

ENMORE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING

TUESDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7.30 PM IN ENMORE MEMORIAL HALL

Attendance: Cllr Cole, Cllr. Hopkins, Cllr Comley, Cllr Hucker, Cllr Jackson, Cllr Pay, Cllr Bolt,
RFO: A. Stoye, Clerk: D. McIlroy.

1. Apologies had been received from Cllr Nicholson and A. Hubbard (Footpaths Officer)
2. With the exception of Cllr Hucker noting that one of the payment authorisations being requested by the RFO was in respect of services that he had provided, there were no Declaration of Interests on agenda.
3. The minutes of last meeting were approved and duly signed.
4. There were no public comments on Agenda Items.

Cllr Cole proposed that it should become the policy of the Parish Council to express support for planning applications in respect of which there were no concerns and that this policy should be noted in the meeting minutes. In the past the Parish Council did not comment on planning applications unless there were areas of concern. Cllr Bolt, who presently sits on the planning committee at Sedgemoor, stated that positive comments from Parish Councils were always welcome when looking at planning applications.

Cllr Jackson raised the concern that sometimes not all those affected by planning applications, ie neighbours were informed by letter from Sedgemoor Council. However, Cllr Cole remarked that it was not the Parish Council's responsibility but Sedgemoor's. A. Stoye remarked that email notification of planning applications had been offered for a trial period. Although take-up had been limited, this increased coverage of information about relevant/local planning applications, though would not necessarily cover those affected by the planning applications.

Cllr Hopkins suggested that arrangements be made for an interim meeting if the deadline for consultation on any planning application did not permit discussion at a routine scheduled bi-monthly Parish Council meeting. This suggestion was approved unanimously.

ACTION: D. McIlroy to continue checking SDS planning notifications and notify all councillors should anything arise in Enmore Parish.

5. Actions arising from minutes of previous meeting.

A) Task allocation

The following sub committees were proposed by Cllr Cole at the July meeting.

Cemetery planning: Cllr Cole, Cllr Hucker and Cllr Nicholson.

Roads, Signage and Flooding: Cllr Comley.

Staff welfare: Cllr Hopkins.

Finance: A. Stoye, Cllr Jackson

Cllr Comley accepted his position for Road, Signage and Flooding.

Other councillors had previously agreed to their posts.

B) Cemetery update

Members of the cemetery planning subcommittee met with a local contractor on site and discussed options. It was decided not to use the Metropave mesh, which would save around £6,000-£7,000 and which, if subsequently found to be required, could be added at a later date. A porous fabric weed-suppressant would be used and then topped with a layer of decorative pebbles. There would still be a need for edging stones for the car park and for paths. The work could possibly be completed in three weeks. Initially the costs were estimated to be £11,000- £12,000 in total but a firm written quotation is required. Another two contractors have been asked to submit quotations but they are yet to be received. A. Stoye reiterated the need for transparency when considering tenders.

Cllr Comley stated that there would be some maintenance required on the pebbled area as there would still be some invasion of weeds, and the cost of this would need to be allowed for in the budget.

It was suggested that perhaps it might be possible to enlist both practical and financial help from the village for planting/landscaping eg sponsoring trees, benches etc, which could be discussed at the next meeting.

ACTION: The subcommittee will press ahead with obtaining written quotations for the work and inform the full committee when they have been received. A. Stoye will add outline planting/car park plans to the parish council website.

C) SID update

Cllr Comley's very detailed report had been circulated prior to the meeting. He stated that it would appear the majority of the road users did want to drive within the required speed limits but needed to be reminded of these (speeds increased when displays were turned off and devices were operated in "spy" mode). He then explained how the speeds were calculated over 30-minute time periods. He also looked at time spans during a 24-hour period to see if there was any pattern to road use by the worst offenders. Most of the traffic observed in the 8am-6pm period was driving at less than 40mph therefore the use of a speed gun would not be beneficial.

However, he did recommend the installation of a 4th SID at the entrance to Enmore from Durlough by the Enmore Inn. A solar powered SID would cost £2100+VAT, and converting the battery-powered SID to solar would cost £874+VAT.

The recommendation that the council purchase a solar powered SID (despite there being no available fixing point at the moment) was agreed nem con.

The speed of traffic outside the school was also discussed but this was considered to be an issue for the school and Somerset Council. Cllr Comley has spoken to the Chair of Governors at the school about his concerns.

ACTION: Cllr Comley will proceed with the purchase of the SID and A. Stoye will subsequently reclaim the VAT element from HMRC. Cllr Jackson will speak to Chair of Governors/school governors when she attends next governor meeting with them.

D) Flower tubs on entrance/exit to Enmore

Due to various issues with uneven land, ditches and road safety concerns it was decided that placing large flower tubs at the entrance and exit of the village was not a practical proposition. This proposal will therefore not be pursued.

