

MINUTES OF CROSCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Held at the Church Rooms, Church Street

on

Tuesday 9th January, 2024, at 7:00 pm

Present: Cllrs A Ford, B Gudzelak, C Jackson, M Rogers, H Shergold (Chairman)

Attending: Cllr Bente Height (Somerset Council); J McGhee (Parish Clerk)); three candidates to be co-opted as councillor (A Hargraves, J Owen, A Sully); one member of the public (G Pettitt).

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. PUBLIC FORUM

The member of the public, G Pettitt, indicated she felt it was a serious failing in the draft budget (Appendix 8) that reserves were only shown as general reserves and not identified against specific likely items of future expenditure, in particular the play area, so that adequate funds could be specifically earmarked and built up over time. There was a brief discussion over reserves and this is addressed further under item 8(iv) below.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies: Cllr M Starnes, Cllr M Lovell (Somerset Council).

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Rogers advised that the people applying for planning permission as described in item 7(i) below are friends of his.

5. CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

The Clerk described the voting process. Each of the three candidates spoke briefly in support of his application. A ballot was then held of councillors. Anthony Hargraves was chosen as the preferred candidate by a majority in the first round of voting. Cllr Ford proposed that he be duly co-opted and Cllr Rogers seconded. Council unanimously accepted Mr Hargraves as a councillor. He signed the

Declaration of Acceptance of Office form, which was countersigned by the Clerk and the Chairman, and joined the meeting as a councillor. The other candidates were thanked and complimented by the chairman for their applications and encouraged to seek other ways of contributing to the parish.

Clerk to provide an appropriate email address for the new councillor, update the Council website, have the Register of Members Interests Form completed and inform Democratic Services at Somerset Council.

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- i. To confirm and sign minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 24th October, 2023 (Appendix 4). **RESOLVED** Approved.

7. PLANNING

- i. To consider application below

No. & Officer	Detail	Type
2023/1485/FUL Lynsey Bradshaw	Full details Response Date: 10 Jan 2024 New driveway access, carport, conversion of existing store and bedroom area into B&B and maintenance repairs. The Old Manor, Long Street, Croscombe. Mr & Mrs N McElhatton.	FULL

Council discussed this application. Cllr Rogers abstained from the discussion. No significant objection was identified. The substantive conclusion drawn was that the changes to car parking would improve visibility and therefore safety at the junction of Boards Lane and Long Street. For that reason, the Council will recommend approval of the application and the Clerk was instructed to apply a comment appropriately at the Somerset Council planning portal.

8. FINANCE

- i. To approve (or not) bank account reconciliation to 02 Jan 24 (Appendix 5). **RESOLVED** Approved.
- ii. To approve (or not) budget review to 31 Dec 24 (Appendix 6). **RESOLVED** Approved.
- iii. To note cashflow from 13 Oct 23 to 02 Jan 24 (Appendix 7). **RESOLVED** Approved.
- iv. To approve (or not) budget for 2024-25 and agree precept (Appendix 8).

The level of precept for 2024-25 was discussed. Council members were conscious of need to balance the desire to keep the precept low with the potential need to consider taking on more services currently provided by Somerset Council as a result of the latter's financial difficulties. Cllr Jackson proposed a precept increase of 10%, to £12,650. Cllr Gudzelak seconded.

RESOLVED The proposal was unanimously approved. The Clerk will complete the appropriate precept form and submit to Somerset Council.

The Council considered the comments made during the Public Forum. The Clerk will review the Council's asset register, consider specific items against which reserves could be set, update the

budget and present to the next Council meeting. The overall level of reserves, and the budget as a whole, will not change.

9. CLERK'S REPORT

- i. To note Clerk's Report (Appendix 9). **RESOLVED.** Noted.

The Clerk reported on further items verbally.

Several avenues are being explored to gain a view of the cost of extending the 20mph speed limit from the junction of Jack's Lane and Old Street Lane to a point past the houses on Old Street Lane. A discussion with Traffic Management at Somerset Council has been arranged and the Clerk expects to be able to report before the next meeting.

Somerset Council has been approached for an up-to-date copy of the lease between it and Croscombe Parish Council. The request is with Sedgemoor Property Services within Somerset Council and the Clerk expects an update before the next meeting.

10. LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT

- i. To note report from Somerset Council (Appendix 10). **RESOLVED.** Noted.

11. CEMETERY AND PLAY AREA MAINTENANCE

- i. Approval or not of invoice from Shepton Mallet Landscapes Ltd - £2,415. **RESOLVED.**

Council approved payment of the invoice. Clerk to raise payment.

- ii. Maintenance for 2024 – cemetery and play area.

One quote has been submitted for maintenance of the cemetery in 2024. The Clerk is to obtain competitive quotes, inform councillors and resolve award of the contract.

- iii. Cemetery gates

Cllr Ford highlighted the poor condition of the gates to the cemetery. They are difficult to secure open and difficult to open once securely closed. Cllr Jackson will investigate the situation and what can be done and report to the next meeting.

12. PARISH QUESTIONNAIRE REPORT

- i. Discussion of survey results (Appendix 11).

Cllr Shergold will reissue the report with the full set of results and recommendations and these will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

13. UPDATE ON PLAY AREA PHASE 2

- i. Approval (or not) of the purchase of goalposts.

Cllr Rogers proposed approval of expenditure on goalposts up to the amount already fundraised. Cllr Shergold seconded. Council unanimously approved. **RESOLVED.** Council approved the purchase of goalposts. The Clerk will liaise with Cllr Gudzelak and order the goalposts.

- ii. Report on Phase 2 by Cllr Gudzelak.

Cllr Gudzelak gave an update on a number of items which may be provided in Phase 2 of the play area development. Options are being refined and quotations sought. A proposal will be

presented to Council as the options become clear and funds raised.

14. DEVOLUTION OF ASSETS AND SERVICES FROM SOMERSET COUNCIL

Council decided to make no decision on devolution of assets or services at this time because the situation isn't sufficiently clear. Council will continue to monitor a range of discussions going on among councils about this topic. More information will be available after the next Shepton Mallet LCN meeting; Cllr Shergold will attend and report.

15. CREATION OF WORKING GROUPS TO MAINTAIN THE VILLAGE

Council decided that working groups will be developed as and when specific needs arise or become clear.

16. DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING

Cllr Shergold will discuss this topic with C Howes and report to Council.

The Clerk will source a defibrillator training DVD which is in the Council archive material.

17. MEETING SCHEDULE 2024

Council decided that the next meeting would be 13th February and that meetings would be held every six weeks thereafter, in the Church Rooms, beginning at 7:00pm. The Clerk will establish the Church Rooms are available, develop the schedule and publish it on the website.

18. MATTERS OF REPORT – ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

None.

Date of next meeting – Tuesday, 13th February, 2024. 7:00pm in the Church Rooms.

CLOSE 20:52