

# MINUTES OF CROSCOMBE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

**Held at the Church Rooms, Church Street**

**on**

**Tuesday 07 May, 2024, at 6:30 pm**

**Present:** Cllrs Annette Ford, Ben Gudzelak, Anthony Hargraves, Chris Jackson, Mick Rogers, Hilary Shergold (Chairman)

**Attending:** Cllr B Height (Somerset Council)  
J McGhee (Parish Clerk)  
2 members of the public

**1. Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting**

To approve the minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2023 (Appendix 1). **RESOLVED.** Approved.

**3. Parish Council Chairman's Report**

The Chairman delivered her report – text included at the end of these minutes.

#### 4. **Public Forum - Feedback from Parishioners and Discussion**

A member of the public raised the issue of the severe flooding in the village earlier in the year and asked what was being done about it. Paul Hodge, the new Chair of the Flood and Environment Working Group, was present and so was able to update the meeting on the extensive work which had been undertaken since the flooding. Actions included:

- a. The redevelopment of the structure and operation of the FEWG
- b. An extensive investigation and subsequent report into the recent floods with a range of recommendations; this was forwarded by the Clerk to the Lead Local Flood Authority Team at Somerset Council to demonstrate and emphasise the full backing of the Parish Council. A specific request was made to incorporate the report in full in that team's requirement to report under Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.
- c. The extensive revision of the parish's Flood Plan including the identification of a group of flood wardens and other helpers to move into action when floods occur.
- d. A meeting with the local MP, James Heapey, and agencies to discuss the village experience and what could be done to mitigate floods in the future.
- e. Meetings with other parties such as the Environment Agency and Somerset Rivers Authority.

#### 5. **Close**

The meeting closed at 18:40.

## Croscombe Annual Parish Meeting 07 May 2024

### Chairman's Report

It has, again, been a relatively quiet year for the parish council. Predominantly the year has been devoted to consolidation of existing projects. In no particular order –

- All areas that the council are responsible for have been regularly maintained.
- Two new councillors have been proposed and accepted by the council. Martyn Starnes and Anthony Hargraves have been welcomed and will no doubt be valuable and active members of the council across all areas of PC business. They replace Sarah Fawcett-Fice and Kate Egan who we thank for their support and contribution to council business.
- The village survey was completed with a sound response from across the demographic range of villagers and the concerns raised will be considered and implemented where possible by the PC taking into account the limitations imposed by its legal remit. For further details, please see the survey's outcomes and general recommendations on the PC website.

The recent flooding incidents in the village have led to the creation of a robust Flood Management Working Group which is fully supported by the council and there have been a number of initiatives implemented which should afford greater resilience in the future. Information, and an outline of the work to date, can be found on the PC website.

Future strategies discussed have been -

- To investigate and undertake a Phase 2 of additional playground equipment. To date there have been vigorous fund-raising activities to support this and replacement goal posts have been purchased and will be installed in the school playing field in order to provide for both village and school children.
- To aim to disseminate the work of the council and advertise its roles more widely across a variety of media platforms; work has already started with parishioners who have signed up to the PC website receiving individual Mailchimp notifications.
- To continue to rebuild council reserves so that potential long term and expensive projects can be underwritten. Over the years, past councils have done a great deal to enhance and protect the infrastructure and therefore the living conditions of parishioners to an extent that there are few glaring omissions that people could identify in the recent parish survey as needing addressing.

However, parish councils are not powerful enough to change areas that sometimes significantly impinge upon parishioners' lives, for example, traffic speed, public transport, environmental issues (the list can be infinite!) What we can do is advise and facilitate between agencies that do have those powers, notably the new unitary authority, and, in most cases that is done through the clerk on our behalf.

Councils cannot undertake their tasks without the support of a competent clerk, and I would like to thank Joe McGhee for his steady, calm support throughout the past year. I would like to also thank all councillors for their service and hard work.