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Porlock

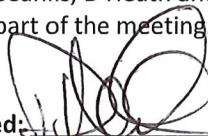


Parish Room
Old School Centre
Porlock
Somerset, TA24 8NP

Parish Council

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Porlock Parish Council held at Porlock Village Hall on Wednesday 11th June at 7pm

Councillors Present: D McCanlis (Chair), S Colson (Vice-Chair) & S McCanlis, D Heath and M Stenning
Also present: 4 members of the public and Cllr. S Pugsley for part of the meeting.
The meeting was clerked by Cllr. S Colson

Signed:  Dated: 09/07/2025

Min Ref:	Minutes	Action
C-2025-063	1) To receive apologies for absence Cllr S McCanlis was not present at the start due to other commitments overrunning, the meeting was quorate and commenced at 7pm	
C-2025-064	2) To consider any declarations of interest and disclosable pecuniary interest dispensations The Chair asked members if there were any declarations or disclosable pecuniary interests to be declared. None were declared.	
C-2025-065	3) To consider items to be dealt with after the public, including press, have been excluded The chair declared no items required the public or press to be excluded.	
C-2025-066	4) To consider for approval and signing the minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on the 14th May 2025 Council RESOLVED to approve the minutes with no amendments. The minutes were signed by the chair.	
C-2025-067	5) To receive and note any updates from members to the action log report No updates received.	
C-2025-068	6) Public participation Four members of the public expressed concern, on behalf of themselves and others, about the length of grass and the amount of weeds around the village at present. It was agreed to take further input during the relevant agenda items in the meeting.	
C-2025-069	7) To consider sponsorship grant application from Lesley Thornton on behalf of Will Rayner, owner of the Discover Porlock Website for website hosting for one year and development of the Discover Porlock Website £745.00 (Sponsorships & Grants EMR 330) The application was withdrawn prior to the meeting.	

- C-2025-070** **8) To consider a request to permit access for works to replace the water service pipe at Swiss Lodge, Parsons Street on the 25th June 2025**
Council RESOLVED to permit access, on the understanding that a letter will be sent asking for an assurance that the surface will be reinstated sufficiently. JJ
- C-2025-071** **9) To receive the RFO report**
The report was received.
- C-2025-064** **10) To note and sign the final payments for May 2025**
The schedule was received, noted and signed by Cllr. S Colson.
- C-2025-073** **11) To consider for approval and sign the bank reconciliation to end of May 2025**
Council RESOLVED to approve the reconciliation and was signed by Cllr. D Heath.
- C-2025-074** **12) To note with the summary and sign the detailed receipts & payments to end of May 2025**
The reports were received, noted and signed by Cllr. D McCanlis.
- C-2025-075** **13) To receive, approve and sign the draft payments schedule for June 2025**
Council RESOLVED to approve the schedule, signed by Cllr. S Colson.
- C-2025-076** Council RESOLVED to suspend Standing Order #1 to enable a broad discussion of items 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21 and 22 prior to considering each item in turn.
- Cllr. S McCanlis joined the meeting at 19:23
- C-2025-077** Key points raised by members of the public:
- Too many weeds growing on the sides of paths and roads, lack of maintenance. It is unsightly and risks damaging path and road surfaces and walls.
 - Lack of grass cutting is destroying the look and feel of what should be a beautiful village. Will put off visitors and damage our tourist-based economy.
 - Reduced maintenance means reduced local employment.

A member of the public left the meeting at 19:35.

Council members explained that much of the weeding is outside Council's control as it is the responsibility of Somerset Council's contractor (idverde) and the street cleaning post is currently vacant. Porlock Parish Council has been trying to resolve this issue without success for almost 2 years and is also very frustrated by the situation. The Chair also explained that all councils now have a legal duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity, and that the purpose of the following agenda items is a response to this while balancing this with maintaining a beautiful village. It was stressed that the Council has never discussed 'rewilding' and our approach is to manage our green spaces.

Council members then discussed, at some length, the interconnecting agenda items 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21 and 22. This included further input from and discussion with the members of the public present.

- C-2025-078** Council RESOLVED to reinstate Standing Order #1.