Cllr Pay then left the meeting and stated that she should would be unable to attend the next parish council meeting. Her apology was duly noted in the minutes.

Cllr Bolt stated that as a member of Sedgemoor planning committee he was unable to comment or be present when planning matters were discussed.

6. The Parish Council unanimously approved the received planning applications 27/22/00006AGE and 27/22/00007AGE.

Cllr Jackson updated the council on her email correspondence with Somerset Heritage and Sedgemoor council regarding the proposed developments for Enmore Golf course. As yet no planning applications have been received therefore they are unable to comment; but both organisations are now aware of the Parish Council's concerns regarding footpaths, rights of way and destruction of habitats.

ACTION: D. McIlroy to email Sedgemoor planning and inform them of the parish council's decision on both planning applications and to continue to monitor SDC planning list.

7. Financial update

The latest financial report had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting.

A. Stoye has now organised both payroll and PAYE for D. McIlroy and has paid her fully for all salary owed to late October. She has also paid HMRC for tax owed.

Both bank accounts are now up and running. Cllr Jackson and A. Stoye have online access to NatWest with four signatories for cheques. Cllr Jackson, A. Stoye and D. McIlroy have online access to Lloyds with four signatories for cheques.

A. Stoye assured the council that due to the availability of those named to access bank accounts checks could be made at any time for account activity.

8. Insurance renewal

Although another quotation was being sought from an alternative broker, there had been no response before the meeting (and the subsequent response showed Zurich to be the most reasonable choice). A. Stoye recommended that the Parish Council accept the revised quotation of £241 from Zurich to provide continuity of cover. She also noted that it might be beneficial to set next year's precept at slightly less than £5,000, rather than marginally over (Zurich's premiums are based on bands for precept income with £5,000 being a cut-off point and our current level of precept is £5,003).

9. Approval of payments

Authorisation of payments were requested for:-

Insurance renewal premium of £241 (Zurich Town & Parish)

Work carried out by Cllr Hucker for gardening services: the routine maintenance of grassed areas around the village (£392) and additional work prior to the Jubilee celebrations (£120), totalling £512.

Reimbursement to D. McIlroy for memory sticks and in respect of the renewal off the Google domain name.

The Council authorised and approved these requests.

10. Plan/Develop budget and precept for the coming year

Documents for this were circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Jackson talked through the main points of the Finance subcommittee meeting: that a formal quotation was needed for the cemetery car parking/ turning area, and that, in view of the economic climate, the subcommittee felt it inappropriate to increase the precept request next year without clear justification. Cllr Hopkins then questioned whether, in view of the County restructuring next year, there might be some passing of responsibilities from them to local/parish councils. However, in the absence of any firm information it was decided that no allowance for this possibility could be made in the budget now being prepared.

A discussion took place regarding the possible full or partial early repayment of the cemetery loan. Repayment of capital would deplete the Council’s reserves (and therefore reduce its flexibility of operation) but would improve disposable cash flow in future years. A. Stoye remarked that it was very difficult to calculate the early repayment penalty since the interest rate used for this calculation changes twice daily. Furthermore, until more information is available on the costs of work on the cemetery, it is not clear how much capital might be available for repayment. This subject will be kept under review and the position may be clearer nearer the end of the financial year.

11. Footpaths Officer/Somerset Bus Partnership report

As A. Hubbard was unable to attend the meeting D. McIlroy read out the main points of her report as Footpaths officer: the obstacles listed in her previous report have now been attended to, she again raised concerns over the golf club proposals especially to the re-siting of the footpaths/bridleways, she also mentioned the overgrown nature of the right of way by Enmore School and asked if it would be possible for a volunteer to trim the affected area. The Parish Council did not believe that it was their responsibility but took the view that it would probably be quicker for a volunteer to attend to it.

With regard to bus provision for Enmore, there was nothing applicable to Enmore from the latest SBP meeting but she noted that Somerset County Council are removing more buses from their timetables and she wished to raise this issue with local councillors. With the increasing age of the local community and the price of petrol, public transport for the area is needed more than ever. Further reports will keep the Council informed on this subject.

12. Broadband provision

D. McIlroy has investigated local communities that had organised their own broadband. There was only one which involved the community buying the equipment and volunteers with technical knowledge installing it across the area. This does not appear to be feasible for the Enmore area. Cllr Comley volunteered to contact BT, as he has had dealings with them in the past with his broadband provision, to see if anything short-term could be achieved by them.

ACTION: Cllr Comley to contact BT

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm

NEXT MEETING January 3rd 2023 @7.30 pm in Enmore Memorial Hall

Signed: Date:
Chairman of Council