

Combe Florey Parish Council

Date of Meeting: Tuesday 14th November 2023 7:00 pm At Combe Florey Village Hall	Written by: Gemma Coombes (Parish Clerk)
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Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Councillor's Present

Cllr Robin Cleverly (Chairman)
 Cllr Jacquey Newton (Vice Chair)
 Cllr Simon Hawes (RFO)
 Cllr Adriana Truby
 Cllr John Passingham

In attendance

Gemma Coombes – Parish Clerk
 Cllr Andy Sully - Somerset Councillor
 Cllr Mike Rigby – Somerset Councillor
 PCSO Brianna Whelan
 Parishioners x 7

2023/83) Welcome by Chairman

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

2023/84) Apologies for absence

None.

2023/85) Declarations of Interest

Cllr Hawes declared an interest in agenda item 11.2; deer crossing at Ash Priors. The interest is declared as this adjoins his land. Cllr Newton later declared an interest in the village garden project.

2023/86) Approval of last meetings minutes

The minutes from the 11th July 2023 and 12th September 2023 were approved by Cllr Hawes and seconded by Cllr Newton. All in agreement to adopt these mins.

2023/87) Public participation

Nothing raised outside the agenda.

2023/88) Matters Arising / Matters brought forward from Annual Parish Meeting

1. Defibrillator project - Update on installation

Both the defibrillators are now installed. Training on how to use them will be arranged in the future. They are looking for some second responders to register as well who will help in an emergency to get the defibrillator if needed.

2. Dog waste bins

Three potential sites were originally identified by Parish Councillors, working in conjunction with Cllr Sully from Somerset Council. These sites underwent a site survey and two locations were found to be potentially suitable to be emptied: one along the wall between the village hall and the burial ground, and one near the sewage treatment plant. One by the footpath near Combe End was not feasible as the lane would be too narrow to park and empty the bins.

Somerset Council state that;

“Currently each bin costs around £350 plus VAT fitted, but that depends on the type of fitting, so could be a bit more. Emptying is currently £7.33 per empty per bin.”

The decision to be taken is do we want a bin? If so how many? Participants on the floor stated they feel only one is needed at most.

We need to look at the land register also to address who owns the land at the potential sites. Cllr Cleverly states his opinion is these bins will not help as those who don't pick up will still not bother if there is a bin.

If it is in the middle of the path or road it does not wash away very well.

It is not a criminal offence to leave dog waste on a derestricted road.

Any further logical sites should be forwarded to Cllr Newton

Cllr Truby stated she is opposed to spending money dog bins

This will be carried forward to the Annual Parish meeting in May to gauge a wider opinion.

2023/89) Somerset Council report (Cllr Rigby / Cllr Sully)

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Signed: [Chairman]

Somerset Council are in a financial emergency and are looking at financial devolution. A letter was sent out by head of Somerset Council. They are looking at getting Parish Councils to take on more financial responsibility such as running public toilets, cutting verges, public libraries, street cleaning and run the infrastructure. A large amount of money goes into adult social services which is 66% of the budget (increasing to 85% in the next financial year).

Parish Councils do not have a cap on how much they can raise the precept, unlike the County Council. PCs raising the precept may allow more services to continue but is unlikely to be popular with parishioners unless they can see a clear benefit.

While they are asking for the Parish Councils to take on more Somerset Council have not associated any costs to these tasks; this needs to be understood before we set our precept in February. This may be clearer once Somerset Council set their budget in December.

This to be carried forward to the January meeting.

2023/90) Policing Report

PCSO Brianna Whelan (also known as Bee) has taken over from Louise. She will send out monthly reports on crime that covers the whole of the rural areas.

She is happy to arrange meetings if needed or anything people wish to be brought to her attention. Brianna will be happy to attend some of the book marts as far as her shifts and other work load allows.

2023/91) Planning

1. Current planning applications

- I. Application number : 11/23/0010 - Replacement of retaining wall and associated works to rear of Osmans Cottage, Williton Road, Combe Florey.

This is for restoration of the collapsed railway embankment. This is in a conservation area within the curtilage of a listed building and is essential work. This is 'no comment' from the Parish Council.

Mr Dibble has reduced the size of his original planning application and this will also be 'no comment'.

2. Other planning matters

Nothing raised.

