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Porlock



Parish Room
Old School Centre
Porlock
Somerset, TA24 8NP

Parish Council

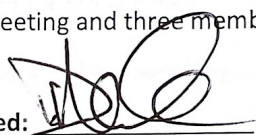
**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting,
Porlock Village Hall, Wednesday 12th June 2024, 7 pm**
Copies of minutes and non-confidential reports are available on request

Councillors Present:

Cllr. D McCanlis (Chair), Cllr. S Colson, Cllr. S McCanlis, Cllr. D Heath, Cllr. C Gardner, Cllr. M Stenning

Councillors Present for part of the meeting: Cllr. D Thornton, Cllr. L Thornton,

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

Signed:  Dated: 10th July 2024

Min Ref:	Minutes	Action
C-2024-078	Apologies were received by the Council Cllr. L Bloys	
C-2024-079	Declarations of interest and disclosable pecuniary interest dispensations None were declared.	
C-2024-080	Items to be dealt with after the public, including press, have been excluded The Chair asked Council if there were any items that they felt should be discussed in closed session. The Council did not request any items requiring the public, including the press to be excluded.	
C-2024-081	Minutes from the Council meeting held on May 8th '24 Cllr L Thornton commented that in her opinion the reporting of item 8 was not as balanced as she would have liked and that she would abstain from the vote requesting that her abstention from the vote to be recorded in the minutes. The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair. PROPOSED: Cllr. D McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. S McCanlis VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR ABSTAIN: Cllr. L Thornton plus three other Cllrs. who were absent from the May meeting	
C-2024-082	Public participation Public: Can the seat be reinstated at the War Memorial at Dunster Steep? Council: The War Memorial Working Group (WMWG) will discuss this once the ongoing work has been concluded. Public: If the Council agreed to a seat being replaced could the seat be made of recycled plastic not wood? Council: The WMWG will consider this when they meet	LT LT

Initials:  Date: 10/07/2024

- C-2024-083** **Public:** There is no sign for the Museum at Dovere Car Park
Council: In 2021 the High Street Support Group, set up by Porlock Parish Council (PPC) and funded by the then Somerset West & Taunton Council, did look into finger posts for the car park at the time, however the fund didn't stretch that far. Also recent discussions with the Chair of the Dovere Manor Museum included the question of signage visibility.
- C-2024-084** Cllr D McCanlis will take this feedback back to the Museum. DM
- C-2024-085** Cllr L Thornton will look out the previous costing and provide to the Clerk. LT
- C-2024-086** Council will relook at signage in Dovere Car Park in a future meeting. JJ
- C-2024-087** **Public:** Who is responsible for the weeds in the Dovere Car Park?
Council: Responsibility lies with Somerset Council. If they are not required by law to do this then they won't as they are looking to save money. We are in discussion with Somerset Council and idverde about the service contract for the village.
- C-2024-088** **Public:** What about the bins which are in a terrible state, with bins over flowing, bins missing?
Council: This is all part of the same issue/discussion, the Environment & Community portfolio on the website contains a full report. Cllrs. have been emptying bins and taking the rubbish away to try and minimise the situation, as well as weeding in various parts of the village. Council are trying to get answers to these and other broader 'street' issues from Somerset Council. Council have Earmarked Reserves if this service is removed as part of devolution and Council are required to fund the solution.
- C-2024-089** **Public:** Have we lost our street cleaner?
Council: As far as Council is aware we have lost the street cleaner however we are following this up with Somerset Council and idverde.
- C-2024-090** **Internal Audit**
 Council considered the recommendations made by the Internal Auditor for year ending 31st March '24. It was noted many of the recommendations were already in progress prior to the audit taking place.
- Council RESOLVED to accept and adopt the recommendations of the Internal Auditor and that Council were satisfied that the control objectives, that have been ticked in the internal audit, are all in place.
- PROPOSED Cllr. L Thornton SECONDED: Cllr: S Colson VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR
- C-2024-091** **Section 1 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return**
 The Chair read out the Annual Governance checklist line by line and the Council agreed to tick items 1 - 8 and tick n/a to item 9.
- Council RESOLVED to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 23/24. The Chair and the Clerk signed the statement.
- PROPOSED Cllr. L Thornton SECONDED: Cllr: S McCanlis VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

C-2024-092 Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return

The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) presented the Accounting Statements for 23/24 having been previously signed by the RFO prior to the meeting. Cllr L Thornton gave a brief history for the restated figures in 22/23.

Council RESOLVED to approve the Accounting Statements for 23/24. The Chair signed the statement.

PROPOSED Cllr. S Colson SECONDED: Cllr: L Thornton VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

C-2024-093 Cllr. S Colson requested that for next year Cllrs. are given supporting documentation/foot-notes to be able to check the source and accuracy of figures. Cllr. L Thornton did remind Council that our Finance Regulations require the Finance Committee to approve the Accounting Statements prior to being submitted to Council.

