

MILVERTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT VICTORIA ROOMS, MILVERTON ON MONDAY 4th DECEMBER 2023 at 7:00 pm

Present	R Burton (Chair)	M Dinning	A Mather
	P Chambers	J Hoyle	T Phelps
	A Dakowski	C Mann	J Townend

In attendance: Mr T Payne, Clerk to the Council
SC Cllr G Wren
3 Members of the public

	Public Questions Comment was made regarding parking issues in High Street, which are initially to be referred to the local PCSO Reports from County Councillors SC Cllr G Wren advised that there were no specific details yet available on how services, particularly those classed as discretionary, will be affected by its financial position; Departments are working on tariffs that could be used to recharge services to PCs; The budgetary position for 2024/25 will be known by the end of January.
1.	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Cllrs H Burton and G May
2.	Declarations of Interest None declared
3.	Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 6th November 2023 After minor typing corrections, the minutes were approved as circulated.
4.	Actions from previous meeting - It was noted that SC Traffic Management had agreed to extend the double yellow lines around the junction of Woodbarton and Sand Street to cover crossing points.
5.	Planning 5.1 Consideration of Planning Applications for comments to SC - <i>23/23/0038/LB Reinstatement of access points on ground and first floors to enable accommodation of Ivy Cottage to become part of dwelling of The Olde Quaker House and reinstatement of chimney on the southern gable end at Ivy Cottage, North Street, Milverton</i> Following discussion and it being noted that a full planning application will need to be submitted in due course for the element regarding the reinstatement of the chimney, it was resolved that the Parish Council support the application, subject to full details being provided on the chimney in a future planning application. - <i>23/23/0040/LB Installation of 18 No. solar panels on the south facing roof of Little Fort, St Michaels Hill, Milverton</i> Consideration of this application was deferred until the January meeting

Signed..... Date..... Minute Book Page Number.....

	5.2 Report on Planning Decisions and other Planning Matters Clerk reported that the recent application re Higher Bickley, Mildon House and Weekmoor Barns (works), Grateful Cottage and 1 Sand Street (trees) and Secret Meadow (lawful development certificate) had been approved by SC; Note was made on a response by SC Highways on the proposed Butts Way development (23/22/0013).
6.	Flooding in Milverton and Preston Bowyer Chair reported he and SC Cllr G Wren had met in early November with a SC Team member (A Meares) who would be involved with the Section 19 Report on the flooding. An update had been expected prior to the PC meeting but nothing had been received. It was still hoped a summary report would be produced by March 2024. The Sand Street kerb and gully work had not been carried out as planned, seemingly as the correct footpath closure notice had not been applied for by SC Highways. The issues with the SC budget raises questions on the timing of works already approved to deal with the flooding from the spring in Jubilee Gardens. A budgeted costing may be sought in order to review options. There is no update on the gully work in Creedwell.
7.	Bus Service in Milverton and related issues Cllr J Townend reported that he had attended a webinar with SC, which reinforced the need to publicise the Use it or Lose it message. The numbers being suggested are an additional 600 return journeys per week over the whole route. Posters have been put up and the situation continues to be highlighted in the parish Magazine. Instances are still being reported of buses not stopping at the roundabout and the promotion of the route is not helped by the closure of Wood Street; There is a safety issue with pedestrians walking to the roundabout especially in the evenings; The possibility of a bus service to Wellington via Milverton is still being investigated.
8.	Consideration of Grant Applications In view of the uncertainties regarding the effect on the Parish Council finances from the cuts envisaged at Somerset Council, it was resolved to defer consideration of discretionary grants until a subsequent meeting.
9.	Unitary Authority 9.1 Update The next LCN meeting was noted as being on 12 December, which will focus on the impact of the financial situation of Somerset Council. The agenda/remote link is to be circulated to Councillors. 9.2 Service Devolution by Somerset Council to Parish Councils Chair reported on a SALC meeting he and Cllr J Townend attended, with information being provided by SC Cllr B Revans on the current state of SC's finances and Mr D Mears, Clerk of Bridgwater TC, on TC/PCs taking on services. It was noted that a devolution framework is to be considered at an SC meeting in January; Improvements have been made to the potential overspend, bringing it down to £87million, with proposals being brought forward to reduce it further. The intention is to avoid a Section 114 Notice being issued if at all possible, due to the ramifications of Commissioners being appointed. Due to the uncertainties faced by TC/PCs, the date for finalising precepts may be pushed back It was noted that there was a need to determine what SC actually does in Milverton, which would provide a framework for what the PC could consider taking on. A Highway Steward could be an option where neighbouring Councils combine together to cover the cost. This may also cover maintenance of footpaths.

