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Office Hours:
Tuesday 10:00 – 15:00
Wednesday 10.00 – 15:00
Thursday 10.00 – 15:00



Parish Room
Old School Centre
West End
PORLOCK
Somerset, TA24 8QD

Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at Porlock Village Hall on Wednesday 28th September 2022

Members Present: Cllr Wood, Chair-person
Cllr. Allenby, Vice-Chairperson
Cllr. Dennis, Cllr Fraser, Cllr. Rayner, Cllr. Stanyon, Cllr Gable and Cllr. Ware.
Also present: Cllr. Milne (SW&T)
4 members of the general public
Cllr Stanyon (taking Minutes)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr. Bloys due to family commitments.

Proposer: Cllr. Ware
Seconder: Cllr. Dennis

6 Councillors APPROVED
2 Councillors ABSTAINED

2. Declarations of Interest and Disclosable Pecuniary Interest Dispensations

Cllr Stanyon noted her interest in the Porlock Vale Tourist Association.

3. To APPROVE and sign the Minutes of the following meetings:

- i. Minutes for the Full Council meeting held on 13th July 2022

Proposer: Cllr. Fraser
Seconder: Cllr. Gable

The following amendments were made

Point 11. Somerset Bus Partnership

The amount awarded to Somerset County Council was £11,900,000 not £119,000,000

Point 10. Review of the Chairman's Internal Audit Report 2020/2021.

The words "the Chairman's" were removed.

This item was deferred to the 14th September meeting. The item was not put on the Agenda for 28th September and to be deferred until the October meeting.

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

- ii. Minutes for the Staffing and HR Committee held on 19th July 2022

Proposer: Cllr. Allenby

Seconder: Cllr. Stanyon

6 Councillors APPROVED

2 Councillors ABSTAINED

iii. Minutes for the Finance Committee held on the 28th July 2022

Proposer: Cllr. Fraser

Seconder: Cllr. Dennis

7 Councillors APPROVED

1 Councillors ABSTAINED

iv. Minutes for the Extra-ordinary Council meeting held 12th August 2022

Proposer: Cllr. Ware

Seconder: Cllr. Allenby

7 Councillors APPROVED

1 Councillors ABSTAINED

v. Minutes for the Staffing and HR Committee Meeting held on 24th August 2022

Proposer: Cllr. Stanyon

Seconder: Cllr. Allenby

4 Councillors APPROVED

4 Councillors ABSTAINED

vi. Minutes for the Staffing and HR Committee Meeting held on 9th September 2022

This meeting was unable to proceed due to the period of mourning for HM Queen Elizabeth

4. Matters to report for information purposes and action points raised at previous meeting.

No matters to report

5. Public Participation

The members of the public did not wish to make any comments.

The meeting reconvened.

6. Planning

6/27/22/116 Danesbrook, Furzeland Road, Porlock, TA24 8NF

Proposed extension of single storey rear extension, erection of porch extension and alterations to north elevation.

The Council recommended that there were **no objections** to this application

Proposer: Cllr. Dennis

Seconder: Cllr. Fraser

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

The Council recommended that there were **no objections** to this application

Proposer: Cllr. Dennis
Seconder: Cllr. Fraser
UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

7. Chairman's Announcements

Cllr Wood advised that Cllr Gundrill and Cllr Ellicott has stepped down as serving members of the Parish Council with immediate effect. Cllr Wood stated that a contributing factor for one of the above Councillor leaving was due to the toxic atmosphere within the Council.

Cllr Wood reminded all Councillors of the Seven Principles of Public Office, following the tense atmosphere within the Council. He also highlighted the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Council and drew attention to the provisions for General Conduct and, in particular, those relating to Respect and the need for politeness and courtesy in behaviour, word and deed.

Cllr Wood raised that the Parish Council has been the target of malicious information posted on social media via Instagram. This information appears to coincide with Council business being discussed. Cllr Wood asked all Council members to be aware that Council matters should remain confidential until public minutes are available.

There are training sessions available to all Councillors and the members are to decide what is appropriate and required.

The Chair of the Council then moved the order of the Agenda.

15. PPC to discuss the impact of recent road closures affecting Porlock and Porlock Weir – Cllr Rayner to report.

There have been recent signs erected stating road closures, which are then removed prior to the planned closure. This affects businesses, visitors and residents between Porlock and Porlock Weir. It was requested that the Council approach highways and ask that all planned road closures affecting Porlock Parish are notified to the Clerk at the Parish Council. Cllr Fraser is highways liaison and will investigate this and discuss with District Councillor Nicholson. An official letter is to be sent from the Parish Council to the Highways department at Somerset West & Taunton Council.

