



Minutes 2023

Date of Meeting:	9 th November 2023	Time:	19:30
Location of Meeting:	Hembry Room, Westfield Church Hall		
Present:	Cllr. John Vassalli, Cllr. R. Leighton, Cllr. J. Johnstone,		
In Attendance:	Tammy Roper (Clerk),		
Apologies:	Cllr. M. Mead, Cllr. N. Myers, Cllr. F. Smith, Cllr. G. Slocombe		

Ref:	Topic of Discussion
1-9/11/2023	Chairman's Comments
	Cllr. Vassalli standing in as Chair in the absence of Cllr. Mead, welcomed everyone to the smallest meeting we have ever had.
2-9/11/2023	Public Question Time
	Member of the public present in regards to for A39 roadworks. Due to this, it was agreed that Agenda item 11 would be moved to the first item discussed. Member of public left at 8pm.
3-9/11/2023	Declarations of Interest
	No Declarations of Interest were declared.
4-9/11/2023	Minutes of Last Meeting
	Minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr. A. Leighton, seconded by Cllr. J. Johnstone. All agreed.
5-9/11/2023	A39 Speed Restrictions
	Discussed as first item due to member of the public being present. It is planned for a 20 mph speed limit on the A39 for a period of 50 weeks, to allow for the entrance to be constructed for the new development. The member of public is concerned that Skimmerton Lane will be used more as a rat run, as drivers try to avoid the traffic congestion on the A39 caused by these restrictions. The member of public further explained that they thought that the effect will be on the whole parish of Durleigh, not just Skimmerton Lane, if congestion measures are not put into place. The proposed timescale will span an academic year, plus numerous planting & harvesting seasons. They attended a meeting in Wembdon where it was made clear by the developers of the north side of the development, that they predict it will be 50 weeks for their patch, but that they then foresee that construction of the other side will start, so restrictions will be in place for much longer. The member of the public felt that a one-way system would help to alleviate traffic issues. Skimmerton lane is too narrow for two-way traffic, especially when farm vehicles are being used. This then causes a safety issue with further traffic building up on the A39. Skimmerton Lane is heavily used by agriculture vehicles almost 24 hrs per day. Asking for Durleigh Parish Council to support or instigate a request for one way system. Cllr. Vassalli explained that Durleigh Parish Council had raised these concerns on the planning application response. He has also recently written to Cllr. Slocombe re these concerns.

	<p>Action: Cllr. Vassalli to forward email to Cllr. Caswell and Cllr. in charge of highways, in the absence of Gill Slocombe. Cllr. Vassalli to raise at LCN on 22nd November.</p>
6-9/11/2023	<p>Update on Actions from Previous meeting</p> <p>Enmore Road bin – Cllr. Leighton went past yesterday, picked up a bag of rubbish. The hedge and nettles have been cut, revealing lots of hidden rubbish, including a nitrous oxide bottle. On the whole a lot better than previously seen, but we will still monitor.</p> <p>Noticeboard – Cllr. Vassalli updated in regards to the requested quotes for re-surfacing and generally tidying up the area. As discussed at the previous meeting the two first quotes were too expensive, so further quotes were sought and received. The lowest quote at present is £421.94, but Cllr. Vassalli is pursuing another quote. The Councillors agreed that it was worth £422 (4% of budget), to tidy it up and hopefully deal with the dog fouling issue. Expenditure up to £422 agreed. Proposed by Cllr. Vassalli, seconded by Cllr. Leighton. All in agreement.</p> <p>Action; Cllr. Vassalli to forward all quotes to Clerk.</p> <p>Sign for Queenswood Lane and Spaxton Road – In the absence of Cllr. Gill Slocombe, it was decided to defer this item until the January meeting.</p> <p>Bench at Rexworthy Farm footpath – Cllr. Leighton gave an update. The slab (to attach the bench to) has been installed, using the concrete left over from work on the bridge. The bench has not been installed yet.</p> <p>Change of Domain Name – The Clerk gave an update on the work being done to transfer to .gov.uk and explained it had taken a different route to expected. Part of the requirement is having centrally administered emails for all councillors. Our current website host is not keen to do this and if it was provided it would be at significant cost. While searching for email service packages, the Clerk contacted SALC for advice and was advised they were working on a discount agreement with a provider, for SALC members. On their advice, the Clerk contacted Parish Online and received a quote for £315 per year which includes obtaining the .gov.uk domain name, hosting of a new website compliant with all legislation and 20 email boxes. This works out cheaper than with our current provider, plus looking for a further email service. Due to this, the decision was taken to accept the quote from Parish Online. Proposed by Cllr. Vassalli, seconded by Cllr. Johnstone. Agreed by all.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to contact current provider to advise that we will be ending contract. Contact Parish Online to confirm acceptance of quote.</p> <p>Chevron – Cllr. Vassalli gave an update that Katherine Tyson from Somerset Highways had been in contact to confirm it was the chevron on the bank coming from Enmore direction that was needed. This is now in hand, alongside the two existing slow signs which will be refreshed. This work should be completed in this financial year.</p>
7-9/11/2023	<p>Matters Arising (Including Consultation Responses)</p> <p>National Pay Rise Awarded – At the September meeting, the Clerk’s annual increment rise was approved, but noted that the National pay award was still awaited. This has now been agreed, with the £1 per hour increase applicable from 1st April 2023. Both the pay award and back pay (£263.55) were approved. Proposed Cllr. Vassalli, seconded by Cllr. Leighton. All in agreement.</p>



