Minutes of a Meeting of Huish Episcopi Parish Council held at Huish Episcopi Primary School on Monday 21 November 2022 at 19:00hrs

Present – Councillors (Cllrs)
Julie Gadd, Graham Lock, Peter Porter, Jane Redfearn (Chair), Val Saunders, John Wood, Barry Horsgood
In attendance:
J Ferguson – Parish Clerk, County Cllrs Richard Wilkins and Mike Stanton and 1 member of the public.

Public Open Session

County and District Councillor's Reports
Cllr Richard Wilkins reported on the LCN consultation timeline and the statistics for the responses to the consultation from local councils and the wider public.
Cllr Wilkins further presented a plan for a number of highway improvements including signage and bollards to prevent and protect the Grade I listed Hanging Chapel from being repeatedly damaged due to unsuitable vehicles striking and becoming stuck beneath the arch. The Parish Council gave their full support to the scheme and agreed to the parish clerk contacting SCC Highways requesting that the measures go ahead. It was reported that Langport Town Council (LTC) had also given he scheme their approval and would similarly be contacting SCC Highways.
Both County Councillors asked the Parish Council to give consideration to the message contained in the recent letter from the leader of Somerset County Council (SCC), Bill Revans, explaining the budgetary constraints and projected overspend that the County Council are expecting in the next financial year. Parish Councils were being asked to take these and other key issues into consideration when setting their budgets and submitting their precept requests in January 2023.
' We cannot be definitive at this stage about the impact of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) process, with the Chancellor's statement on government spending delayed yet again, and we don't yet know the outcome of the work to devolve assets and services to local communities. We believe, however, it is prudent for your organisation to consider how it can take steps to ensure it is financially resilient in the light of the new Somerset Council's profound budget challenges and difficult decisions that may need to be taken.'
(extract from Letter to all City, Town and Parish Councils from the leader of Somerset County Council, Bill Revans – 1st November 2022)

19:20 – Meeting opened

22/165 Apologies for absence. (LGA 1972 s85(1))
Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Crumb and Cllr Harris.

22/166 Declarations of interests. Council members to declare any interests, including any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33 (b-e). (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)
None.

22/167 To approve the minutes of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12, para 41(1))
RESOLVED: To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17th October 2022.
ACTION: Parish Clerk

22/168 Matters arising from the minutes
None.

22/169 Planning applications – 22/02887/HOU. 17 Portland Road, Huish Episcopi. Garage conversion into habitable living space. Demolish existing conservatory and replace with single storey side extension. Front extension with porch and pitched roof.
RESOLVED: To SUPPORT the application.

…….. Chair …….. Date

ACTION: Parish Clerk

22/170 Planning applications – 22/02165/FUL. The Quackery, Wearne Haven, Wearne. Change of use of agricultural land to residential curtilage and erection of building for ancillary accommodation – retrospective.
RESOLVED: To SUPPORT the application.

ACTION: Parish Clerk

22/171 Planning applications – 22/02742/HOU. 2 The Avenue, Huish Episcopi. Enlargement of existing side extension.
RESOLVED: To SUPPORT the application.

ACTION: Parish Clerk

22/172 Planning decisions and report
None.

22/173 Finance – To approve purchase of Remembrance Wreath at a cost of £50
RESOLVED: To approve the purchase of Remembrance Wreath at a cost of £50.

22/174 Finance – To consider a grant request from Parrett Community Shed
RESOLVED: To approve a grant of £300 to the Parratt Community Shed.

22/175 Finance – To consider a grant request from Langport Area CIO
RESOLVED: To approve a grant of £1000 to the Langport Area CIO.

22/176 Finance – To approve NALC National Salary Award 2022-23 terms and backdated pay
RESOLVED: To approve NALC National Salary Award 2022-23 terms and backdated pay.

22/177 Finance – To approve the payment schedule

Huish Episcopi Parish Council November 22 Payment Schedule			
Invoice	**Payee**	**Particulars**	**Amount**
1	STAFF	Gross Salary	£961.06
2	STAFF	Expenses and reimbursements	£59.79
3	TIMEBACK ACCTS	Payroll fees	£27.50
4	SSDC	Ranger Sept 22	£768.30
5	RBL	Remembrance wreath	£50.00
	TOTAL	**Nov 2022 meeting**	**£1,866.65**

RESOLVED: To approve all payments and for 2 Cllrs to authorise at the bank.

ACTION: Cllrs Wood and Harris

22/178 Finance – To approve the cashbook and bank reconciliation to 31st Oct 22
RESOLVED: To approve the cashbook and bank reconciliation to 31 Oct 2022.

22/179 Finance – To consider the potential financial impact of a Unitary Authority due to devolution of services and assets to the Parish Council
It was suggested that this would be difficult to quantify as no information relating to what those assets or services might be had been provided, but agreed that consideration to potential additional liabilities throughout the parish should form part of the budget setting for the coming year. The potential for parishes to work together to help keep cost down was discussed, along with consideration for an increase in the Lengthsman's hours (on the assumption that this scheme would continue).

22/180 Finance – To approve the 2023-24 draft budget

…….. Chair …….. Date

The Parish Council agreed to provide any feedback to the clerk before the next meeting where the budget would be approved.

ACTION: All Cllrs

22/181 Finance – To appoint the internal auditor for the financial year 2022-23
The clerk reported that she was still waiting to hear back from the accountancy firm recommended and would report at a future meeting.

