



MINUTES OF HIGH HAM PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT HIGH HAM VILLAGE HALL  
ON TUESDAY 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.30pm

Present: Dave Vigar (Chairman), Catherine Roberts, Nick Fear, Nancy Green. V Young (Clerk).

Unitary Councillors : Richard Wilkins

Pubic approx: 5

Meeting opened at 7.40pm.

**1) Apologies & declarations of interest:-** Mike Stanton (Unitary Councillor) had sent apologies. Amanda Chuter, Rob Webb and Rob Rice had also sent apologies and these were accepted. Additional apologies had been received from one parishioner. There were no declarations of interest.

Agenda item order was changed

**2) Planning applications for consideration - None**

**3) Planning applications decided**

23/02660/HOU – Cherry Trees, Mill Road, High Ham - Erection of a detached single garage - Granted

23/02578/FUL – Poplar Farm, Henley Road, High Ham – The erection of a roof over existing cattle feeding area to reduce pollution. - Granted

23/00324/FUL – Demolition of existing building and erection of a new dwelling – Aunt Emilys, Low Ham – Refused.

**4) Unitary Councillor report –** The written report had been circulated. Tomorrow would be a meeting of full council. Two lead members were leaving and needed to be replaced. The disappointing settlement from central government was noted. This mean that instead of a 6.5% increase in line with cost they were giving 6.1% instead which meant another shortfall of over three million pounds for the unitary council to find or save by cutting services.

Richard Wilkins wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

**5) Public Session:** A recent soil erosion issue, in which there had been extenuating circumstances due to the timing of very heavy rainfall shortly after a maize harvest had caused considerable difficulties for a few residents in the area. A reminder was to go out on facebook and the website regarding the landowners responsibilities for keeping ditches clear etc. Sandbags and some supplies of sand were available by contacting Dave or John Vigar. If the roads became dangerous then it could be reported directly to highways and also 101.

**6) Approval of Previous minutes.**

The minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were approved with minor amendment as a true record.

**7) Ongoing Action Points and Updates.**

**Lengthsman** – Since the last report the favourable weather gave Craig and Rachael the opportunity to apply weed killer. Areas covered include the cemetery, Picts Hill, Hamdown Court and Millennium Wood. The levels of the grit bins had been checked and it was now confirmed that Highways would top-up if necessary. Grit bags could no longer be collected from the depot. Work on drainage has continued, focusing on areas of higher priority. Lengthsman would continue to work through the list of priority locations informed by Dave Vigar and Amanda Chuter. Permission had been requested to Somerset Council for the pollarding of some of the trees on The Green.



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Lengthsman work in Millennium Wood: Bramble bashing and hedge trimming continued in the Millennium Wood. Thinning will continue to allow growing space for healthy trees and lose the look of a plantation. The felling of diseased ash trees would continue.

**Highways/Footpaths** – A no entry sign had appeared at the start of Aclands Drove, on Beer Drove stating words to the effect of ‘no entry’. The sign had disappeared next day. It was confirmed that neither the installation or removal was anything that had involved the Parish Council. Fly-tipping of a small freezer on Field Road had been reported and this had been removed.

It was reported that the third drain down Hext Hill near Long Street had been jetted in September but was now overflowing again. The drain near Willow Cottage was on the Somerset Council repair lists for the next financial year. It was noted that County Highways seemed keep to push responsibilities onto LCN groups of parishes. A footpath with a dangerous stile had been photographed and the defect problem sent into Somerset Council. Richard Wilkins - to be copied in on the report to see if he could move this up the priorities list.

**Millennium Wood** – see lengthsman report.

**Parish Green** - None

**Playing Fields** – Noted that the loan for the purchase of the field completes in January. The new signs had been installed and hedge-cutting will take place soon.

**Refurbishment of noticeboards** - Ongoing

**Any other** – inc Village Hall, School, Website, Defibrillators, Phonebooths, Carols around the Christmas tree. - It was noted that the wreath making had been a very successful fundraising events for the village hall. Carols around the tree were advertised for 23<sup>rd</sup> December at 5.30pm.

**Cemetery** – an update to the wording of the policy regarding reservation of plots was necessary with regards to double graves as only side by side graves were available at the moment. This was for further discussion at a future meeting with regards to the exact wording.

It was unanimously agreed to purchase upto 200 sandbags from amazon. The quote was £79.90 from Amazon for 100.

### **8) Correspondence and meetings attended**

The Chairman (Dave Vigar) had attended the development committee meeting with regard to 100 houses in Huish Episcopi on the border of the Parish. Dave Vigar raised objections regarding traffic and used data from the Speed Indicator Devices that had been on Picts Hill. There had been several objections to the application. However the Development Committee of the Unitary Council for the South Somerset area granted the application regardless. There were additionally concerns regarding the reservation of affordable homes for local people not taking place. There was much concern within the Parish with regard to the late notification of the committee and the rather ad-hoc notification to local residents who were affected by it.

Dave and Amanda had attended the LCN meetings. The online meetings with the Unitary Council continued fortnightly. No definitive information had been passed on.

A piece of correspondence was raised that had been sent to a parishioner. It was thought that the letter was from the playing field committee instead and was about hedge-cutting along Windmill Road.



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**9) Financial**

Budget - the finance group would meet to recommend a budget to full council.

The following payments were authorised

Lengthsman - £891.86

Clerk's wages - £437.13

Somerset Council Premises Licence - £70.00

**10) Date of next meeting** - 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024 was confirmed as the next meeting.

**11) Items for future meetings** – Budget for year ending 31/3/2025 and cemetery document to be updated.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.07pm