WEST CAMEL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the West Camel Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 7th November 2024 at 7:30 pm in The Davis Hall.

Present:	Chairman	**Kathy Miller-Hunt (KMH)**	
	Councillors	**Jenny Down (JD)**	**Geoff Chapman (GC)**
		Mick Richens (MR)	**Jane Lawrence (JL)**
	Clerk	**Les Stevens (LS)**	**Angela Suter (AS)**

Somerset Council Councillors – **Cllr Henry Hobhouse (HH)** **Kevin Messenger (KM)**

Members of the public – 1.

1124.01 Vacancy by co-option – Jane Lawrence (JL) was co-opted onto Council, nominated by KMH seconded by MR and agreed all. KMH welcomed JL and thanked her for stepping forward.

1124.02 Electors' Participation – None.

1124.03 Apologies for Absence – Cllr Cliff Baker (CB) - holiday.

1124.04 Minutes of the last meeting (05/09/24) to be agreed and signed - The minutes were agreed by all councillors and were duly signed by KMH and LS.

1124.05 Matters of Report arising from the previous meeting minutes (not on the agenda) –
0923.07 C vii – Remove bench stumps by Home Close instead of repair as others sited close by. **AP LS**
0924.10 d – LS to update bank mandate. JL and CB to send photo id to LS **AP LS**

1124.06 Declaration of Interest and details of dispensations requested / granted since last meeting (councillors and/or visiting councillors). – JD expressed an ongoing interest in item 7 C iii (Flood Mitigation Proposals).

1124.07 Somerset Council Councillor feedback – HH mentioned he was still awaiting an answer to his request for the transfer of several parishes in his ward to the Wincanton LCN.
KM mentioned the 10th December River Authority email received. LS has already sent to Parish Councillors.
HH mentioned the section 19 report for discussion not happy that the correct facts have been ascertained and is meeting with Martin Willey (Flood Lead in QC) 08/11/24 and offered to meet with KMH w/c. 11/11 if required. KMH thanked HH and KM for their contribution.

1124.08 Standing Items of Business

a. **Local Crime**
   I. **Neighbourhood Watch** – Nothing reported this month from Adrian Davenport (AD). JL mentioned 2 young men reportedly from the Red Cross knocking on doors at the Caravan Park. They had also been around West Camel and AS mentioned Queen Camel earlier in the same week. Mention to AD. **AP LS/AS**

b. **Footpaths / RoW –** LS to drop 2 gates to GC who will have them installed at the same time as his new fence. It was also mentioned that the footpath from Cottis to the Bakery and The Spinney to Slate Lane had a fence also installed so although the gates were in situ they cannot be used. Highways to be approached. LS has raised this with Same Langdrigan (Galliford-Try.

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c. Environment.

i. Flood Plan – Ongoing. JL has a spreadsheet to turn into pdf but mentioned some large blanks in contact details for some homeowners. KMH mentioned that some people had not wanted to give out these details.

ii. Flood Monitoring Proposals – HH added that the he has secured funding of £1400 for the adding new SRA Gauges to the Peglar 'App' which he hopes to have in place by December 2024. Peglar route was queried as the 'RiverApp' does allow for alarms to be set.

iii. Flood Mitigation Proposals 2024/25 – LS asked that councillors walk the river through to Bridgehampton to see the amount of clearance/improvement that had been made. River was reported to be clearer and flowing faster. Russell Best (Key Contractors) should be finished with tree pollarding and river bank clearance on Monday/Tuesday week beg, 11/11. Then Riparian Land Owners to start clearance.

iv. New CFH website and 'RiverApp' details circulated to residents 07/11/24 via email

d. Play Area / Ground.

i. Replacement play equipment – LS / AS / KMH / MR / JD met with Chloe Warner (and other interested parties) who had done some further investigation and costings and come back to the group for wider discussion. An estimates cost of £20-25K for the bundle of different age group equipment will need to be raised. Agreed no zip wire and LS to contact insurers re an in-ground trampoline. Look at Lottery Fund application – 16-week process MR mentioned Bingo Fundraiser – Ongoing.

ii. Hedge Cutting all completed by Adrian Parrott. Excellent tidy job.

iii. Mowers supper grant of £20/mower (£140 in total) proposed by MR seconded by JD and agreed by all.

e. Community Housing Scheme

i. Community Housing – Plots 8/9 sale – on hold.

ii. Plot 1 resale process – now in the second period (Old South Somerset area plus people with a link to the parish) and can be advertised on the open market after 31st January 2025.

f. **Traffic Calming.**

i. Howell Hill – LS confirmed that the leaning stanchion which occurred after hedge cutting he would discuss with Tracey at Somerset Council. **AP LS**

ii. SID warranty plan extension discussed cost of £400. MR proposed extending for another 12 months GC seconded, agreed all. Data to be collected by LS for analysis in 12 months. **AP LS**

g. Community Engagement & Communication

i. Website / Comms in general – no update.

ii. Notice Board Replacement / repair – LS stated that he would refurbish the Parsonage Rd NB during the Winter. KMH complimented him on the Southmead replacement board – Ongoing LS

h. **Parish Council Processes / Unitary Authority Update**

i. LCN is the Yeovil LCN appropriate? HH stated that he had asked for several parishes within his ward to be transferred to the Wincanton LCN. **Ongoing with HH.**

ii. Replacement Clerk – Angela Suter (AS) welcomed. New filing cabinet required for storage as AS has limited capacity at home.

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iii. Allocation of extra duties currently managed by LS were discussed. Defibrillator checks – AS, SIDS, Footpaths and mowing LS happy to continue. Litter Pick – MR to organise, Marquee – ongoing.
iv. Councillor vacancies – KMH encouraged everyone to try and recruit people to fill the two vacancies. **AP All.**
v. As JL is now compiling the Contingency plan in the SRA (Somerset Rivers Authority) template, KMH asked if GC would now take on lead of the Personnel Committee, assisted by CB? MR offered to also join this committee. MR also offered to become Vice Chairman as this role was now vacant. KMH thanked GC and MR for taking on these new roles.

i. **Highways** –
  i. Back St drain – Update – LS reported that earlier problems with the installed pipe had been corrected by a second working party on 12th October.
  ii. Howell Hill – LS has contacted SC Highways to trace an existing iron pipe, and potentially dig a hole by the chamber for local resources to incorporate pipe into drainage system – **ongoing.**
  iii. Lengthsman scheme working well. A scheme to open a blocked ditch from Urgashay to the river is under investigation after support given by the land owner.

j. **Community Benefit Fund (CBF) –** No new applications.

1124.09 Correspondence / Other matters requiring action

a. Local Government Boundary Commission Somerset Consultation – included in Bi-weekly news brief to all residents.
b. Somerset Parishes Conferences 2024 13th November - no attendee
c. Precept Consultation for Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue - circulated via email prior to the meeting.
d. Vehicle Operators Licences (HGV Parking) – LS explained Steart Hill Farm now appeared to permission to park up to 70 vehicles. Similar issues, mostly affecting Queen Camel and South Cadbury & Sutton Montis PCs is being investigating further.

1124.10 Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer Report

a. Interim Fidelity Check – **AP MR**
b. Budget build 2025/2026 – to discuss and agree at next meeting on 9th Jan and Precept requirements advised to SC by end of January 2025. Increase potentially from £60-120 per household to cover flood mitigation, lengthsman evolving roles. LS mentioned solar park funding ends next year.
c. Payment Authorisation – LS shared the Schedule of Payments for 6th September – 7th November 2024 (below) which totalled £2,337.94. He explained what each payment was for and whether pre-approved in the budget and explained the additional hours claimed. KMH proposed approval of all payments, seconded MR, agreed all.

Cheque No. or OP Ref	Payee	Service / Goods Purchased	Amount
21/2425	Key Contractors	Digger & Dumper Hire (Howell Hill)	£528.00
22/2425	Somerset Council	SID Stanchion (Howell Hill)	£200.00
23/2425	ElanCity	Mounting bar & batteries	£220.74

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24/2425	HMRC	PAYE Q2	£192.80
25/2425	Jeff Stamp	Lengthsman Duties September	£160.00
26/2425	Richard Hooper	Mower Fuel	£45.63
27/2425	SALC	Training Course (S Palmer)	£25.00
28/2425	L Stevens	Gen Exp + Add Hrs	£269.72
29/2425	A Suter	Hours Training (Net)	£56.05
30/2425	Parrott Works	Hedge Cutting	£480.00
31/2425	J Stamp	Lengthsman Duties October	£160.00
Total			**£2,337.94**

1124.11 Planning Applications

New planning applications – none.

Planning Updates – None.

1124.12 Matters of Report / Future Business

a. **Other Matters of Report –** GC reported bad road signage for Downhead/West Camel and thought there should be a weight limit restriction past the bakery.
b. Matters of Future Business – MR volunteered to be vice chair agreed and thanked by KMH

1124.13 Date of next meeting – Thursday 9th January 2025 in the Davis Hall Committee Room.

At this point the Chairman asked members of the public to vacate the meeting while a confidential staffing issue is discussed in closed session.

1124.14 NALC 2024/25 Local Government Services Pay Agreement – GC proposed implementation of the National Pay Award, seconded by JL and agreed by all. **AP LS to implement.**
LS mentioned that contractually AS will move to SCP 15 from 1st April 2025, but pointed out that as he hadn't taken earlier pay-spine increases, the existing clerk's rate of pay was currently lower than most councillors were paying their gardeners! After discussion, MR suggested that the Personnel Committee should discuss further and make a recommendation in the new financial year.

11.24.15 The meeting closed at 21:10.

Signed.....
Chairman Date 9th January 2025

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Clerk Date 9th January 2025

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