8. Somerset County Council and District Councillor's Reports

Cllr. Milne, Somerset West and Taunton District Council:

Somerset West & Taunton Council

Cllr A Milne reported that Somerset West and Taunton Council is diminishing as it moves to form part of the new Unitary Council.

Hardship Fund

There is a new hardship fund which has been launched. The amount paid will be £200.00 and will be means tested.

E-Scooters

The trial to run the E-scooters has been extended to 31st May 2024. The survey is still open to 30th September for all to complete.

EV Charging Points

Somerset West and Taunton Council are awarding a grant of £1500.00 to install additional EV charging points

Local Community Network Consultation

This consultation process will be running until 17th October 2022. The boundaries have been identified and the survey can be found on the Somerset County Council website. The new Community Network will be implemented on 1st April 2023.

Exmoor Consultative Forum - Hedgerows

Porlock Parish Council will need to identify the areas and advise Somerset County Council, where the double cut of hedgerows will be needed or any drains need clearing, in order for these to be carried out. If areas are not highlighted, the hedgerows will only have a single cut.

Taunton Park and Ride

A £1.00 charge either way has been introduced on the Taunton Park and Ride

Somerset Waste Partnership

Some areas have experienced problems with waste collections, which is due to the backlog from the public Bank Holiday on 19th September 2022. A request was made for new stickers or additional publicity to ensure that all parishioners know how to separate their waste as Somerset Waste Partnership will not collect waste which is mixed.

Litter Fines

These have now been implemented, but do not cover dog fouling. Attempts are being made for the same enforcers to cover dog fouling as well as littering.

9. Finance:

- a. September accounts to be APPROVED and passed for payment – Cllr Fraser to report.

Proposer: Cllr. Ware
Seconder: Cllr. Dennis

The following point was discussed and proposed

The employee salary payments for August and to be reviewed and agreed by 2 members of the Finance Committee.

All August payments to be submitted to the Finance Committee, if they have not been included in the September details.

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

The Salary payments for all staff are NOT to be redacted in the future

The payment for £372.00 to Charming Stoves is NOT to be paid until further information on this invoice has been obtained.

Proposer: Cllr. Ware
Seconder: Cllr. Rayner

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

- b. Item 9b will be deferred until later in the meeting
- c. Annual Governance Statement AGAR Section 1
 To APPROVE the Annual Governance Statement 2021/2022

Proposer: Cllr. Wood
Seconder: Cllr. Fraser

7 Councillors APPROVED
1 Councillor OBJECTED

d. ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS AGAR Section 2

Proposer: Cllr. Ware
Seconder: Cllr. Fraser

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

e. To agree the period of the Exercise of Public Rights

Proposer: Cllr. Dennis
Seconder: Cllr. Stanyon

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Bank Balances on the 31st August 2022: This information was not provided.

Payments Received between 8/07/2022 – 31/08/2022: This item was not discussed

8 Report on the Clerk Vacancy – Cllr Stanyon

The draft minutes were circulated from the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th September 2022. A sum of £25.00 was agreed to spend on additional advertising on the Somerset Jobs website for the Proper Office/Clerk vacancy, due to no applicants coming forward to apply for the role. Cllr Allenby will organise the advertising on the SALC website and the Somerset Jobs website. Currently Porlock Parish Council has an interim Responsible Financial Officer who will need to move to become an employee. This will be reviewed at the end of October, once the interim RFO can identify the number of hours needed to cover the financial responsibilities.

9 Appointment of a Proper Officer – Cllr Stanyon

Cllr Stanyon explained the role of the Proper Officer in order for the Council to meet its statutory requirements. The Staffing and HR Committee drew up a list of minimal responsibilities for an interim Proper Officer, which were listed at the meeting. The Council operating on a de minimum basis. A member Councillor could volunteer to fulfil the Proper Officer role. Cllr Wood requested, at this meeting, for a volunteer member to offer to be Proper Officer. No member Councillors volunteered to take this temporary role. Cllr Wood will seek advice from SALC as to the legality of Porlock Parish Council in the absence of a Proper Officer. Currently, this now means that no further Parish Council business can be conducted beyond this meeting, until further advice is given by SALC.

10 PPC to review and consider the new trustees for the Recreation Ground Committee

The new proposed Trustees are Mr Richard Maw, Mr Phil Kenward and Mr Jason Horne

Proposer: Cllr. Ware
Seconder: Cllr. Stanyon

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

14 . Matters raised for information purposes only

Cllr Wood stressed the need to complete the Local Community Network Consultation survey.

16. PPC to review the responsibility of the floral displays located along Polrock High Street – Cllr Rayner to report.

This item was agreed to be deferred to the next meeting.

17. PPC to consider the costs of living crisis and the impact on the local Community – Chairman to report.

This item was agreed to be deferred to the next meeting.

18. “Warm Space” for the Community at The Library and The Visitor Centre during the Winter months – Cllr Stanyon to report

Cllr Stanyon would like to publicise to members of our community can use the Library and The Visitor Centre to spend some time in a warm space, should they like to. The Council agreed that this was a good suggestion.

19. St Dubricius Church Christmas Tree Festival – Chairman to report

This item was agreed to be deferred to the next meeting.

20. Protective measures to reduce the damage to walls/property within Conservation Area at Doverhay and The Drang conservation bollards – Cllr Dennis to report

This item was agreed to be deferred to the next meeting.

21. Cleaning and maintenance of Dunster Steep War Memorial – Cllr Dennis to report

This item was agreed to be deferred to the next meeting.

22. Report on Water re-fill points – Cllr Gundrill to report

This item was agreed to be deferred to the next meeting.

23. Correspondence

This item was agreed to be deferred to the next meeting.

24. Reports from outside bodies.

This item was agreed to be deferred to the next meeting.

The meeting was then closed to the general public at 9.18 p.m., in order for confidential matters to be discussed in a closed session.

9b Full Council to review and APPROVE the following recommendations provided by the Finance Committee

9bi Full Council to APPROVE the Draft minutes for the Finance Committee meeting held on 25th August 2022

Proposer: Cllr. Fraser
Seconder: Cllr. Dennis

One amendment was proposed, to Review the existing financial process and seek guidance from the Interim Responsible Financial Officer to draw up new financial procedures.

6 Councillors APPROVED
2 Councillors ABSTAINED

9bii Full Council to APPROVE the recommendations listed in the Finance Committee Meeting Draft Minutes held on 25th August 2022.

Point 3, from the closed session at the Finance Committee meeting held on 25th August 2022 were agreed at this meeting. No further details will be made available.

The recommendations from the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 25th August 2022, were then discussed individually.

6i. The PVTA to produce a Porlock Shoppers Guide with a grant from the ETCRF Fund. £2500.00.

Proposer: Cllr. Fraser
Seconder: Cllr. Dennis

5 Councillors APPROVED
1 Councillor OBJECTED
2 Councillors ABSTAINED

6ii The PPC to consider reinstating an annual grant to the PVTA

To be deferred to the 2023-2024 Budget meeting to be held by the Finance Committee.

Proposer: Cllr. Ware
Seconder: Cllr. Dennis

6 Councillors APPROVED
2 Councillors ABSTAINED

6iii The PPC to consider an application for a grant from The Oaks Nursery

Additional information has been requested from The Oaks Nursery, before being considered.

6iv The PPC to consider an application for a grant from Porlock Weir Gig Club

Additional information has been requested from The Porlock Weir Gig Club, before being considered.

6v Application from Traders of Porlock for assistance with the annual Late Night Shopping event held in Porlock, with funds being used from the ECTRF fund. £1250.00

Proposer: Cllr. Fraser

Seconder: Cllr. Rayner

7 Councillors APPROVED

1 Councillors ABSTAINED

7. FC to review the request from the PVCCT to allocate £120.00 of the remaining balance to support the Porlock Vale Arts Club

Proposer: Cllr. Fraser

Seconder: Cllr. Rayner

6 Councillors APPROVED

1 Councillors ABSTAINED

1 Councillor OBJECTED

8. FC TO RECOMMEND the purchase of a recording device for the future Full Council and Committee Meetings

Proposer: Cllr. Fraser

Seconder: Cllr. Ware

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Point 3, from the closed session at the Finance Committee meeting held on 25th August 2022 were agreed at this meeting. No further details will be made available.

Closed session item

Proposer: Cllr. Ware

Seconder: Cllr. Dennis

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

End of points discussed at Full Council meeting 28th September 2022, from the Financial Committee meeting held on the 25th August 2022

Resumption to Full Council Agenda Item Number 13

13. PPC to APPROVE the hiring of an independent Auditor to investigate current financial safeguarding of the PPC and to provide a report recommending any changes – Cllr Rayner to Report.

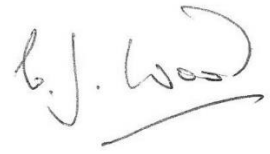
Cllr Rayner proposed that an independent Auditor is appointed to review historical PPC financial payments and make full recommendations to the PPC for any changes in financial procedures.

Proposer: Cllr Rayner

There was not a Seconder for this agenda item. This negated this Agenda item.

Cllr Rayner submitted his immediate resignation, which was accepted by the Chairman.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9:41pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B.J. Wood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath.

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12th October, 2022

Chairman