JJ

C-2024-094 The notice period of the exercise of public rights

Council RESOLVED the notice period for the exercise of public rights would commence 24th of June and end on the 2nd of August 2024

PROPOSED Cllr. L Thornton SECONDED: Cllr: M Stenning VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

C-2024-095 Somerset Council (SC)

Chair welcomed Somerset Cllrs. Steven Pugsley and Frances Nicholson to the meeting and brought item 23a forward in the interest of time efficiency for them.

Cllr. S Pugsley raised a question about the cutting of the vegetation in Central Car Park, as the maintenance team is due to come in the next two weeks and are conscious that stripping back could create complaints.

C-2024-096 Council agreed that car parking spaces should be cleared of vegetation and a border should be cut back leaving the majority of vegetation. Council also asked that chemical sprays are not used. The Clerk will be the contact for the maintenance team. Council also raised if Doverhay Car Park would done at the same time. Cllr. S Pugsley will report back and raise the question with maintenance team.

SP

C-2024-097 The Council also raised the earlier topic of refuse and general street cleaning with Cllr. S Pugsley.

Cllr. Pugsley requested that the Clerk send an email to him regarding street cleaning, bins and that the lack of street cleaning contributes to the blocking of drains; so Cllr Pugsley could raise the issue.

JJ

C-2024-098 Cllr. S Colson asked if there was any update on the Highway Steward and Lengthsman

Cllr. S Pugsley reported that the parishes within the Local Community Network (LCN) have insufficient funds, however he is continuing to pursue options. For now have to rely on the service that is provided as part of the hedge cutting service managed by Kier, the new contract provider to SC Highways. Hedges are the responsibility of the landowner, however verges are the responsibility of highways both vertical and horizontal.

Any issues on the roads hedges, verges, signs etc. are to be reported on the SC highways portal.

ALL

C-2024-099 The future use of the Old School Centre.

The Chair swapped item 10 and 11 in the order of the agenda

There was a summary of the suggestions submitted which covered a range of commercial and non-commercial ideas, the focus being on a flexible or dedicated space in one or both of the rooms. Ideas were discussed as to their merits and disadvantages and what facilities were already being offered in the village.

Discussions covered the current use of the space by the Parish Council, the Lovelace Resource Centre and the Library and the suitability of the current working environment, future potential needs, opportunities of expansion of services and staffing requirements.

Cllr. L. Thornton raised that if we do not replace the income of the current tenancy and utilise the space solely as a community space then the Council will need to take on the rates and utility costs which would see a 5% increase in the precept as well as the costs of any material changes.

It was suggested that some of this potential cost could be offset by charging fees for any such activities that may look to hire the space and that there are many potential benefits to having a new flexible space for the whole community.

More work is required for Council to understand the costs involved in any future proposal both ongoing and implementation.

C-2024-100 Somerset Wildlife Trust report on the Old School Centre Community Garden

Council discussed the report and it was agreed that there was enough experience and knowledge in the Council and community to carry out its own study of the Community Garden. Access to the garden needs to be made a priority to make it accessible to all. Council should consider planting some recently discovered Porlock Pippin apple trees as suggested by a member of the public.

Council RESOLVED to set up an Old School Centre Community Garden Working Group (OSCCGWG), with Cllr. D Heath as lead Cllr. with its first task to carry out a survey on current vegetation and plan on next steps to help deliver the Council's commitment to Bio Diversity and with value for money. The OSCCGWG sits alongside other Working Groups under the Environment & Community Portfolio.

DH

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

C-2024-101 Open floor

The Chair asked the attending public if they had any comments they wished to add?

Public: I'm interested in understanding what ideas the Council feel are feasible and how is this going to be funded, by whatever means.

Public: The PVCIC are planning on having 'drop ins' so there could be a clash there, but there will be many groups that would want to use such a space but at what cost and would that exclude some groups. It's a lovely space and should be maximised for all to use.

Cllr. L Thornton suggested that as Council start to discuss process and next steps that Council should think about a public session to share the ideas in more depth and those

being considered taken to the next stage and the cost impact assessed in terms of any increase in precept.

C-2024-102 Process and next steps to deciding the future of the Old School Centre

It was recognised that further discussions were required to flush out the detail including costs.

The Chair suggested to move towards points in principle on deciding what should be in scope and what parts of the Old School Centre should be used for what. This was objected to by Cllr L Thornton & Cllr D Thornton. Cllr. L Thornton suggested that we had a dedicated meeting, open to the public, to discuss and consider the suggestions in more depth, publishing the suggestions for all to see. The remaining Cllrs. wanted to move to a high level decision on the principles of how the space could be used. This again was objected to by Cllr L Thornton & Cllr D Thornton as they felt no cost analysis had been carried out on any of the ideas put forward, a high level decision in principle couldn't be considered. Cllr. S Colson pointed out that a high level direction of travel was not precluding any analysis of costs, which would need to be done at the appropriate point.

