

**MINUTES OF THE YEOVILTON AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, TUESDAY 9th
JANUARY 2024 AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, YEOVILTON**

Present: Mr J Scott (JS) (Chairman), Mr S Hodgson (SH) (Vice Chairman), Mrs S Thomas-Webb (STW), Mr P Crang (PC), Mr A Hickman (AH), Mr R Moffatt (RM), Mr A Elliot (AE), Mrs N Moore (NM) (Clerk).

1. **Apologies:** Cllr K Messenger (KM), Mr P Jones (PJ).
2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** The minutes of the previous meeting held on 14th November 2023 were signed as an accurate record.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.
4. **Flooding Issues:**

4.1 **Update from A303 and other Meetings:** PC and SH provided an update on recent activity. PC has met with the Environment Agency (EA) and stated that there is a myriad of problems. In Bridgehampton, the flood bank could be better protected. There appears to be more water from the ditches running through the fields since the work on the A303 has been taking place. At both ends of Bridgehampton there are problems, with the MOD end appearing to have blocked drains and apparently a contamination issue. The River Cam flood meeting is later this month.

SH told the meeting that the ditches run from the A303 and drains from the old A303 flood Podimore. North side of Higher Farm bridge is where Galliford Try's responsibility ends. When the water goes under the A303, it meets a cement gully which appears not to have been maintained for many years and is full of rubbish and overgrowth. The firm from Plymouth did a good job, however, there are still gullies that haven't been touched. The dredging debris has been left on the side of the road and is now flowing back in to the ditches. HH told the meeting that Park Brook has now been cleared and is running well (south side of the A303). John Nicolson has asked Highways England (HE) on a number of times to clear the drains and to look at the concrete ditches. HE has agreed to remove the debris in Podimore.

SH is organising a village community meeting later this month and will ask for residents to volunteer to get involved.

HH told the meeting that he had been in contact with the Internal Drainage Board and asked them to bring forward clearance of the drains. He is trying to get a representative from RNAS agree to a meeting and is hoping that someone from the base will attend the Flood Warning System meeting at Queen Camel on the 31st January. HH stated that he would like to establish a contact with more influence in RNAS to attend a meeting with the EA and Somerset Rivers Authority. NM will contact the Defence Infrastructure Organisation to see if they can help.

Action: NM.

JS mentioned that Galliford Try have not shared their drainage maps. NM to contact to ask them to provide.

Action: NM.

4.2 **Ditch and Drain Clearance:** Due to Somerset Council's financial problems, it is likely that this will fall to the Parish Council. HH suggested that the Chairman write to Sarah Dyke MP, for HE to get the A303 problems sorted and to ask the MOD to sort the flooding issues from RNAS and look after the local residents.

Action: JS

5. **Matters Arising:**

5.1 **Mingle Bin:** STW provided an update. Limington residents are happy but the bin at the weir is controversial. Comments have been made that it is too prominent and too close to the road. The meeting decided to ask the Council if they would move it free of charge, if so, STW will liaise with AH on the best position for it. If not, it will stay where it is.

Action: STW

5.2 **Yeovilton Noticeboard:** PC reported that he had received a further quote which was no cheaper. Funding for the noticeboard is on hold.

6. **Open Session:**

6.1 **Somerset Councillor's Reports:** HH told the meeting that KM will be attending the next meeting in March.

There is a 298-page document regarding the budget reductions going to the Executive Committee this week which will be decided by the Full Council on 15th February 2024.

HH is not sure what to do about the flooding as the parishioners are not engaging with him. HH is producing a leaflet on how to protect your property. JS stated that national bodies all have a role to play for our residents. The Parish Council is looking for National Highways; the MOD; the EA; and Somerset Council to come together to find long term solutions to the flooding problems as it is clear that flooding is only likely to get worse in the future.

The recycling centre at Castle Cary is under threat. HH urged people to get together to apply pressure.

6.2 **RNAS Matters:** PJ was unable to attend the meeting but sent the following update: only one flying complaint has been received since September. This was related to a Merlin helicopter load lifting in support of a ground training course. No breaches of procedure were identified.

