

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on :-
Tuesday 10th December 2024 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall**

Present: Stephen Kimsey (SK) (Chair), Dot Hayward (DH), Sarah Payne (SPa), Steve Powles (SPo), Marc Vyvyan-Jones (MVJ). Plus 4 residents.

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| 1 | Apologies: Mary Abel (MA), Francis Nicholson (FN), Chris Chanter (CC), Stephen Pugsley (SPu) and Louise Cooke (LC) | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interest -None declared | |
| 3 | Minutes:- SPa proposed that these were an accurate representation of the previous meeting and MVJ seconded. The minutes were unanimously accepted and signed off by the chair | |
| 4 | <p>Boundary review discussion: to discuss the following motion which has been circulated to parish councillors and residents on the website, the village Facebook page and on the noticeboards</p> <p>“Background - The Local Government Boundary Commission is currently undertaking a review and consultation on proposals for new council divisions and division boundaries for Somerset Council. The current consultation ends on 20th January 2025 and. Is likely to result in the total number of Somerset County councillors reducing from 110 to 96. In addition to having the aim of creating roughly equally sized divisions (in terms of electorate), the legal criteria of the review includes the need to reflect the interests and identities of local communities and also for new electoral arrangements to provide for effective and convenient local government. Huish Champflower is currently in the Dulverton and Exmoor electoral division, and is extremely well supported by 2 County Councillors and also the very effective Exmoor LCN. Our concern is that as we sit on the edge of the current Dulverton and Exmoor electoral division, that we, along with other neighbouring Brendon Hills parishes, might be moved into a different division. Huish Champflower Parish Council will be discussing and voting on the following resolution: - "<i>Huish Champflower must continue to be in an electoral division with other Exmoor parishes, as it is critical for us to continue to be part of this strong community of shared characteristics and interests.</i>"</p> <p>Of the parish councillors present all 4 voted in favour of this motion plus one vote given in absentia.</p> <p>The Boundary Commission needs to understand both the views of the parish council and the views of local residents, and there is an online questionnaire to complete. Posters to be put up around the village with a QR code to encourage residents to send in their views. Everyone’s views matter. Link here. The consultation closing date is the 20th Jan 2024.</p> <p>Stephen to find out exactly what the consultation is asking for.</p> <p>Clatworthy and Upton have expressed their desire to stay within Exmoor</p> <p>The Exmoor LCN, of which the parish council has been an active participant in, has been an exemplar to the rest of the county. It would be a great shame to lose involvement in this group.</p> | <p style="text-align: right;">DH</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SK</p> |

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| 5 | <p>Highways</p> <p>Grit bins mostly full 2 bins have a lot of water in and need holes put into drain them one on Brown Lane and one opposite the entrance to Coombe End Farm. DH has put scoops in all the bins and bags except the 2 filled with water. The majority of bags and bins were well filled.</p> <p>Ice warning signs 2 needed. DH to ask Highways if they can provide even if this is chargeable.</p> <p>Very bad pothole at Raleghs Cross by the temporary traffic lights. There is a really easy method to report potholes online Link here</p> | DH |
| 6 | <p>Footpaths and Bridleways. A stile near East Coombe Farm is very rotten, MVJ reporting to Somerset Council.</p> <p>Somerset Council have a scheme where you can adopt a footpath or a bridleway, you undertake to walk/ride it regularly and report any issues.</p> | MVJ |
| 7 | <p>Finance update</p> <p>We have £7326.06 in the Treasurers Account with 2 payments since the last meeting £18.99 to DH for the purchase of the scoops and £53.13 to SPa for the purchase of the first aid kit for the village hall. In the Business Bank Account we have £1087.18 and have earned 98pence interest since the last meeting.</p> <p>In January we will investigate moving the account to Nat West as Lloyds are introducing charges of £5 per month. Action DH, SPa, MA and LC</p> <p>Precept we have to ask for our precept by the 20th January, last year this was put up thinking the Somerset Council were going to devolve certain functions to parish councils. However, this didn't happen but it is quite likely that it will this year grit, stile maintenance and hedge trimming are possible functions that could be devolved. This leaves a level of uncertainty. The discussion was once we know what functions are being devolved and the costs of those we can get a clearer picture.</p> <p>In context Somerset Councils contractors would charge us £6-700 per day for work. A contested election could cost £2000 etc</p> <p>The general feeling from parish councillors was that we should not put up the precept this year. SPa proposed the precept was kept the same and SPo seconded this 3 voted in favour with one feeling that there should be a small inflationary increase. The discussion that followed was that we need to see how this years costs work out and then an inflationary increase would seem sensible. Decision made to keep the precept at existing level. DH to send in response form</p> | DH, SPa,M A,LC |
| 8 | <p>Volunteering:-Suggested that we have a volunteer day at the village hall where residents can consider various volunteering opportunities. Add to future agenda in the spring</p> | DH |
| 9 | Date of Next meeting changed from 14th Jan to 21st January 2025 | |
| 10 | AOB Cafe at the church Jan 31st Coffee and Cake | |