

Hinton St George Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 15th July 2024, At St. Georges Village Hall, Hinton St. George

Present: Cllrs R. Lewin (RL) P. Reynolds (PR), P. Lanham (PL), A. Barber (AB) and S. Ashton (SA). Somerset Councillor, J. Roundell- Greene

The Clerk and Parish Path Liaison Officer

Members of the Public: One

961. Open Forum.

A member of the public enquired about a sign for the Village Cross as it is not clear to people this is a village cross and not a war memorial. He felt a small concise plate with description of the Cross would be appropriate. Councillors confirmed this was an agenda item and there was discussion about previous works to the Cross and the need to ensure the sign is on the ground and not attached to the scheduled monument.

962. Apologies for Absence: Cllrs. M Herbert and F Voss sent apologies along with County Councillors A Dance – all personal. Accepted.

963. Declarations of Interest: None

964. Minutes of last Meeting: The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 17th June 2024 were approved and signed by the Chair.

965. Somerset Councillor Report: Somerset Councillor J. Roundell-Greene said the financial situation was not great, but savings of around £1.6 million have been achieved, although not in the Adult and Children’s services. She confirmed that the waste contract was being renegotiated, and there would be an increase of around £ 3 million for this financial year, and varying increases for the remainder of the contract up to 2030. When asked about emptying of dog and letter bins, she said they were continuing as usual at the moment. She also said that Yeovil Town Council would be taking some sports and recreational facilities in Yeovil under a devolved assets agreement with Somerset Council.

There was discussion on the flooding issue along Merriott Road and the conflicting responses from Somerset Council and both the Chair and Vice Chair voiced their frustration that the Parish Council had expressed drainage concerns during the construction stage, but they had been ignored by the planners. There was discussion on the problems, how this might be remedied and who had signed off on the drainage. Councillors were clear they intend to pursue all possible avenues to have the drainage corrected and to make formal complaints to the relevant authorities.

They thanked Cllr J Roundell-Greene for her report and her help in this matter and she left the meeting.

966. Clerks Updates:

a) Summer Lane road surfacing works: There was no update, so the Clerk will write again.

b) Grass verges – there was no response with regard to the ownership of the verge at the school playing field, so the Clerk will write again.

c) A30 Small Improvement Scheme: The scheme had been discussed at a local Highways meeting, but there was no budget to make any additional changes.

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The Clerk also mentioned that the side of the hedge along New Road will be cut within the next few weeks on safety grounds as people are having to step out onto the road to avoid the overhanging vegetation. There was discussion on the reduced Chapter 8 training which would cover safety while working along a road, and the overgrown hedges and verges on approaches to the village. Councillors expressed concern at the reduced visibility at the A30 Mangle Hill junction and asked the Clerk to contact the landowners to have vegetation cut back and to enquire about possible training for road working.

967. Highways and footpaths updates:

a) Parish Path Liaison report – the PPLO reported that the kissing gate had been repaired and he had met with the man undertaking drainage works and he liked his ideas to try to improve drainage in the area. Councillors also noted the works being done to some hedges. The Boardwalk has now been removed and people are walking down the steps to the Great Oak. There was discussion about the offer a kissing gate from Rights of Way and Vice Chair confirmed that a rotted step on a bridge had been repaired. The Chair spoke about possible works to the old pond to the south of the Oak and said he would share any plans with the Parish Path Liaison Officer once they had been fully explored.

Councillors thanked him for his report.

b) Flooding on Merriott Road –

to consider the latest correspondence from Somerset Council and agree response and next steps. Councillors discussed the 3 options mentioned in the last email from Highways, noting that one was not possible as pipework was under a property, one involved land not owned by Highways or the developer and the other would involve substantial work along Merriott Road. After further discussion on gradients, land ownership and what amount of water needs to be drained, it was agreed that the Clerk contact Highways to arrange a site meeting as soon as possible to discuss the options. The Clerk will also review the original planning consent to see who signed off the drainage works.

It was also agreed the Clerk write to ask for a full response to their enquiry with regard to the Bond and the conflicting replies from different departments at Somerset Council.

To consider submitting a formal complaint to Somerset Council following the response to the Freedom of Information request. Councillors expressed their dissatisfaction with the varying responses, and it was agreed that the Clerk and Vice Chair would jointly draft the formal complaint to Somerset Council. All agreed.

c) to discuss changes to road and street services from Somerset Council and consider possible actions. – Councillors noted the possible cuts to some street services and the likely reductions in verge cutting and drain clearance, and the impact this could have on the precept for 2025/26.

