

ENMORE PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT

MINUTES OF MEETING

held on

Tuesday 2nd July 2024 at 7.30 pm in Enmore Memorial Hall

Attendance: Cllr. Hopkins, Cllr Jackson, Cllr Comley, Cllr Fergusson, Cllr Hucker, Cllr Hubbard, Cllr Caswell, Clerk: D. McIlroy, RFO: A. Stoye. Mr D. Cole.

1. There were no apologies.
2. There were no Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items.
3. The minutes of the meeting held on 7th May 2024 were approved and duly signed.
4. There were no public comments on agenda items or questions on matters of concern. However, Cllr Hubbard, speaking as a member of the public, wished to notify the Parish Council of flooding issues affecting her property, Castle House, and the nearby properties in Enmore Road. She had been informed that a natural watercourse runs underneath her property, which, under Riparian ownership laws, is her responsibility. However, in heavy rain, water runs downhill on the road and, in combination with blocked ditches and gullies along the sides of Enmore Road, causes an overflow of this watercourse and flooding. The watercourse pipe is cracked at present and Cllr Hubbard is arranging to locate and repair the pipe. However, there remains the issue of rainwater running off the roads and filling up the ditches both before and after her property. Watercourses further down the road by the Burge/Webber farms should be kept clear to enable water to drain down to them.

ACTION: Cllr Hopkins and D. McIlroy to write to Somerset Council to ask about what can be done to prevent a re-occurrence of this issue. Landowners would also be reminded of their responsibility to maintain ditches on their property.

5. There were no planning applications to discuss.
6. Actions arising from previous meeting minutes.

6.3 Jubilee Meadow/future cemetery.

A meeting was held at the cemetery between D. Cole, Cllr Jackson, and Cllr Hopkins to discuss what signage and wording would be appropriate for the future civic cemetery. Quotations were then obtained from various sources: stonemasons and online. It was proposed that two signs would be required in the longer term: a stone boulder visible from the road with the wording 'Enmore Cemetery' and a wooden board inside the cemetery gate with wording covering both cemetery and meadow, and acknowledging the various donors and sources of funding for the car park, seating area and landscaping.

However, following a long discussion, it was decided to adopt Cllr Fergusson's proposal that the purchase and installation of a stone sign for the cemetery be deferred until the cemetery is in use, or its use seems imminent. D. Cole noted that like-for-like quotations would be needed for the main boulder sign when required.

It was, therefore, proposed by Cllr Comley, seconded by Cllr Hubbard and agreed by all, that one sign should be purchased to stand on two wooden posts by the gate in the cemetery itself. Cllr Hucker also noted that, as the existing sign was not currently relevant, it should be removed.

The subject of the security of the field was also discussed and it was considered that by installing a combination lock on the gates, with the combination given to the villagers of Enmore (Cllr Jackson proposed via the Enmore Broadcast group) it would allow villagers to use the space but deter unwanted visitors to the site. Also, should anyone enter the site illegally by forced entry, there would be a legal route to allow for their removal. All present agreed that this idea should be implemented.

ACTION: Cllr Jackson to order the wooden sign for inside the cemetery with the wording shown on the quotation. Cllr Hucker to remove the old sign and purchase a strong combination lock for the gate. The necessary payments or reimbursements were approved by Council.

Cllr Hopkins thanked D. Cole for his contribution.

Cllr Comley raised the question of what happens after the first burial and who would manage the site? He had read some literature (on the government and SALC websites) regarding the legal aspects of managing a civil cemetery. Cllr Hopkins noted that the Parochial Church Council were considering the remaining capacity of the churchyard and therefore the estimated time before the new cemetery would be required. However, at the present rate, it may well be ten years before this happens. In response to Cllr Comley's question, Cllr Hopkins suggested that this subject be deferred. By the time there is more immediate likelihood of burials in the civil cemetery the legislation and Parish Council responsibilities may have altered.

6.1 Speed management update.

Cllr Comley reported that the SID by the Enmore Inn had been hit twice in the last eight weeks. Fortunately on both occasions no damage had been done. As it was impossible to move the supporting pole, Cllr Comley wondered whether the SID and solar panel could be mounted higher (making maintenance more difficult) or moved further away from the edge of the road using a bracket. Cllr Caswell noted that there were companies online who manufacture angled brackets that might be suitable.

Cllr Comley reported that he had emailed the new Police Commissioner C. Moody seeking her advice on the problem of speeding traffic through Enmore but had not yet received any response.

ACTION: Cllr Comley to investigate the availability and cost of suitable brackets and report back to the other councillors.

Cllr Jackson had received no further update from Katherine Tyson as to when the speed changes would be implemented through Enmore and outside the school; merely that it would be within the current financial year.

6.2 Broadband update.

Cllr Comley has had no further update from Airband or Openreach with regard to the installation of fibre broadband in Enmore. Cllr Caswell added that, according to information he had been given, Airband were not expected to make progress in our area before 2027. The delay is understood to be partly attributable to financial constraints and partly caused by problems encountered obtaining wayleaves and land owners' permission. However, Cllr Caswell has managed to secure the presence of a representative from CDS (Connecting Devon and Somerset) to attend the next Dowsborough LCN meeting on September 11th (location and time still to be confirmed), which he encouraged all to attend.