Recent flooding has resulted in the RNAS assistance plan being implemented. Residents are escorted across the airfield due to the village being cut off. This plan is

posted on the Parish Council website and information on what is available at specific times as air operations and the safety of those crossing the airfield whilst the airfield is open is paramount. The 1800-1900 time slot is for exceptional circumstances and villagers are asked to plan around the allotted times in order to avoid being unable to access the airfield.

During the flooding in November, it was reported that a drainage ditch was clogged up with undergrowth preventing the flow of water from Bridgehampton. The EA were also looking at this. The ditch was cleared prior to the second bout of flooding in December. There is an action for the ditches around the airfield to be cleared.

Please note that the Y&DPC website will be updated with the contact number for Phil Jones, Community Engagement Officer – 03001602781, email:

phillip.jones229@mod.gov.uk

The Parish Council felt that it was important for RNAS Yeovilton's Community Engagement Officer to attend all Parish Council meetings. The Chairman would write to him and invite him to a specific meeting to address a number of issues with RNAS including drainage gates; support for residents during flooding and traffic speeding from the base.

Action: JS

6.3 **Church Matters:** Rev B Faulkner explained that the necessary legal and procedural process will be taking place during the year so that the existing benefice will be dissolved and the creation of the new Ivel Mead Benefice will follow.

7. Planning Matters:

22/00962/REM land adjoining Pilgrim's, Weir Lane. Reserved Matters for appearance, landscape, layout and scale. Following outline approval 19/01996/OUT for the erection of a dwelling - awaiting decision.

23/01666/DOC1. Land at Higher Farm Ashington Lane, Limington. Discharge of Condition 5 (hard and soft landscaping) of planning application 21/03150/FUL – awaiting decision.

23/01879/OUT. Moonwinds Quarantine and Boarding Kennels, Limington Road, Ilchester. Outline application with all matters reserved save for access for the demolition of existing buildings, erection of 5 dwellings, creation of a new access and provision of associated infrastructure – awaiting decision.

23/03182/PAMB. Barn at Limington Road, Limington, BA22 8EJ. Prior approval notification for the change of use of an agricultural building to a dwelling house – awaiting decision.

23/03067/FUL. Land adjacent to Cobham Hall, RNAS. BA22 8HW. Installation of ground mounted solar array – awaiting decision.

23/03066/COL. RNAS, BA22 8HW. Application for certificate for proposed installation of solar PV on roof of Cobham Hall – awaiting decision.

8. **Financial Matters:**

Balances at 09th January 2024:

Current account: - £3191.12

Business savings account - £15203,17 (of which £5373.93 is the Limington Fund).

Receipts:

Interest £32.02

Payments:

Printer Ink £19.99; External Auditor £252.00

9. **Asset and Service Devolution:** The meeting discussed Somerset Council's funding issues and the devolution of services to be undertaken by the Parish Council. The meeting felt that further guidance from Somerset Council was required on the delivery of services. HH stated that different Parishes are doing different things. There is a meeting in Ilchester on 25th January to discuss these procedures which the Chairman would attend.

Action: JS

10. **2024/25 Precept:** The meeting discussed the increase which is needed to cover the additional provision of services. JS stated it is difficult to set a precept when we do not know how much Somerset Council are spending on services for the 4 villages at the present time.

It was stated that any addition this year will be scrutinised next year and can be raised or lowered accordingly. The Chairman proposed increasing the precept for 2024/25 by 10%. This would equate to Band D property paying an additional £2.35 per annum. This proposal was unanimously agreed. The Parish Clerk will submit the agreed precept to Somerset Council.

Action: NM

11. **Traffic Matters:**

11.1 **Grant Application to National Highways:** The grant application was refused.

11.2 **Village Speed Gates:** Avon and Somerset Police have a fund for local traffic issues which will re-open on 1st April 2024. It was proposed that we apply for funding for Podimore. This proposal was agreed. If funding from the Police Fund was not approved, the Parish Council would undertake to fund the Podimore gates from its own resources.

12. **Tree Matters:** Nothing to report.

13. **Rights of Way:** Nothing to report.

14. **Other Correspondence:** None.

15. **Any other Business:** No further business.

16. **Date of Next Meeting:**

Tuesday 12th March 2024, St Mary's Church, Limington at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Signed:

Date: