

## Lydeard St Lawrence and Tolland Parish Council Meeting

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### Minutes of the Parish Council (PC) Meeting held in the Village Hall on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024 at 7:30pm

Present: Cllrs Marshall – Chairman, Telling, Oxley, Hobson, Vickery, Peters, Harding supported by Neal Gossage (Clerk).

Apologies: None

Absent: None

No members of the public were present.

The Chairman noted that Cllr Sturgess had resigned before the meeting. He asked councillors to consider other people in Lydeard St Lawrence that might be prepared to serve as councillors.

#### **24.065 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest in relation to items on the agenda.

#### **24.066 Minutes of meeting held on 21st October 2024**

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chairman and Cllr Telling.

#### **24.067 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **24.068 Planning Applications**

Planning application 41/24/0004 was discussed following an appeal to the original decision. The Parish Council had no objections to the original application and continued to maintain that position.

#### **24.069 Standing Orders**

A revised draft of the Standing Orders was considered. Cllr Telling proposed that the orders be adopted and that was seconded by Cllr Harding. The motion received unanimous support.

#### **24.070 Financial Regulations**

A revised draft of the Financial Regulations was considered. Cllr Vickery proposed that the regulations be adopted and that was seconded by Cllr Peters . The motion received unanimous support.

#### **24.071 Police and Crime report**

The report was noted.

Councillors expressed continuing disappointment at the level of detail in the report particularly in relation to information on incidents in the village.

Cllr Marshall agreed to speak with Ms Whelan again to see if more detail can be included in future reports.

**Action: Cllr Marshall**

#### **24.072 Somerset Council Matters**

The Chairman referred to the report provided by Cllrs Sulley and Rigby. The report provided a brief update on Somerset Council matters but further detail would be helpful.

Councillors did not have any further comments on the report.

#### **24.073 Consider and select a new website provider**

It had previously been noted that the current website is shared with other village institutions and is not compliant with the latest WCAG standard.

Following some discussion around the need for a new website and the costs involved, a motion was moved to ascertain which councillors would support the move to a new website. Four councillors supported the idea and three were either against the idea or were neutral on the matter.

Given a majority in favour of moving to a new website provider, further discussion took place on the two providers who had submitted a proposal. Cllr Vickery explained the differences between the two proposals in relation to initial and ongoing costs.

In view of the costs, a motion was moved to appoint Parish Online as the new website provider. That was supported by four councillors and three councillors abstained. Councillors decided that specific .gov.uk email addresses will not be used at present due to the small number of emails that are currently received by councillors.

The Clerk was asked to appoint Parish Online as the website provider and work with Parish Online to set the site up.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **24.074 Management Accounts for the period ended 30 September 2024**

The management accounts were noted and no queries were raised.

#### **24.075 Clerk's Pay and Expenses**

The Council was asked to approve the clerk's pay (£702.00) and expenses (£21.61) for the quarter ended 31 December 2024. That was proposed by Cllr Vickery and seconded by Cllr Hobson and received unanimous support.

#### **24.076 Draft Budget 2025/26**

The draft budget for 2025/26 was discussed and it was noted that two drafts were presented – one incorporating grants to village organisations and the other one without such grants. TDBC used to provide a grant of £1,905 to the parish council to support village organisations but, as a result of the changing financial position of Somerset Council, that grant is no longer provided.

After some discussion, the Council decided that it wished to continue to support village organisations and would therefore seek to recover a similar amount from people in the parish through the precept. It was further agreed that the Playing Fields Committee would continue to receive £735pa from funds subject to the precept being agreed. Other changes agreed were to include a budget for footpath maintenance (of £300) and to increase the grant to Tolland PCC to £250.

These changes were proposed by Cllr Peters and were seconded by Cllr Hobson and received unanimous support.

The Clerk was asked to prepare a revised draft budget for presentation to the January 2025 meeting.

**Action: Clerk**

#### **24.077 Meeting dates**

A draft of proposed meeting dates for 2025 was circulated and was agreed by all present.

#### **24.078 Any other business**

Cllr Marshall noted that two councillor vacancies now exist and asked those present to consider who might be prepared to act as a councillor. Cllr Telling had a few people in mind that she would approach.

Cllrs Marshall and Peters noted that the bonfire night party was well attended and successful. The Village Hall Committee Winter Food evening was also successful.

Cllr Peters queried whether the broadband installation by Airband was progressing to plan. Cllr Marshall stated that the work was progressing steadily but is unlikely to be completed until later next year or early in 2026.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the councillors for their work during the year and wished all present a Happy Christmas.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:15.

**The next meeting will be held in the Village Hall at 7:30pm on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025.**