2023/92) Finance

1. Account balances

- I. Current account - £13000 this is before the current payments are taken out. This is 3x the level of our precept, some of this (around £4k) is still CIL money that came to the council.

2. CIL funding

This is none recurring and some has been used to support the defibrillator project, the rest is available to support other projects. CIL money has a 5 year deadline from date of receipt

3. Bank Reconciliation and Cash Days Books

Payment schedule was circulated and signed by chairperson, daybook and cashbook also signed.

4. Remittances

- I. Foot paths and Burial grant from Somerset West and Taunton £450

5. Invoices for payment

Cllr Hawes read out the invoices for payment. The below are items that were known of at the time of the agenda.

- a. Parish Clerk wages and expenses (October - November inclusive) £239.80 (before deductions)
- b. HMRC (Clerks PAYE) - £46.60
- c. Payment to John Passingham for maintenance of footpaths. £100
- d. Payment to CFPCC for Burial grant. £350

All proposed by Cllr Hawes, seconded by Cllr Newton. All in favour.

Invoices arriving for payment after the agenda was published.

- e. SALC yearly subscription. £74
- Proposed by Cllr Hawes, seconded by Cllr Newton. All in favour.

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2023/93) Highways and Footpaths**1. Speed of traffic - further discussion.**

The speed of vehicles (mostly white van delivery drivers) raised cause for concern.

If a speed limit was to be introduced are the white van drivers going to recognise the speed limit? The feeling is no.

In 2012, Highways conducted a survey and the average speed was 20mph. At the time, there was no police support to introduce a speed limit as there were no accidents.

The mood in the room is there is no appetite for this as there is no desire for signs, and no need for a speed limit. This comes up every 5 years or so and has always been rejected.

It is unanimous this is to be removed from the agenda.

2. Deer crossing at Ash Priors road

The deer are feeding in the fields on stubble turnips. This creates more food here for them so they are attracted to the area. The lane is used for a crossing bringing the mud onto the road.

There are options of getting rid of the food source, culling the deer, or put a large deer fence up both sides of the road for a long way. This will cost £75 per metre on deer fencing to install and would not be supported by the land owners. This was seen as part of rural living.

3. Footpath past cemetery

The footpath has become unusable as lots of flood water has eroded the path. A new footpath has been formed at the top of the bank to by-pass the issue. This alternative footpath seems to be working; as this is a public right of way and not obstructed there is nothing that can be done. Cllr Cleverly to speak to the land owner.

4. Parking in Village

Comments have been raised about excessive parking in the village. Events at the village hall or church can produce a lot of temporary congestion. This was seen as a natural consequence of living in a small village with narrow roads. There is nothing the Parish Council can do to resolve this.

Remove from agenda.

2023/94) Village Maintenance / Garden**1. Plans for next phase in Garden project.****I. Planting requirements / Landscaping works / Maintenance gardeners**

Cllr Passingham and Cllr Newton put forward a plan to manage the garden. Cllr Newton declared an interest in the proposal being put forward. The proposal is for Cllr Newton to be the contractor to do the work in the village garden at £20 per hour and a total of 38 hours per year this is total of £760 per year.

Cllr Hawes will look into the rules for officers of the Council working directly for the Council and PAYE implications.

We will speak to the gardener of the Village Hall to understand if she is happy to quote for the work and an advertisement will go in the Village newsletter to get quotes for the work. We would need to also assess quality of work as well as prices. Cllr Truby will put an ad in the next newsletter.

Carry forward to the next meeting.

The causeway to the Farmers' Arms by the stream is dangerous in places as there are low tree branches hanging down. It is the landowner's responsibility to deal with this and the landlord of the pub will be contacted.

2023/95) LCN update on last meeting (Cllr Sully)

Flood information drop-ins have been distributed around the area and the results of this will be fed in to the next meeting.

Home finder has also been a presentation on this and how you build local connections to be placed with the council. This will be fed into the next meeting.

2023/96) Village Hall - Status report

Nothing imminent.

2023/97) Topics for future meetings

Community review projects.

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2023/98) Correspondence / General updates
None

2023/99) NEXT MEETING:
Parish Council Meeting: 09th January 2024 at 7.00pm at Combe Florey Village Hall
Meeting closed at 20.29

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Signed: [Chairman]