968. Planning applications to review:

There were no applications to review.

Decisions to note:

24/01162/TCA – South Orchard, Gas Lane, Hinton St. George – notification of intent to fell No 2 trees within a Conservation Area – Decided – No TPO required.

24/01092/S73 Eggwood House, Eggwood, Merriott TA165QN -S73 application to vary Hinton St. George Parish Council
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condition 4 (discontinued use after 5 years) of planning consent number 18/02644/FUL to allow the continued use of the land for day provisions for adults with additional needs for a further 15 years to 30th April 2039, in accordance with the extended lease – approved with conditions

969. Planning and Conservation matters:

a) to receive update on Conservation Area appraisal and agree next steps: - the Clerk confirmed the completed street surveys and the tree review had been sent to the Heritage Consultant. It was agreed other areas should be surveyed and the Clerk will add significant trees to the street reviews. The Vice Chair suggested a longer article be placed in the Autumn edition of the Hinton Hound, ahead of any public consultation.

b) Pelota Wall -to discuss and agree actions– Cllr Lanham confirmed he hoped to speak to the stonemason within the next few weeks to allow further discussion at the September meeting.

c) To receive update on lighting at Merriott Road – Councillors noted the estimate for the changes to the 3 heritage lights, to reduce to a warmer level and agreed that the work should be done. There was discussion on the suggested level of brightness, and it was agreed that Cllr Lanham would liaise with the lighting engineer to agree the final details. Councillors also expressed interest in having a full lighting report for the village, which Cllr Lanham will also discuss.

All agreed to proceed with changing the LED units for the 3 Heritage lights.

d) To receive report from the Tree Review working party – Cllr Barber thanked the Clerk for the preparation work ahead of the tree review which had been very useful, and the Chair thanked the working party for the very informative report. It was agreed that significant trees be identified for possible Tree Preservation Orders and further discussion should be had in the September meeting.

Cllr Ashton suggested that several local villages were experiencing similar challenges, and it would be useful to host a meeting to discuss the issues faced by smaller Parish Councils. The Clerk and Cllr Ashton will discuss how this might be achieved.

e) To discuss possible signage for the Village Cross – Councillors agreed that a small plaque on a plinth could be placed on the grass in front of the Cross, but nothing should be fixed to the Cross itself. The wording and cost to be agreed.

970. Finance:

a) review of the current receipts and payments schedule and verify bank reconciliations. – Councillors noted the balances on the accounts

b) Invoices for payment to be considered and approved by Councillors prior to payment –

I.	Clerk – Salary	£ 388.60
II.	SSE energy	£ 15.11
III.	Home and Garden Services	£ 758.16
IV.	J Chant - reimbursement	£ 19.99
V.	Old Boys Collective	£ 537.59
VI.	Westco – SID Battery	£ 109.80

c) to receive an update and agree the 2-year electricity supply for the defibrillator -The Hinton St. George Parish Council July 2024

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Clerk had spoken to the current provider and resolved the issue with regard to direct debits, so Councillors agreed the 2-year contract which was signed by the Chair

d) to note the 1st Quarter Budget review – councillors noted the overspend in some areas of the Budget and the Clerk highlighted the likely increase in village maintenance given the reduction in some services from Somerset Council. The first review of 2025/26 Budget will be in September, when there may be a Parish Price List for additional services, such as drain clearance.

971. to receive Parish Councillors reports

PL - none

AB – some pavements have been marked with white paint for repairs.

RL –none

PR – none

SA – none

972. To agree copy for the Hinton Hound – Councillors agreed the suggested information details and the Chair asked the Clerk to liaise with the Editor for a larger space in the Autumn edition.

973. To note correspondence received and consider response to:

a) Sponsor a Chair fundraiser from St Georges Hall Committee – Councillors agreed to sponsor 3 chairs at a total cost of £ 105.00

b) suggestion for Neighbourhood Watch for the village – Councillors noted the suggestion but felt this was not necessary at this time.

974. Public Forum – no public in attendance

975. Next meeting date: The next meeting will be held on Monday 16th September 2024

The meeting ended at 21.35

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Signed

Date