10.	Oake Parish Plan Review Further to a draft Neighbourhood Plan from Oake being circulated, it was agreed that Cllr J Townend would review it and pass comments back to the Oake Steering Group
11.	Committee Reports 10.1 Amenity Committee Toilet Block Refurbishment: Final snagging works are still to be completed by Karesa and they are being chased to complete these, following which the retention sum will be paid. Some small internal works are to be completed by the PC. Parsonage Lane revamp: Quotes for the works are being clarified/reviewed Jubilee Gardens: No further progress by Somerset Council. Dog waste bin provision: Costs of moving dog waste bins and quotes for emptying are to be sought Colesmore Viewing Area: Quotes are being sought for the suggested tree work. 10.2 Emergency Planning Committee Wivey First Responders have offered to run a defibrillator training session. It is to be checked if this is the same as that offered by South West Ambulance Service, being the defibrillator supplier; Costings are to be sought for a new cover and new battery/charger for the generator. 10.3 Allotment Committee New weed suppressant membrane is to be purchased to cover vacant plots as well as a new-kite-element for the bird scarer. A committee meeting is to be held later in December. 10.4 Parish Plan Working Party A meeting of the working party had recently been held, covering the following matters: Consideration of the one-way system proposal, as well as alternative options, to be investigated with Somerset Council; Potential 'new' car parking possibilities in the village were identified and are to be investigated further; Support given to the principle of the PC taking on gully clearance but full detail of the process, timing and costs, are awaited from SC; Bus service to continue to be monitored and reviewed when any changes are proposed in Spring 2024; Support to be continued for the proposal of a Wiveliscombe-Wellington (via Milverton) bus service; Investigations to take place on the potential of setting up a Youth Club facility at the Rec.
12.	Roads and Footpaths 12.1 Footpaths Monthly Report Cllr A Dakowski reported on attending a meeting of local Parish Path Liaison Officers in Wellington, attended by the new Footpath Officer and the Volunteer officer from Somerset Council. Parish Councils are seemingly to be encouraged to become responsible for footpath maintenance; It was noted that the DMMO application re Footpath WG07/10 had been completed and is registered. The timescale for a decision is unknown though could be in terms of years as opposed to months. Further to previous indications of a kissing gate being provided on Footpath WG7/16, this is now likely to be affected by SC cost constraints ; 12.2 Roads 12.2.1 Monthly Report Cllr G May had reported on the following: The closure of Wood Street for repairs was preventing buses getting through and the temporary bus stops on Meadows Way were causing problems and complaints due to the distance and safety concerns. A pedestrian lane on Station Road had been requested but there is no indication this will be agreed to. First Bus are also not

	willing to drive into the village and turn around; SC Highways are not willing to put additional bollards up either side of Creedwell Orchard and residents are against additional double yellow lines. More Bollards are potentially going up between Creedwell and the Globe; The double yellow lines at corner of Wood Street are due to be repainted, with a slight extension to the junction itself to make it more visible; Mr S Potts is liaising with SC Traffic Management about the vehicle data from the SIDS with reference to the narrowing road markings in Preston Bowyer; The possibility of installing Village Gateways has been reviewed but due to the likely costs (£3,000 ea), this has been put on hold; Potholes in Creedwell Orchard were repaired on 1 December 2023, though the necessary road was closure caused issues for through traffic for the entire day. Chair reiterated (<i>as per Item 6 above</i>) that it had transpired that the requisite closure applications for the Sand Street works (Re gullies and drop kerbs) were not processed adequately by SC Highways and consequently the works could not be carried out as previously planned. There is currently no indication when the work will be re-programmed. 12.2.2 Investigations into feasibility of Village One-Way System (CM) Further to investigations that have already taken place on the feasibility of a one-way system being introduced in Milverton, it was resolved to form a Working Party to review the general issue of parking and traffic issues, to be made of Chair and Cllrs J Townend and A Mather. Cllr G May also to be invited.
13.	Airband High Speed broadband Clerk reported Airband has indicated a further meeting with the PC will be arranged though no date has yet been agreed.
14.	Finance 14.1 Schedule of Payments Payments to be paid online were noted as being approved: Claire's Cleaning - toilets £310 T Payne - Clerk's fee £1,523.09 DDs for Dec/Jan Google £18.40 EDF £11.0 Water2Business - toilets 6 month bill £119.93 14.2 2024/25 Precept Clerk had produced an updated report on the minimum precept level before taking account of any provision for services to be taken on from Somerset Council. This was now £31,260 for 2024/25. Further discussion to take place prior to a decision on the precept being made in January 2024 by which time, there would hopefully be some clarity on exactly what SC services would be cut back and estimates of the costs were the PC to take responsibility for any such services.
15.	Crime Report No report received

16.	Matters of Report 16.1. Other matters 16.1.1 Local Banking facilities It was noted that a Banking Hub is to be set up in Wellington from March 2024, which is when Lloyds Bank, the last existing bank in the town, is scheduled to close. 16.1.2 Course feedback The ideas included in a Course attended by Cllr J Hoyle on Engaging with Young People are to be discussed at a future meeting.
17.	Date of next meeting The next meeting was confirmed for Monday 8th January 2024, at the Victoria Rooms.
	The meeting closed at 9.20 pm