

MINUTES OF THE CORFE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT CORFE VILLAGE HALL, TUESDAY 15th November 2022.

Present: Cllr J Harrison, Cllr B Lenthall, Cllr C Brown, Cllr D Bradbeer, Cllr J Jackson, Cllr G Alexander, Cllr A Butler, SCC Cllr S Wakefield. Two members of the public.

Chairman Cllr J Harrison opened the meeting at 6.00pm, welcoming all.

07/10: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. – SCC Cllr R Henley.

08/10: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. Cllr Harrison: Almshouse Trust. Cllr C Brown: Village Hall Committee.

09/10: MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 20th SEPTEMBER 2022 – These were discussed briefly. The minutes have been circulated, published, and signed as accurate records.

10/10: MATTERS ARISING FROM THOSE MINUTES - Nothing was commented on.

11/10: REPORTS OF COUNTY COUNCILLORS.

SCC Cllr S Wakefield of Somerset County Council highlighted several issues that appear in a written report. (See Appendix 1 below).

12/10: REPORTS OF PORTFOLIO HOLDERS.

PLANNING: Cllr J Harrison – Reported he had received complaints from residents concerning the Woodside extension in that the planning application first submitted on the 10/3/21 had not been followed. An email has been sent to the planning office to clarify things on this subject. Feltham cottage application submitted on 23/1 has had no objections. Lower Hayne has resubmitted an amended planning application following planning office rejection of the original proposal. A decision on this amended application is due by 27/12.

HIGHWAYS: Cllr B. Lenthall – Reported that the road cracks on Corfe Hill had now been filled and that gullies had been sucked, although he believed this may not have been 100% successful following some complaints of excess water still occurring following heavy rain. Cllr Lenthall will be making enquiries in due course.

A new grit bin has now been purchased and will be installed when time allows. Highways have confirmed that they will not be replacing any bins for us and that the Parish Council would have to do this.

RIGHTS OF WAY: Cllr D. Bradbeer - Had nothing to report. However, he has been busy with some play park maintenance issues and was thanked for his efforts on this.

WEBSITE: Cllr J Jackson – The website remains well used. Cllr J Jackson also reported that a Keep Corfe Healthy whatsapp group had been created and it now boasts 45 members. Cllr B Lenthall also expressed his support for the farming community in these difficult times and requested that users are careful with their postings to avoid unnecessary distress.

A New Year's Eve party with an optional fancy dress theme of 'The 80's' will be taking place in the village Hall. Full details are on the website in the latest newsletter:

<https://www.corfevillagesomerset.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Latest-Newsletter.pdf>

Please buy your tickets (£2.50) from Hayley Smith: smithsscentsshop@gmail.com

VILLAGE HALL: Cllr. C. Brown – Keith Gosling was unfortunately held up prior to the meeting and was unable to give an address to those present. He did, however, report further progress on a proposed extension to the Village Hall was still ongoing and that he was hopeful of presenting some costs to the Parish Council for consideration soon.

The proposed New Year's party was also promoted as were village events leading up to Christmas. Village Hall meeting minutes are now available for public viewing on the Corfe Village Website:

<https://www.corfevillagesomerset.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/VH-Minutes-Oct-2022.pdf>

They are also displayed on the Village Hall noticeboards as and when they occur.

GREEN PORTFOLIO – Cllr. G Alexander – Reported nothing new to share with those present but asked 'What is Corfe and its residents doing to save the planet'? This was raised primarily as a discussion subject for those present to consider. A plant-based approach to diet was expressed as an option. The use of solar power as an alternative power source such as that being used to power our traffic SIDs was also highlighted. If residents do have ideas on this topic, please send them in so that possible actions to help could be implemented. It was agreed that most people will do as they feel what is best for them and their families on this subject and that choices will always be based on personal preferences.

ALMSHOUSE CHARITY SELICKS GREEN REPORT – Cllr J Harrison – Nothing further to report since the last meeting.

13/10: WHITE HART INN - UPDATE.

Last week, Cllrs Brown and Jackson had a Zoom call with the new owner of The White Hart. This was an introductory conversation in which he set out his thoughts on the future of the building. He was very up-front about his main motivation: to make money.

If a vibrant and profitable pub is the best use of the asset, then he would look to invest in a refurbishment. What he doesn't want to do is spend a lot of money and then find a pub isn't a viable business. Furthermore, he does not want to open a pub or similar business if it meant ruining another business within the area or alienating the local community who he said are often opposed to change.

We highlighted that the pub has great potential given its location and historically was a successful business we stressed there is a lot of demand in the village for a good pub that could become the centre of the community.

Clearly, the accounts he has seen only cover a more recent (unsuccessful) period. He wants to do more due diligence before deciding how to proceed. At present, he believes the Taunton & Pickering Golf Club is a venue that is doing well at the expense of the White Hart.

His other option is to seek an alternative use – nursing home, Airbnb, and residential housing were all mentioned. He believed the pub hadn't been assigned ACV status – we have made him aware it has and sent him the council letter.

Overall, we sensed he is in no rush to decide and is happy to 'landbank' the property for now. He disclosed he has a large portfolio of properties, including six 'open' pubs and three 'closed' pubs. However, there are also examples of former pubs that have been converted to other uses, such as Airbnbs.

We have sent him some photos of the building and car park, highlighting the state of dis-repair, and asked him to remove the estate agent's signs.

Overall, a friendly meeting, at the end of which we agreed to speak again.

14/10: FINANCES – Cllr J Harrison provided an update on finances. Our current cash position is £23,092.31. Monies currently being held that are protected include: £3,327.00 reserved for the Corfe Gateway project and £1434.67 held on behalf of the suspended Corfe Lifts group. We therefore have a true balance of £18,330.64. Payments made since last meeting on 20th September 2022 included: Church Burial Fund for £220.00, Grit Bin for £137.94, Corfe Dog Bin Emptying £55.94, Peak Playgrounds Springer Bar £54.00, Notice Board refurbishment £408, Poppy Shop £41.92, Krystal Web Site £47.99 (Not Cashed), Parsons Landscapes £205.85 (Not Cashed). Income received since the last meeting include 3D Cleaning website advert for £10.

15/10: CORRESPONDENCE – A reminder to prepare our precept for 2023/24 has been received. This needs to be decided on in January. It was noted that an expectation of more expense and workload on Parish Councils following the changes to the Somerset County Council structure would be likely however, the Parish Council will endeavour to keep any rises to a minimum if any are required.

16/10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS –

There have been a number of complaints that fireworks are alarming pets and livestock. A polite reminder to all users of fireworks that animals become alarmed when fireworks are being used. If you are planning to use any fireworks to mark an occasion, could you try to give prior notice of timed display as it would be greatly appreciated to allow all animal and pet owners to be prepared. We would also highlight silent fireworks as a good alternative. This request was fully supported by Corfe Parish Council.

Corfe Community Trust is available to anyone who is in need. Please contact Keith Gosling to make him aware of your concerns in the first instance.

On 18th December, Corfe will be having a carol service. Corfe Church will be holding a Christmas Tree festival this year, viewing will be from December 19th to 24th inclusive, 2pm to 6pm daily. Trees will be decorated by local businesses, societies etc., from Corfe and neighbouring villages which have already been allocated.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 17th January 2023 at 6.00pm

Appendix – Report from Sarah Wakefield, Somerset County Council and SWT - November 2022

Support to mitigate impact of Cost of Living crisis this winter

Somerset County Council's Executive have approved a wide-ranging package of support to help local people deal with the impacts of the Cost of Living crisis this winter.

Support includes financial assistance with food and energy bills through the Household Support Fund, a 'Warm Welcome' network of venues where people can find warmth and company, as well as targeted support for clinically vulnerable people in cold homes.

Somerset County Council declared a Cost of Living emergency in July of this year, and set-up a cross-party working group to investigate action the Council can take to help people through this period.

That group has worked closely with Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, South Somerset District Council and Somerset West and Taunton Council, as well as partners in the voluntary and community sector, to put in place initiatives to bolster the support package provided by central Government.

Somerset residents struggling to pay the bills this winter could be eligible for support through the Household Support Fund.

The County Council has been allocated £3.8m to distribute before March 31st 2023 as part of the third round of funding provided through the Government's Household Support Fund.

This funding will be used to provide food vouchers worth £10 a week to children eligible for Free School Meals during the school holidays, and enable people to apply for support with a range of urgent essentials including fuel, food, and white goods.

Somerset County Council has contributed a total of £250,000 to Somerset Community Foundation's Cost of Living Crisis Appeal fund which will be used to support food resilience, energy projects and the 'Warm Welcome' network. Somerset West and Taunton Council, Sedgemoor District Council, South Somerset District Council and Mendip District Council have also contributed £50,000 each to the SCF Cost of Living Crisis Appeal.

The Warm Welcome initiative is a network of venues that will offer an inviting place for people to keep warm. These venues will offer optional activities, or a place to get some work or homework done, or even just see a friendly face for a chat.

Spark Somerset is being funded to develop the programme and build a framework, identify appropriate spaces and co-ordinate the project moving forward. Somerset Libraries will be open as usual to offer a warm and welcoming space to all. Once all of the warm spaces have been confirmed, a public map will be made available.

Spark Somerset will also be supporting food resilience in the county as part of this work, meanwhile a map of all foodbanks, pantries, and food cupboards in Somerset is being developed which will be made publicly available.

Other support this winter includes the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) Safe and Warm Somerset helpline, which supports people who are clinically vulnerable and struggling to afford their energy bills and living in a cold home.

A total of £314,000 has been provided from Somerset County Council's Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) Grant which means that in addition to delivery of their standard offer, CSE will also take on targeted outreach to clinically vulnerable people in cold homes and help arrange the installation of insulation and heating measures to improve the energy efficiency of low income or low EPC-rated homes.

The Council is using an additional £65,000 from the CEV grant to fund Open Mental Health to provide targeted face-to-face help at home for approximately 500 older adults in need of mental health support.

To make an application to the Household Support Fund, please visit: bit.ly/SupportFund22. If you need help to apply, please phone Somerset County Council on 0300 123 2224. People who applied to previous rounds of the Household Support Fund are welcome to apply again in this round of funding.

To donate to the Somerset Cost-of-Living Crisis Appeal today visit: www.somersetcf.org.uk or call 01749 344949.

For more information about support available for Somerset residents, please visit:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/additional-support-for-somerset-residents/>

Taunton to have its own Town Council

Taunton – Somerset's county town – will be represented by a new Town Council for the first time in 50 years.

The grass-roots council is due to come into being on 1 April next year – just as the new, unitary Somerset Council is launched.

Both Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) and Somerset County Council (SCC) held special full council meetings to approve the creation of a new town council for Taunton and changes to local governance arrangements, marking the culmination of two years of intensive work, research and consultation.

The decisions mean a legal order will be made for a town council to represent Taunton - the centre of which was the only part of Somerset not to be parished as a result of local government reorganisation in 1974.

The commitment to a Town Council for Taunton was made in the business case for the new, unitary council in Somerset which recognised the need for Taunton to have a strong town voice when the role of city, town and parish councils becomes even more important. Both the district and county councils worked in partnership to deliver shared pledges on creating the new Town Council.

Somerset County Council launches Orange Button Scheme at Walk for a Life event

More than 50 people walked through the streets of Taunton to raise awareness of suicide across Somerset.

Many of those taking part in Somerset County Council's inaugural 'Walk for a Life' event were walking in memory of loved ones or because of their own experiences. The groups paused for reflection at Vivary Park's bandstand before laying flowers at a bench donated by Ricky Gervais' Netflix programme 'After Life'.

The walk finished at the Somerset County Cricket Club, where a number of partners were on hand to offer information and advice including Somerset Foundation Trust, Open Mental Health and Stepladder.

The event also marked the launch of Somerset County Council's new 'Orange Button' scheme: a community-based suicide awareness scheme.

People who are having thoughts of suicide, or who are worried about a friend or family member, can now "push the button" when they see someone wearing a distinctive orange badge, and ask them for information and support.

The Orange Button is worn by people in Somerset who have undergone quality assured Mental Health or Suicide Prevention training: whilst they are not able to counsel people, they can help people to find relevant services locally.

To find out more about the Orange Button scheme including how to become an orange button wearer, please visit <https://www.healthysomerset.co.uk/support-with-your-mental-health/training/>.

Somerset social workers shortlisted for top national award

Two brilliant Somerset social workers have been shortlisted for a prestigious award in recognition of their outstanding leadership and practice.

Louise White and Janet Hardy, who are both Service Managers in Somerset County Council's Adult Social Care Department, have been selected as finalists in the Team Leader of the Year (Adult Services) category at the annual Social Worker of the Year Awards.

Finalists were selected for showing clear leadership skills and evidence of how they have either nurtured an effective working environment, achieved cultural change, or improved service quality and outcomes.

The shortlist, which features more than 90 outstanding practitioners, teams, and organisations in 17 categories, was chosen by an independent judging panel made up of young care leavers, social workers, industry leaders, and people with lived experience of social work.

The winners will be revealed during the Social Work Awards 2022 ceremony, being held at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London on Friday, November 4.

For more information about the awards, visit www.socialworkawards.com

Somerset hosts trailblazing conference to tackle child exploitation

Somerset County Council has hosted a trailblazing multi-agency conference in Taunton, sharing best practice on combating Child Exploitation. Guests included the NHS, police, social workers and Representatives from the voluntary sector.

Somerset's specialist exploitation Social Workers opened the conference, sharing their experiences of working as part of a multi-agency team to help young people recognise when they are being used or exploited and how to find and use the support that is available to them. They also outlined examples of good practice highlighted by Ofsted during its recent inspection, which rated the County's Children's Social Care as providing "good" services for children and families across the board.

