Huish Episcopi Parish Council

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Minutes of a Meeting of Huish Episcopi Parish Council held at Huish Episcopi Primary School on Monday 18 March 2024 at 19:00hrs

Present: Councillors (Cllrs) – Rob Crumb, Arwyn Harris, Julia Gadd, Barry Horsgood, Graham Lock, Peter Porter, Jane Redfearn (Chair), Val Saunders, John Wood.
In attendance: J Ferguson – Parish Clerk, Somerset Cllrs Richard Wilkins and Mike Stanton and 8 members of the public (part-time).

PUBLIC COMMENTS (15 minutes)
This section (at the Chairman's discretion may last up to 15 minutes) is not part of the formal meeting of the Council and minutes will not be produced. Public Bodies (admissions to meetings) Act 1960 s 1 extended by the LG Act 1972 s 100.
The following items were raised:
As detailed in a recently published article for The Leveller, public member spoke out against any future merger of Langport and Huish Episcopi, making reference to the numerous instances of failed and rejected mergers over the last 20 years.
Discussions were heard with arguments for and against a future Community Hall in Huish Episcopi.

OUTSIDE REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES

- Somerset Councillors

Cllr Stanton and Wilkins had circulated a report and answered questions put to them by Cllrs.

19:30 – Meeting opened

23/184 To receive apologies for absence and approve the reasons (LGA 1972 s85(1)).
None.

23/185 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.

23/186 To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting (LGA 1972 sch 12, para 41(1)).
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2024.

23/187 Matters to report from a previous meeting.
Cllr Wood was still unsure as to the wording for the War Memorial plaque, Cllr Redfearn agreed to help understand the source of the request.

23/188 Planning decisions report. None.

23/189 Planning applications. None.

23/190 Finance – To **APPROVE** the payment schedule for March 2024.

Huish Episcopi Parish Council Mar 24 Payment Schedule			
Invoice	**Payee**	**Particulars**	**Amount**
1	SOMERSET COUNCIL	RANGER (FEB24)	£ 1,161.90
2	J FERGUSON	REIMBURSEMENT NOTICEBOARD KEYS	£ 20.91
3	TIMEBACK ACCOUNTS	PAYROLL FEES 6426 6509	£ 12.00
4	HEDGEHOGS R US	HEDGEHOG HIGHWAY BOX	£ 157.50
5	STEVE OSMOND ELECTRICAL	DEFIBRILLATOR INSTALLATION	£ 72.00
	TOTAL	**Mar-23**	**£ 1,424.31**

RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the payment schedule for March 2024.

ACTION: Cllrs Wood and Harris

23/191 Finance – To **CONSIDER** options for a Parish Maintenance Ranger contract.
RESOLVED: To instruct Somerset Landscapes to provide a weekly Ranger service as per their quotation.

23/192 Finance – To **CONSIDER** a grant request for £9000 from Langport and Huish Youth Club.
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** a grant request for £9000 from Langport and Huish Youth Group, to be made with the April 2024 payments.

23/193 Finance – To **CONSIDER** a grant request for £10,000 from Landmark Langport.
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** a grant request for £10,000 from Landmark Langport.

23/194 Finance – To **CONSIDER** quotes for fingerpost maintenance.
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** a quote of £915 for fingerpost maintenance.

ACTION: Cllr Wood

23/195 To CONSIDER a response to the Somerset Council Highway Maintenance Devolution – Options for local enhancement to routine highways maintenance services.
It was decided to wait and see the output from a LCN meeting which was due to be held later that week before deciding on any response to this correspondence.

ACTION: Cllr Redfearn

23/196 To APPROVE the Joint Councils Committee (JCC) Terms of Reference (ToR).
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the Joint Council's Committee Terms of Reference (App.1).

23/197 To CONSIDER JCC recommendations for qualifying parish projects using S106 funding.
It was agreed that these recommendations were a useful starting point but that any application for funds would require careful consideration. Frustration was heard from Cllrs Porter and Horsgood as they impressed upon the PC the urgency for long-standing renovations to the changing rooms at the Memorial Field, risking losing the current bookings that they held.

23/198 To CONSIDER the future of a Huish Episcopi Community Hall – In discussion relating to S106 funds, the JCC agreed to recommend to the Parish Council that any future Community Hall is not taken forward and consideration be given to any S106 funds already allocated to this project. Further arguments for and against the future of any village community hall were heard and feedback from an informal question posed on social media was presented, in support of the project. Cllr Redfearn had been approached by representatives from the Diocese with a suggestion that land may be able to be secured at a favourable cost. Members in opposition to taking the project forward asked why this had

not been progressed over the last 25 yrs and it was argued that a suitable location could not be identified at that time. It was further stated that challenges including raising funds and managing a project of this size would be considerable and risky for the PC. Impact on existing venues was also a concern.
Cllr Saunders put forward a motion, which Cllr Crumb seconded:
RESOLVED: To **APPROVE** the JCC recommendation that any future Community Hall is not taken forward and consideration is to be given to S106 funds already allocated to this project. (VOTE: 5 for, 4 against).

23/199 Reports – To receive reports:
a. Parish Councillors.
Cllr Redfearn reported on the situation with the Lengthsman and had also reported some maintenance on the SC 'Report it' webpage.
Cllr Porter gave an update from a recent Transport WG meeting, with parking surveys being carried out, tackling ongoing speeding and continuing to look at HGV signage throughout the parish.
b. Any other reports.
A report was heard from the Youth Club, which was well attended and held a 'Pasta Tuesday' providing a hot meal to those present. It was very popular and will continue into April at least.

23/200 Clerk's report and correspondence.
a. Supporting people in Avon and Somerset affected by crime – donation request.
b. Somerset's local nature recovery strategy – Public consultation.
c. Response from SC Planning Director regarding Planning Committee meeting conduct.

23/201 Items for the next agenda.
- APCM & APM.

23/202 Date of next meeting – 20 May 2024 (Cllrs to note - All agenda items to be notified to the Parish Clerk by Thursday 9 May 2024).

21:07 – Meeting closed.