Cllr Comley has also written to Amanda Williams (CDS) to ask for information regarding tenders and contracts for the area but has had no response.

6.4 Wilder Enmore update.

Cllr Jackson reported that the hedge survey has been completed and that Philip and Stephen Burge (whose hedges were used) were both impressed and pleased with how it was conducted. They are awaiting the results before they can proceed to the next stage but are hopeful that the data can be used to encourage other farmers to join the survey.

7. Finance report/ approval of payments.

A. Stoye had produced an up-to-date finance report, which was circulated to all prior to the meeting. This included final accounts for the landscaping and seating project (which was marginally over the original budget but the scope of the project had increased)

She asked for approval of payments for reimbursement to D. McIlroy for the annual website domain charge (£10+£2 reclaimable VAT) as well as reimbursement of small sums for postage and stationery that D. McIlroy had incurred on behalf of the Parish Council. Both payments were approved.

A Stoye noted that she would defer the next VAT reclaim until the invoice for the new notice board was available, and expected to make the next claim as at the end of July.

There is currently £62.54 left unspent from the original £500 Magic Little Grant money. So far all the expenditure has been on the churchyard although the grant application covered the Jubilee Meadow/future cemetery as well as the churchyard.

A discussion then took place on whether it was a suitable time to consider repayment of the cemetery loan as the rate of interest charged on the loan is more than the interest earned on the Council's deposit account.

However, Cllr Hopkins took the view that there was a possibility of unknown additional costs for the Parish Council to meet following the devolution of services from Somerset Council. It was agreed that the possibility of early repayment of the outstanding loan be revisited in early 2025 as part of the financial review for setting the precept for the following year. Hopefully more information would then be available about any additional Parish Council responsibilities.

Cllr Fergusson expressed his gratitude to A. Stoye for her work on the accounts for the parish council and this was echoed by all.

8. Discussion on the Right of Way 15/4: modification in respect the "Gully/Ancient Packway" footpath across Enmore Golf Club.

Cllr Hubbard had not been able to start this paperwork but would try to do so as soon as possible as she considered it important for the future of the footpath that correct documentation is in place.

9. Report from Footpaths Officer.

Prior to the meeting a Footpaths Report was circulated to councillors. Cllr Hubbard hoped to start walking and checking the footpaths around the area, especially for over-cropping of footpaths by farmers. She hoped to enlist horse riders to report problems on bridleways in the area as many local paths are also bridleways.

10. Report from Neighbourhood Watch.

Cllr Fergusson stated that there was nothing new to report apart from the break-in at Hillandale, which was reported on The Enmore Broadcast WhatsApp group.

11. 'Creating caring, connected, healthier communities'.

Cllr Hubbard had attended a meeting on the subject and circulated a report prior to the council meeting. In view of the age/locality of the population of Enmore she wondered whether some kind of support/general emergency network should be formed. Cllr Jackson noted how supportive Citizen's Advice were but not all had access to them. The council were happy for Cllr Hubbard to discuss this subject with a few Enmore residents and report back to the Parish Council with ideas and comments.

12. Website management and circulation of information.

A. Stoye stated that she was happy to continue to maintain the Parish Council website but would not be offended if another volunteer was to offer their services. She suggested placing a note in the next magazine asking if anyone would be willing to do so.

The councillors were happy to receive forwarded emails from D. McIlroy and A. Stoye and for them to use their judgement as to which to circulate/add to the website.

However, it was noted by Cllr Fergusson that in the matter of planning applications it was important that **all councillors reply to these emails** with their thoughts and recommendations, especially if there was no meeting planned. The resulting email correspondence would provide evidence that the application had been seen and discussed by all councillors.

A query was raised as to whether every planning application must be discussed at a public meeting. It was agreed that clarification should be sought on this point (ACTION: D McIlroy).

[Subsequent clarification was that a public meeting must be held if the Council is to make any comments on an application. This may require additional meetings where the whole of the response period falls between normal scheduled Parish Council meetings.]

A Stoye noted that applications were added to the Planning page of the website and anyone who had asked to be kept informed of applications is notified by email.

13. Discussion on renting out the boom box.

The Parish Council were happy to leave a decision regarding the hiring out of the boom box to the Enmore Memorial Hall committee as the Hall was considered more likely to receive any such requests. A Stoye noted that any income received by the Parish Council from this source would require the Council to register for VAT and complete quarterly returns, increasing time, cost and complexity of administration to an extent outweighing any likely income arising. She recommended waiving any benefit to the Parish Council should the Hall committee decide to rent out this equipment.

ACTION: D. McIlroy to liaise with the Hall committee.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.25 pm

NEXT MEETING Tuesday September 3rd 2024 at 7.30 pm.

Signed: Date:
Chairman of Council