Sammy Woodhouse, a survivor of child sexual exploitation in Rotherham spoke movingly about her experiences and how she has been able to help others.

The St Giles Trust – a charity which helps vulnerable young people who are exploited through gangs, serious violence and offending turn their lives around – ran interactive sessions with delegates, about empowering people to get the help they need.

Somerset's Homelessness Health and Wellbeing work is runner up in National Awards

Work that has improved the health and wellbeing of Somerset's homeless population has been named as a runner up in the finals of the Royal Society for Public Health's prestigious Health & Wellbeing Awards 2022 in the 'Health Equity' category.

Somerset was shortlisted for its work protecting the county's homeless population.

The award ceremony took place on 20th October and was hosted by RSPH President, Professor Lord Patel of Bradford OBE, and RSPH Vice President broadcaster, Natasha Kaplinsky.

By working together, organisations across Somerset, including the County Council, all District Councils, the NHS, Second Step, voluntary, community, and social enterprise accommodation and support providers, the police, probation service and Somerset Open Mental Health, have been able to prevent covid deaths among the county's homeless population, deliver lifesaving medications, and provide tests and treatments for blood borne diseases.

These colleagues have been working much more closely on this issue since 2019 and together have set up both the Somerset Homelessness Reduction Board and the NHS led Homeless and Rough Sleeper Nursing service.

Together, these organisations carried out work to support not only the immediate and longer-term housing needs of Somerset's homeless population, but also their health and wellbeing needs, helping people with mental health problems, substance dependence and physical health needs such as the need for testing and life-saving medicines.

During the pandemic the wider health and housing teams worked to deal with a range of health protection issues by supporting homeless people into safe accommodation, vaccinating against Covid-19 and providing screening and treatment for blood borne diseases including Hepatitis C (HCV).

Learn a language for free with Somerset Libraries

Somerset Libraries have launched a new Translation Service, giving free access to an online language learning service.

The service, which is available to all library members, will work in a similar way to other online resources, giving Somerset library members (including those with full or digital memberships) access to the free service. which can be found at:

www.somersetlibraries.co.uk/languagelearning

The service is delivered by Transparent language Online. Library staff have had access to training materials to help them understand what it offers so they can be on hand help members of the public sign up for membership and then access the service.

The service includes 120 languages so guests from many other countries will also have free access, simply by having a Somerset Libraries membership. It also enables anyone in Somerset to learn languages such as Ukrainian and Russian which could be especially useful for sponsors and people supporting displaced people in the county.

The Library Service is working with colleagues in the Resettlement Team, so that the training regarding this service will also include information about the various Welcome Hubs and other support services aimed at guests from other countries.

You can get a membership by calling into any Somerset library or online at:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/libraries/libraries-services/library-membership/>

GET INVOLVED

Hundreds sign up to help shape council services

More than 300 people have signed up to help shape the future of council services in Somerset.

From April 2023, Somerset's five councils will be replaced by the new unitary Somerset Council which will deliver all council services to all communities – from waste collection and adult social care to housing, benefits and parks.

A new Customer Panel has been established to ensure residents are at the heart of those services.

Since launching in August, more than 300 people have stepped forward – with members already providing valuable feedback on important work like the development of a new council brand.

No special skills are required to join the panel, all you need is a willingness to take part in three research topics each year and provide honest and constructive feedback. Panel members will have the chance to take part in online surveys, one-to-one interviews, usability tests and discussion groups.

You can get involved in a number of different ways. Please find out more via our website (<https://playbook.somerset.gov.uk/our-customer-panel/>), or you can register by calling 0300 123 2224.

Have your say on Somerset's SEND strategy

Members of the public in Somerset are invited to have their say on a new draft strategy for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

The Somerset SEND Partnership, which includes Somerset County Council, NHS Somerset, Somerset Parent Carer Forum and local education providers, have launched a consultation for the public to feedback on their updated SEND Strategy.

The strategy was shaped by extensive engagement with children, young people and families and sets out how services will be delivered and led over the next three years (2023-26).

The Somerset SEND Partnership have four key themes which outline their plan for SEND services, these are:

- Working together
- Getting help as early as possible
- Access to the right support and provision
- Preparing for the future

The consultation is open and will close on Friday 23 December. To read the strategy and provide feedback visit: <https://somerset.inconsult.uk/SENDstrategy/consultationHome>

After the consultation closes, the Somerset SEND Partnership will review all feedback and use this to update the strategy. The final strategy will be published in Spring 2023.