Finance and Risk Working Group Terms of reference were reviewed and agreed. It was agreed to amend the Snowdrop Valley terms of reference to say the committee can authorise spending within the agreed Snowdrop Valley Budget which will be approved by the full council. Any spending that takes it over budget must still be approved by the full council and any spending over £500 also needs to be approved by the full council. The Code of Conduct was also reviewed and agreed. Cllr Foxwell highlighted the seven principles of public life as a councillor which he gave copies of to each of the councillors.</p>	

23/46	To review membership of other bodies; NALC, SALC and Clerk's membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks. It was agreed to carry on with membership to all three of these.	
23/47	To review the updated inventory of land and assets The Clerk explained the FRWG have reviewed the list and the Clerk is going to get confirmation from the Internal Auditor as to how things need to be listed. This will be brought to the next meeting.	Clerk
23/48	To discuss any Planning matters No planning matters were received.	
23/49	Finance: 1.1 Motion to review the adequacy of insurance arrangements and approve the policy renewal. This was discussed in the FRWG, the Clerk is going to get clarification on a couple of points on the insurance cover. If it is the same cover, the Clerk will go back to the original insurers to see if they can match the price of a cheaper new quote, if not it was agreed to go ahead with the new quote from BHIB which is a lot cheaper if you take it over the next three years. 1.2 Update on 2022 – 2023 year end accounts. These were circulated to councillors before the meeting, and it was shown to the FRWG who checked it all and signed the bank statements. Cllr Levenson noted that due to the great success of the Snowdrop Valley event this year the council has got high reserves and it may be that next year the council may have to look at reviewing a lesser precept. 1.3 Motion to approve the schedule of payments and note receipts. It was proposed and agreed to pay this.	Clerk
23/50	To note the correspondence which Councillors have received in the correspondence report. The report was received and noted by the council.	
23/51	To agree the dates of Ordinary Council Meetings for 2023-24. It was agreed previously to bring the June meeting forward to the 13 th . After this, meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of each month excepting January and August at 7.30 pm at the Moorland Hall. 13 June, 18 July, 19 September, 17 October, 21 November, 19 December, 20 February, 19 March, 16 April	
23/52	Items for the next Agenda. i) Review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. ii) Approval of the AGAR and period of public inspection. iii) Discuss and agree the Snowdrop Valley Budget 2023 – 2024. iv) Discuss and agree to a Donation to Cutcombe First School for a new Storage Area. v) Review Inventory of Land and Assets.	

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Signed:

Dated:

Appendix

- i) Clerks Report
- ii) Schedule of Payments
- iii) Correspondence Report