ACTION: Parish Clerk

22/182 Parish Council Matters – To adopt Councillor-Officer Protocol (NALC Civility and Respect Project)
RESOLVED: To adopt Councillor-Officer Protocol (NALC Civility and Respect Project).

22/183 Parish Council Matters – To agree to the Civility and Respect Pledge (NALC Civility and Respect Project)
RESOLVED: To agree to consider and strive towards the Civility and Respect Pledge requirements (NALC Civility and Respect Project).

22/184 Parish Council Matters – To report on the Community Plan (CP) (Cllr Harris)
Cllr Harris had provided a progress report which had been circulated by email. Training provided by the CP team had been undertaken, a poster had been created and a public meeting was planned for the 7th December 2022, 7pm at Huish Episcopi Primary School. The aim of the meeting was to gather opinions as to the survey topics and questions, which would then be prepared and launched by February 2023.

22/185 Parish Council Matters – To consider administrative support for the APB Liaison Group
Cllr Saunders requested administrative support for the APB Liaison Group, which was agreed to be paid, as the workload was becoming more significant due to the number of meetings and actions. It was suggested that perhaps Langport Town Council could offer some clerical support as they had more employees and Cllr Saunders agreed to enquire.

ACTION: Cllr Saunders

22/186 Parish Council Matters – To appoint a Somerset Emergency Community Contact
Cllr Saunders had forwarded the details to the Flood Group and it was agreed that this didn't need to be a Cllr role. A suitable candidate was put forward and Cllr Redfearn agreed to contact them to ask if they would be willing to take on the role.

ACTION: Cllr Redfearn

22/187 Parish Council Matters – To review the allotment rules and rents
Cllr Crumb had informed that allotment inspections needed to be carried out soon. It was agreed that 2 Cllrs needed to carry out the inspections, the results of which would be provided to the clerk and any letters needed to be sent to allotment holders as a result of the inspections would be done by the clerk.
RESOLVED: To increase the annual rent to £48/year from April 2023.

22/188 Parish Matters – To report on the foodbank and Warm Space project
Cllr Saunders regularly provided updates on the progress of the Warm Space project and the foodbank and explained that the demand for the foodbank was rising, but stocks were being maintained at a good level. The Library was being considered as a warm space, but currently the Angel was up and running for 2 sessions a week (Tues/Thurs 12pm-4pm), heated and providing refreshments FoC. More volunteers were needed to allow the sessions to continue as all warm spaced required supervision.

22/189 Parish Matters – To consider local area plans for the Coronation of King Charles III celebrations
It was agreed that the Parish Council were not planning on leading the weekend celebrations, but remained open to support other groups who may be considering putting on an event. Representatives from LTC present suggested that a joint meeting could be called, inviting significant town and parish groups to discuss further and Cllr Redfearn agreed to support. Cllr Horsgood reported that the Hanging Chapel would be open over the Coronation weekend.

…….. Chair …….. Date

22/190 Village group reports
Cllr Redfearn gave a report provided by Cllr Crumb on litter picking and asking the Parish Council to approve purchase of litter picking equipment. Everyone agreed to this modest request and thanked Cllr Crumb for all his, and his group of litter pickers efforts keeping the parish clean.
Cllr Gadd gave a comprehensive report on a recent Somerset Bus Partnership (SBP) meeting that she had attended explaining the measures being taken by SBP to reach out to travellers with the information they need for bus services and routes on offer. Cllr Gadd agreed to be the Parish Council 'Bus Champion'.
Cllr Gadd had also received the virtual training on the Rights Of Way Legislation, something that she already had reasonable knowledge of.
Cllr Porter reported that the running club would be running to raise funds for the foodbank on 7th December 2022.

22/191 Highways, footpaths, rights of way and car park – To consider an extension to the 30mph limit from Muchelney Road to beyond Bicknells Bridge and the first part of Tanyards Lane
Cllr Saunders asked for comments and support for a request to SCC Highways to extend the 30mph limit from Muchelney Road to beyond Bicknells Bridge and the first part of Tanyard Lane. The Parish Council agreed that this would be a good idea and agreed to request an extension to the 30mph limit as discussed.
ACTION: Parish Clerk

22/192 Highways, footpaths, rights of way and car park – To report on the results of the lorry survey
A report was provided, quoting numbers and operators of HGV's using the roads in and around Langport and Huish Episcopi. A report was to be produced and circulated at which time the details could be considered further.

22/193 Highways, footpaths, rights of way and car park – To consider options to address speeding throughout the parish
This was deferred to a future meeting.

22/194 Clerk's report and correspondence
The following items of correspondence had been circulated by email:

- SSDC members briefings
- SALC LGA webinars – Councillor safety and online safety for councillors
- Warm spaces questionnaire – Response sent
- SALC health and wellbeing survey
- Covid 19 booster and flu vaccination programme
- St Margaret's Hospice newsletter
- Winter service snow ploughing local support/community resilience
- SWP briefings
- Somerset Bus Service – Bus service under threat – Cllr Gadd attended
- Somerset Emergency Community contact - Tbc
- SALC Rights of Way Legislation presentation – Cllr Gadd attended
- CCS Community Buildings conference
- Letter from the Leader of Somerset County Council – Budget and precept

22/195 Items for the next agenda

- Citizens Science Project Report (Cllr Saunders)
- Community Governance Review Report (Cllr Saunders)
- Request for LED lights at Newtown Road crossing (Cllr Gadd)

22/196 Date of next meeting – 16th January 2023

20:58 – Meeting closed

…….. Chair …….. Date