- C-2025-079** **14) To receive and consider the final draft of ‘how council puts the biodiversity policy into practice’ action plan and agree next steps:**
 a) **Publish the action plan**
 b) **Create a communications plan for consideration by council**
 c) **Create website page to hold all biodiversity information and activity**
 Council RESOLVED to approve a, b and c of Item 14. JJ
JJ/DH
JJ
- C-2025-080** **15) To discuss and consider options on how council better manages and maintains its green and community spaces (Cemetery, War Memorial, OSC Community Gardens, Churchyard, The Meadows etc) in line with the biodiversity policy and action plan**
 Council RESOLVED the following items:
 – To revert back to the previous version of the maintenance schedule. Cllr D Heath to instruct Alan Binding to implement with immediate effect. DH
- C-2025-081** – The maintenance schedule is reviewed for implementation of specific exceptions designed to enhance biodiversity in appropriate places only.
- C-2025-082** – Instruction to the maintenance contractor will only be given by the Clerk , (and not individual councillors).
- C-2025-083** Cllr. S Colson suggested that council consider engaging the Love Where You Live group for help with managing weeds while the situation with idverde is resolved.
- C-2025-084** Cllr. M Stenning left the meeting at 20:16.
- C-2025-085** **16) To receive and consider the proposed grounds maintenance contractor tender list and timescales**
 Council DEFERRED, pending the outcome of the item 15 resolutions.
- C-2025-086** **17) To receive an update on and to consider recommendations on how to improve and fund council owned floral displays**
 Council RESOLVED to use the current floral display maintenance contracts as a starting point, with the following decisions:
- C-2025-087** – With consultation, extend the current contract terms to start on the 1st April and end on 31st October each year. JJ
- C-2025-088** – Budget for compost and flowers of £200.
- C-2025-089** – Consider becoming self-sufficient in compost via grass cuttings and leaf collection.
- C-2025-090** **18) To receive an update on the Somerset Wildlife Trust Ponds Alive project at the Old School Centre Community Garden (orchard) and to consider:**
 a) **adopting the proposed draft plans**
 b) **sourcing third parties to help develop the project plans and costs for council to consider**
 c) **exploring grant funding sources**
 While the overall intent of the proposed plan is supported, some of the details aren’t practical for various reasons and needs further review.

 Council RESOLVED not to adopt item 18 A and to approve item 18 b and c.
- C-2025-091** Cllr. D Heath to contact Elizabeth regarding implementation of items 18 B and C and bring back to council for further consideration. DH

- Council RESOLVED to keep the OSC garden (playground) design as it is and to conduct a general tidy up and cut the tree back as a one-off activity. Ongoing maintenance will then be considered as a future step. Budget of £1,000 taken from Earmarked Reserve.

DH/SM

- Cllr. D Heath requested a recorded vote.

support of option A.

- B) approve the recommendation of PHS for sanitary waste

- C-2025-100 25) To consider the following spend:**
 a) B&Q - Baby changing facility for OSC public toilet - £134.95 (Inc VAT)
 b) Flagsandflagpoles.co.uk - Replacement flagpole for OSC - 6m £113.40 (inc VAT)
 c) JF Computers - additional office hardware - £1,490.40 (inc VAT)
 d) Active signs – OSC signage and notice boards – waiting quote
 Council RESOLVED to approve A, B, C. Item D no quote was presented and will be presented at a future meeting. JJ
- C-2025-101 26) To consider opening a CRS trade account**
 Council RESOLVED to approve opening a CRS trade account.
- C-2025-102 27) To receive and consider member nominations as representative for Somerset Bus Partnership**
 No nominations were received.
- C-2025-103 28) To receive and discuss nominations for the Somerset Council Chair's Community Awards 2025**
 No nominations were received.
- C-2025-104 29) To receive an update from Somerset Council's representatives on:**
 a) **the replacement/appointment of idverde's manual street cleaner**
 The clerk is currently in touch with the relevant Somerset Council officer and idverde contact regarding appointing a street cleaner in Porlock. Somerset Cllr. S Pugsley requested the clerk update him on the current situation so he can add further support to resolve the issue. JJ
 b) **other notable points for information**
 Somerset Cllr. S Pugsley advised that he was contacting the National Grid regarding the state of overhead power cables at Doverhay.
- C-2025-105 30) To note outstanding items:**
 a) To consider the priority order for the roll out of the water refill units - to be discussed once the installation approval from Wessex Water has been received.
 b) To consider options on how council better manages ongoing upkeep of grounds (not included in the grounds maintenance contract) and what this includes
 c) To receive and consider the proposed grounds maintenance contractor tender list and timescales
 d) To consider making a formal request of Somerset Council to devolve its responsibility for manual street cleaning of Porlock village to Porlock Parish Council.
- C-2025-106 31) To receive any other business - For information only**
 No other business was received.
- C-2025-107 32) Date of the next meeting being the ordinary meeting of the Council – 9th July 2025, at 7pm at Porlock Village Hall, Porlock**

The meeting closed at 9:28pm