WEST HATCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting of the West Hatch Parish Council held in the Village Hall Thursday 31st March 2022

**21/75 Attendance and apologies**

**Councillors: Read, Harrison-Sleap, Kerr, Lodge and Middleton**

**Public: Cllr J Thorne (SCC)**

**Apologies: Cllrs Bray and Knight**

It was resolved that the absence of these Councillors be recognised as approved absences for the purposes of s.185 Local Government Act 1972.

**21/76 Declarations of Interest**

**There were no declarations of interest made**

**21/77 Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 10th February 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

**21/78 Matters arising from the minutes**

* **Twenty is Plenty signs**

Two further locations have been identified as being suitable to erect the signs. It was agreed that more signs would be purchased.

* **Somerset West and Taunton Council Free Trees Initiative.**

It was confirmed that the trees have now been planted in St Andrews Field.

**21/79 Parishioners Forum**

No issues were raised.

**21/80 To consider any issues arising from the Annual Parish Meeting**

A parishioner had enquired at the meeting whether it was possible to erect some ‘Twenty is Plenty’ signage along Lower West Hatch Lane. The Council agreed to identify a suitable location and purchase some signage.

**21/81 To receive reports from County Councillor and District Councillor**

The report from John Thorne, the SCC Councillor had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

One item of interest was that the County Council is intending to hold a Parish Council Conference to discuss the possibility of introducing 20mph speed limits in rural areas as this is an issue that has been raised by many Parish Councils. Cllr Thorne was asked to keep the Parish Council updated on this initiative.

**21/82 Report on Parish Meeting with Rebecca Pow MP**

Rebecca Pow attended a Parish Meeting on March 10th 2022 to hear the concerns of the Parishioners with regards to the proposed A358 improvements. As a result, Mrs Pow will request a meeting with the Secretary of State for Transport to discuss the concerns raised. The report of the meeting has been published on the West Hatch Parish website, and a copy forwarded to the County and District Councils and Councillors.

**21/83 Parish Council Elections –procedures and timescales**

The Clerk outlined the procedures and timescales for the forthcoming Parish Council elections. Completed nomination forms had to be submitted by the April 4th. Provided those sufficient nominations were received to enable a quorate Council to be formed, any resulting vacancies could be filled by co-option at a subsequent Parish Council meeting.

**21/84 Increase in Clerk’s Salary scales wef 01/04/2021**

The Clerk advised that an agreement has been reached on the pay award for local government services employees, covering the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

This has resulted in an increase to the hourly rate of £0.20. The Council agreed to this increase, and the arrears due have been included in the Clerk’s salary payment for March.

**21/85 Formal Expenditure Approval**

It was resolved to make the following payment:

1. Clerk’s Salary £325.20
2. Clerk’s Expenses £ 22.50
3. West Hatch Village Hall £150.00
4. Website renewal fee £286.74

**21/86 Planning – to consider any planning matters arising**

The Council has received notification of a planning application to create a dog exercise yard at 3 Elms Farm. A meeting will be held on site to discuss the application.

**21/87 Reports of Parish Council Working Parties**

* 1. Report from Footpath leader – Repairs to several footpaths have been carried out in recent months including the installation of new gates and fingerposts. A new bridge has also been installed on the footpath behind ‘ Willows’
	2. Report from Trees/Conservation leader – Nothing to report.
	3. Report on Highway matters – Repainting of the Give Way lines at the bottom of Church Lane is still outstanding and the Clerk will chase this. The potholes at the edge of Church Field have been marked but not yet repaired.

The damage caused by badgers at Slough Green will be reported via the online reporting system as this has still not been repaired.

The general poor state of the roads in the Parish, particularly Church Lane was noted and the Clerk will contact Highways to request that the Parish roads are considered for surface dressing.

The damaged culvert and manhole cover in Meare Green Lane has finally been repaired.

* 1. Report from SALC representative – Nothing to report

**21/88 Correspondence and matters of report.**

* **Local Heritage List**

A new project to record heritage assets in Somerset and Exmoor has been launched. Managed by the South West Heritage Trust, the scheme will give special, ‘locally listed’ status to distinctive and noteworthy buildings, sites, and monuments across Somerset and Exmoor. It is a chance to recognise places with cultural value in the area, and help preserve the diverse local heritage.

Nominations are encouraged by local communities and there are several ways to make a nomination, including through the ‘Know Your Place’ website, or by post or email.

Further details can be found at: <https://swheritage.org.uk/local-heritage-list>

* **Update on rewilding of St Andrews Field**

A selection of fruit trees has been planted together with 700 hedglings to create a Community Orchard/leisure area. The track in St Andrews field needs attention, which is the responsibility of the PCC.

**21/89 To agree date of next meeting**

Thursday 12th May at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm