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Porlock



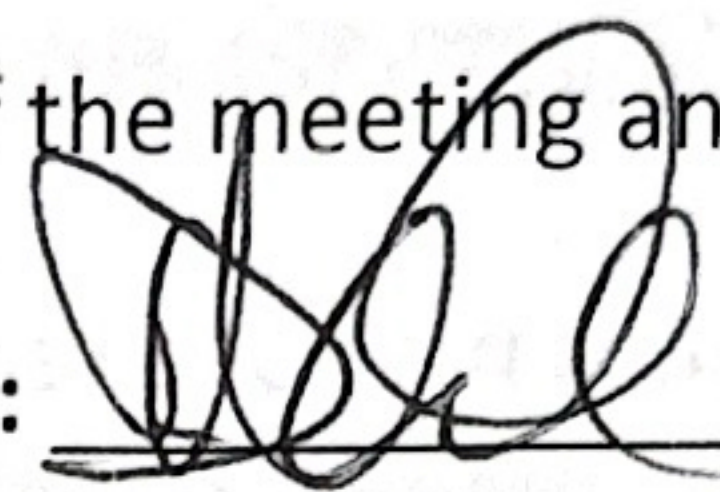
Parish Room
Old School Centre
Porlock
Somerset, TA24 8NP

Parish Council

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Porlock Parish Council,
Porlock Village Hall, Wednesday 13th November 2024, 7 pm**
Copies of minutes and non-confidential reports are available on request

Councillors Present: D McCanlis (Chair), D Heath, S McCanlis, C Gardner & M Stenning

Also present: Cllr. F Nicholson, three members of the public for part of the meeting and Clerk, Johnathan Jones

Signed: 

Dated: 11/12/2024

Min Ref:	Minutes	Action
C-2024-319	Apologies were received by the Council Cllr. S Colson	
C-2024-320	Declarations of interest and disclosable pecuniary interest dispensations None were declared.	
C-2024-321	Items to be dealt with after the public, including press, have been excluded The Chair asked members if there were any items that they felt should be discussed in closed session. Members did not request any items requiring the public, including the press to be excluded.	
C-2024-322	Minutes from the ordinary meeting of the Council held on 9th October 2024 Council RESOLVED to approve the minutes with no amendments. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair. PROPOSED: Cllr. S McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. D McCanlis VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR Casting Vote Chair MS/CG/DH Absent at 9/10/24 meeting	
C-2024-323	Action log updates C-2024-292 – Admin Assistant advert - Handed over to the Clerk to publish on Facebook, West Somerset Free Press and village posters, then subject to interest post on LinkedIn. C-2024-276 – Free Parking Advertising - Update to be given at the Traders of Porlock meeting on the 15 th November. C-2024-202 – Minehead Swim & Leisure - Raised at Local Councils Network.	JJ
C-2024-324	Public participation There were no questions raised from the public present.	
C-2024-324	Somerset Council update The Chair deferred item 7 to later in the meeting to allow the Cllrs. to attend.	

C-2024-325

Grounds Policy

Cllr. D Heath introduced the draft policy which had been shared as pre reading.
Highlighting that members should discuss how it manages weeds.

The Clerk provided an update to members on the recent press coverage regarding weed control and Minehead Town Council's own challenges to the problem. The recent trial of a foam had been rejected.

Members then discussed how to manage weeds and how they could ensure that the policy supported practical weed management in line with Council's Biodiversity Policy.

A member of the public made a suggestion that could Council set aside an area that encourages wildlife to offset areas that need to be maintained.

Cllr. D McCanlis proposed some amendments:

1.1 should include – Council's default position is that herbicides, or similar chemical applications are not used and when such action is deemed necessary an application must be made to the Clerk who will consult with a member of the Council before granting permission.

1.4 Take positive steps to create environments that encourage indigenous life especially insects to thrive.

It was agreed in principle that more needed to be done in the education and promotion of Council's policies.

C-2024-326

Council RESOLVED to approve the amendment to 1.1.

JJ

PROPOSED: Cllr. D Heath

SECONDED: Cllr. S McCanlis

VOTING: 4 IN FAVOUR

ABSTAINED: Cllr. C Gardner

C-2024-327

Council RESOLVED to the amendment to 1.4.

JJ

PROPOSED: Cllr. D McCanlis

SECONDED: Cllr. C Gardner

VOTING: 4 IN FAVOUR

ABSTAINED: Cllr. D Heath

C-2024-328

Council RESOLVED the adoption of the grounds policy with amendments as agreed.

JJ

PROPOSED: Cllr. D Heath

SECONDED: Cllr. S McCanlis

VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

C-2024-329

A proposal should be developed and brought to members that seeks to identify pre-approved areas such as the War Memorial where it is known that weed growth is an issue and not using herbicides would be cost prohibitive.

DH

Grounds Maintenance Contract:

The work schedule that will be included in the contract tender process

The schedule, previously shared as pre reading, was agreed in principle, however further work was required to answer the questions posed on the schedule. Cllrs. D Heath & S McCanlis to review the questions and make recommendation to members at the December meeting. It was recognised that any amendment to the current work schedule will have a budgetary impact.

SM/DH

- C-2024-331** **The term being a two-year contract as recommended by the internal auditor** JJ
 Members agreed that the initial contract period should be for two years however this would not preclude the Council from considering longer contractual terms if this were more beneficial.
- C-2024-332** **The timescales for the tender process** JJ
 The proposal was well received. The Clerk reminded members that the timescales were subject to all items being approved and it would need to be revised once the works schedule had been agreed.
- C-2024-333** Council RESOLVED the works schedule should be reviewed with final recommendations presented at the December meeting and that two years was the correct initial contract term. JJ
 PROPOSED: Cllr. S McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. D Heath VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR
- C-2024-334** **War Memorial Maintenance**
 The report was received. The works had been positively received in the village and only in time would Council be able to see if the issue with the mortar had been resolved or if further action would be required. The next maintenance visit will be around May 2025 before the June commemorations.
- C-2024-335** **Service Level Agreement with Minehead Eye (Porlock Youth Club)**
 The Clerk provided an update: that the amendments had not been made following review from Cllrs. S Colson & D McCanlis. These will be completed and sent to Minehead Eye and then to Council's legal team for review.
 There has been considerable misunderstanding with Porlock Recreation Ground regarding Council's intention of the agreement and perceived 'ownership' of the youth club. Several conversations have been had and emails exchanged with both Minehead Eye and the Recreation Ground to set the record straight and resolve any issues.
- C-2024-336** Once amendments have been made, which include creating greater clarity on its purpose, and have been agreed with Minehead Eye and checked by Council's legal team, the Clerk will share the final agreement with the Recreation Ground Committee. JJ
- C-2024-337** As the agreement has not been finalised or checked by Council's legal team the signing of the agreement was deferred to the December meeting. JJ
- C-2024-338** **Nominations for councillor representative for Porlock Youth Club**
 The item was deferred until the agreement is ready to be signed. JJ
- C-2024-339** **Old School Centre Project Report**
 The report was received, the Clerk summarised the report and next steps.
 PVCIC gone well. The Clerk and the PVCIC Centre Manager will do the handover. Future works list is currently being compiled. Focus is to reuse/repurpose any fittings to minimise cost and to reinforce Porlock's green ethos. Proposed project plans and costings will be presented to members. Once agreed then grants can be applied for. Work has begun with the Lovelace Resource Centre to enable a smooth move. Other

than use for Christmas lights testing and Late Night Shopping there will be no 'official' use of the community room until the new year.

Cllr. D McCanlis raised that when it comes to grants, a coordinated approach should be considered with local organisations like Stacked Wonky and the Porlock Vale Community to avoid weakening any organisation's application.

C-2024-340 Cllr. D McCanlis requested that once the initial future works list review had taken place, a member be consulted on the plan before moving to obtaining quotes to ensure Council input to the final project plan before it was brought to Council for consideration. JJ

C-2024-341 **RFO report**
The report was received.
Q2 2024/25 budget review: The majority of nominal code corrections have been completed, two outstanding to be reviewed by Rialtas. This has corrected several code errors. The next review will take place in Jan along with Council's Budget setting process. JJ
Budget 2025/26: process & key dates were shared with members

C-2024-342 Members responsibility to the numbers: The Clerk will be producing a 'how to – checklist' guide for the financial reports. In the interim all members are encouraged to talk to the Clerk on a 1-2-1 basis if they would like some further clarity. JJ
EMR status report: an update was given on the current status (as of the 31 October) of each Earmarked Reserve. Actual £149,178.02, committed £17,403.50 available £131,774.52. Further work was being undertaken to make sure all historic commitments have been captured this will be updated following the next budget review.