	<p>Drainage – Cllr Leighton reported that during the recent storm, there was flooding in the Durleigh Hill area due to blocked drains. Cllr. Leighton has reported / complained to council about the road drain and will speak to landowner about clearing ditch. Follow up if no response.</p> <p>Bus decals – We have been approached by Buses of Somerset to donate towards new bus decals advertising the £2 fares across Somerset which has been extended to December 2024. A small donation of £18 to cover three decals was agreed, as it was felt that the advertising of low bus fares could benefit residents of Durleigh.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to pay donation and ask if they have poster to display in noticeboard and something we can display at the bus stops.</p> <p>Proposed by Cllr. Vassalli, seconded by Cllr. Leighton. All agreed.</p>
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8-9/11/2023	Financial Matters
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	<p>The Clerk reported that the Bank balance at 31st October 2023 was £14,707.65</p> <p>Expenditure since the last bank statement was detailed:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20%;">1/11/23</td> <td style="width: 40%;">Somerset Council - bin emptying</td> <td style="width: 20%;">D7</td> <td style="width: 20%;">Bank Transfer</td> <td style="width: 10%;">81.38</td> <td style="width: 10%;">16.28</td> <td style="width: 10%;">97.66</td> </tr> </table> <p>The clerk explained with the payments made, the bank balance has reduced to £14,609.99</p> <p>There are no payments waiting to be paid, other than the pay award back pay to the Clerk detailed in ‘Matters Arising’ above. It was explained that all payments that have been made are either all pre-approved on the ‘Schedule of Payments 2023-24’ authorised at the May meeting, or are within the levels for delegated authority as detailed in the Financial Regulations. Therefore, these do not need further approval, but are just to note.</p> <p>The Clerk referred to the Finance Reports up to 31 Oct 2023, sent to all councillors prior to the meeting, which includes the cashbook showing expenditure, the actual expenditure against budget and the bank rec @ 31 Oct . There were no questions or queries in regards to the finance reports and they were approved as accurate and complete.</p> <p>Proposed by Cllr. Leighton, Seconded by Cllr. Vassalli</p> <p>It was agreed that there will be a Finance Sub Group meeting in December to discuss the draft budget for 2024/25, prior to bringing to the full council for agreement in January. As it is likely to be a difficult year ahead with the devolution of assets from Somerset Council, it was agreed that the invite will be sent to all councillors.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to circulate possible dates (contact Chair first)</p>	1/11/23	Somerset Council - bin emptying	D7	Bank Transfer	81.38	16.28	97.66
1/11/23	Somerset Council - bin emptying	D7	Bank Transfer	81.38	16.28	97.66		

9-9/11/2023	Planning Matters
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Items for Discussion:

None

Items for Update:

23/23/00005	<p>Queenswood Farm, Broadlands Lane – Outline application with some matters reserved, for the erection of 2no. dwellings and access arrangements. Withdrawn on 10/10/23. However, residents in Broadlands Lane have received a letter and plan from the agent saying that new plans for just one bungalow with access through with Broadlands Lane are proposed.</p> <p>Await further notification from Somerset Planning.</p>
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23/23/00009	7 Skimmerton Lane - Reduce upper crown of Common Oak (T1) (TPO Ref G1) by 6m to live sound wood. Responded in support.
10-9/11/2023	Survey for Young People
	In the absence of Cllr. Smith, it was agreed that this item will be deferred until January. The councillors present wanted it noted that the draft documents provided in advance of the meeting were very impressive and look forward to discussing them in full with Cllr. Smith present.
11-9/11/2023	Grants & Donation Policy
	The Clerk referred to the Grants & Donations policy which was sent out to all councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk did not feel that any changes were needed and this was supported by councillors. Approved for continued use: All in agreement
12-9/11/2023	Local Community Networks
	Next meeting 22 nd Nov – no update
13-9/11/2023	Meetings Attended
	Update in January with all councillors present
14-9/11/2023	Items for Next Agenda
1	Survey for Young People
2	Budget 2024/25
3	LCN
4	Update on move to .go.uk website
15-9/11/2023	Date & Venue of Next Meeting
Date / Time:	11 th January 2024
Venue:	Hembry Room, Westfield Church

Meeting Closed at:	21:20
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Minutes Signed by: **Date:**
(Chairman)