Cllr. D McCanlis raised that the Treasury Stock Grants are only to be spent via grants. The Clerk is creating a report on the Treasury Stock as requested by Cllr. S Colson and will share with members following the FHR meeting in December.

C-2024-343 **Spend approvals**
a) To consider local government services pay agreement 2024/25 - £1,364.94 (from budget)
Council RESOLVED to award the government services pay agreement 2024/25 of £1,364.94

PROPOSED: Cllr. S McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. M Stenning VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

C-2024-344 b) Tree Survey Cemetery, Churchyard, Old School Centre & Zig Zag – Threetop £300 (from EMR 320 & 321)

Council RESOLVED to accept the quote from Threetop of £300 for the tree survey.

PROPOSED: Cllr. M Stenning SECONDED: Cllr. C Gardner VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

- Finance HR & Governance**
- C-2024-345 Bank reconciliation to the end October 2024**
Council RESOLVED to approve and sign the bank reconciliation to the end of September 2024. The bank reconciliation was signed by Cllr. D Heath and the Clerk.

PROPOSED Cllr. D Heath SECONDED: Cllr. D McCanlis VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR
- C-2024-346 Summary and Detailed Receipts & Payments to end of October 2024**
Council RECEIVED the Summary and Detailed Receipts & Payments to end of September 2024. The summary was signed by Cllr. D McCanlis and the Clerk.
- C-2024-347 Payments Schedule for October 2024**
Council RESOLVED to approve the Payment Schedule and signed by Cllr. D McCanlis

PROPOSED Cllr. D McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. D Heath VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

Cllr. C Gardner requested that a total was added to the Payments Schedule. JJ
- C-2024-348 Old School Centre Community Garden Working Group including the Boat Pump feature**
Cllr. D Heath gave an update on the work undertaken to understand more about the gardens and who was involved in its original design.

The Clerk raised that when the Working Group was formed this included all the lower part of the community garden as well as those in the upper part and that the 'Orchard' was not separate to this Working Group and that it needs to be considered in the future recommendations. It was recognised that it may be easier if the Working Group deal with the two parts in two stages.
- C-2024-349** There has also been a request that Council take part in a proposed Ponds Alive initiative that would seek to obtain grant funding to create a wildlife pond in the orchard part of the Community Garden. Further information is required for members to consider this. DH

A member of the public suggested considering an incentive to encourage people to volunteer in the project.

Following further discussion with members it was recognised and agreed:
- C-2024-350** Contact should be made with the original companies to see if they wish to be involved in its revival. DH
- C-2024-351** The school should be approached to see if they wish to get involved in the boat water pump feature revival DH
- C-2024-352** There is a need to understand which volunteers maintain the gardens and that there is a potential to get more volunteers involved. DH
- C-2024-353** Cllrs. D Heath & C Gardner to come back to with a proposal for the Old School Centre Community Garden. DH/CG

C-2024-354 Somerset Council Update

Cllr. F Nicholson provided an update on the boundary commission consultation, the view is to reduce Somerset Council member numbers from 110 to 96, creating boundaries that provide electoral equality in terms numbers circa 4,500. Porlock has an opportunity to influence the decision in regard to local boundary changes. Somerset Council do not make the decision, it is down to the Boundary Commission. Deadline 20th January 2024.

C-2024-355 Cllr. D McCanlis suggested that an agenda item be added to the next meeting to consider if Council should respond to the boundary commission.

Highways remain under considerable pressure following ongoing headcount reduction.

Active Exmoor Travel grant is open that looks to seek opportunities to create better access to the national park. Open until March 2025.

C-2024-356 Porlock Community Orchard's request for the continued use of the Old School Centre grounds

Council RESOLVED to approve the continued used of the Old School Centre grounds by Porlock Community Orchard for an annual donation of £100.

PROPOSED Cllr. S McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. D Heath VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

C-2024-357 Christmas Lights & Trees Working Group

Cllr. S McCanlis provided an update. Trees have been ordered from AP Farmer; the trees will go up on the 28th November ready for lighting up on the 1st December. The Village Hall Maintenance Team will be putting up the big real trees. Volunteers will be putting the barrel trees and wooden trees along the shops. Where ladders are used three people will be required.

A couple of large artificial trees have been offered however it was decided not to accept them as they are very large, and the Working group didn't know where they could make use of them.

One set of solar lights had been purchased and trialed, which are very good and reduce the need for batteries. Further sets will be purchased.

JJ

C-2024-358 Community Health & Wellbeing programme being run by Somerset Association of Local Councils and Somerset Council.

Previous papers have been circulated to members. The Clerk gave an update that there are grants available however it was agreed by members that given resourcing issues, that there is no capacity to take up additional programmes, however the Clerk would collate council activities against the 11 strategic categories and identify where Council may wish to apply for funding in the future.

JJ

C-2024-359 Emergency Plan Working Group

Cllr. D McCanlis resigned as Working Group lead due to lack of capacity. It was discussed that Emergency Planning could potentially form part of business as usual operations run by the Clerk and in the first instance Council's emergency plan should be developed as part of its business continuity / business resilience.

Council RESOLVED to disband the Emergency Plan Working Group.

PROPOSED Cllr. D McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. C Gardner VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

- C-3034-360** Clerk to look at Council's current business continuity plans and legal requirements reporting back to council in the new year. JJ
- C-2024-361** Clerk to talk to Alistair Campbell to get a better understanding of the village's preparedness for flooding and Council's involvement. JJ
- C-2024-362** Cllr. D McCanlis to hand over all current emergency plan documents to the Clerk. DM
- C-2024-363** **Love Where You Live Working Group**
A nomination was received from Cllr. S McCanlis.

Council RESOLVED to appoint Cllr. S McCanlis as Working Group lead.

PROPOSED Cllr. S McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. C Gardner VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR
- C-2024-364** **Civility & Respect Pledge**
The Clerk gave an overview on what else Council needed to do to sign the Civility & Respect Pledge: 1. A training programme for councillors 2. Dignity at Work policy. Training is now identified in conjunction with the Clerk and the Dignity at Work policy will be drafted and brought to the December meeting for consideration and once completed the pledge can be signed. JJ
- C-2024-365** **Portfolio Report**
The portfolio report was received. The Clerk highlighted the memorial repair costs estimated at £30,000. Further work is underway to try and identify existing families/relatives who have responsibility to repair. To date only two families have been identified.
- C-2024-366** **Locking up times for the Public Toilets at Doverhay and the Old School Centre**
Council RESOLVED to lock up the toilets an hour earlier at 5pm during the winter months until the clocks go forward in the Spring, the exception being when events are taking place.

PROPOSED Cllr. C Gardner SECONDED: Cllr. M Stenning VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR
- C-2024-367** **Outside bodies**
Doverly Manor Committee
There is a meeting of the two committees (Museum and Management), on the 25th November to discuss the way forward for the two charities.
- C-2024-358** **Porlock Community Library**
The report was received.
- C-2024-369** **Porlock Village Hall**
The report was received. The next meeting will be the 27th January. There were no objections in principle to a defibrillator being installed in the old telephone box however there would be a cost to get power into the kiosk. The Village Hall have asked if the Council has a contingency plan if the Village Hall cannot be used in the event of an emergency in the village. Cllr. Stenning will hand over the task of siting the defibrillator in the phone box to the Clerk.

- C-2024-370** As part of Council's own business continuity plans and discussion with Alistair Campbell consideration will be given to how/if any contingency is incorporated if the Village Hall cannot be used. JJ
- C-2024-371** **Local Councils Network**
The report was received.
- C-2024-372** **Outstanding Items**
Council noted the following items as deferred until the next ordinary meeting of the council. JJ
- i) To consider alternative water refill units
 - ii) To consider the adoption of the refreshed Porlock Parish Council Logo
- C-2024-373** **Any other Business** (for Information only)
There were no other items raised
- C-2024-374** **Date of the next ordinary Council meeting**
Cllrs. noted the date of the next Ordinary Council meeting 11th December '24, at 7pm in Porlock Village Hall

The meeting closed at 9:05pm