C-2024-103 20:24 - Cllrs. D Thornton and L Thornton left the room in objection to the way the discussion was heading and being managed, and their objection to being repeatedly asked not to interrupt others when speaking.

Public: The idea of a public meeting could be ok if it was controlled and managed well and that a small piece should be shared on Facebook about the basic ideas of what is being considered. I also want to say the behaviour of those two Cllrs. was awful.

Public: If you can say what space is available for use then the community will have a clearer idea on what it could be used for.

Public: Would it be feasible to physically stand in the space to get a feeling for what the space could be used for.

Council: In an ideal world it would be great to have the public meeting in the space to share the ideas proposed, however we would have to discuss and agree how that would work with PVCIC.

C-2024-104 Council RESOLVED that the Chair will call an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to share suggestions, to discuss Council's proposals and consider the future use of the spaces at the Old School Centre and consider the outlined next steps.

DM

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

Finance HR & Governance

C-2024-105 Council's representation with the Porlock Vale Community Interest Company (PVCIC) to be removed

Cllr S Colson shared his disappointment with the way in which the agenda item had been worded and that it was unfortunate that it hadn't been discussed in advance with him as the current representative. Cllr. S Colson couldn't imagine a situation where a proactive and supportive Council wouldn't have a PVCIC representative. Even if at this moment the PVCIC do not feel the need for a Council representative, the PVCIC is an important part of our community life and the Council should maintain their Representative, demonstrating the door is always open

Council REJECTED the removal of the Council's representation with the PVCIC

PROPOSED Cllr. D McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr: S Colson VOTING: ALL AGAINST

C-2024-106 Council's representation with the Porlock Recreation Ground Committee

The Recreation Committee have agreed that they do not need a Porlock Parish Council Representative as they already have three members of the Council on their Committee.

C-2024-107 Bank reconciliation to the end May '24

Council Resolved to approve and sign the Bank reconciliation to the end of May '24

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

C-2024-108 Detailed Receipts & Payments to end of May '24

Council RECEIVED the Detailed Receipts and Payments Summary to end of May '24

C-2024-109 Payments Schedule for June '24

The Clerk gave an update on invoices that were or had been under investigation. JJ

Resolved: NALC, Cllr & Clerk Training £219.3. This is an outstanding account from 2021 and 2022. Evidence has been provided by NALC of the booking and the several attempts to collect payment. This is now submitted for approval.

Under Investigation: Amicus Law, Dunster Steep £600 & SALC affiliation fee £394.40 are both under investigation. Payments are withheld until this has been concluded and brought back to council for approval.

Council RESOLVED to approve the Payment Schedule for June '24 as noted above.

PROPOSED: Cllr. S Colson SECONDED: Cllr. C Gardner VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

C-2024-110 Finance & HR Committee meeting held on the 4th June '24

Council RECEIVED the draft minutes from the Finance & HR Committee meeting held on the 4th June '24

C-2024-111 Finance & HR Committee recommendations to Council:

The Chair gave a summary of the discussions held for each item and the recommendations made.

Council RESOLVED to approve the following recommendations made by Finance & HR Committee 4th June '24:

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

- C-2024-112** - The Apple Press in the Old School Centre Community Garden will be added back on to the Asset Register with a nominal value of £1; otherwise Council could not obtain public liability cover. Council noted that legal ownership of the Press remains unclear but that Council are custodians as it sits on Council land.

- C-2024-113** Clerk to write to Grant Dennis with the reasoning behind Council's decision to include the Apple Press on our Asset Register. JJ

- C-2024-114** - Set up the Clerk with a Lloyds Bank Multi-pay credit card under the existing terms and conditions **JJ/LT**
- C-2024-115** - The service charge for Porlock Vale Community Interest Company will be based on 2022/23 charges with an increase of 10%. **JJ**
- C-2024-116** - Early termination of the Bright HR Service agreement which ends 4th May 2026 costing £1104 saving £276. It was noted that this could result in an overspend on budget for 2024/25 however the saving was seen as beneficial as the service is something the Council/Clerk have not used. **JJ/LT**
- C-2024-117** - Accept the quote for £3,360 from MS-Group to undertake the subsidence repair work required to the War Memorial at Dunster Steep - see War Memorial Subsidence Report **JJ**
- Payments submitted for approval**
- C-2024-118** PROPOSED: Cllr. S McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. D Heath VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR
- C-2024-119** - Doverly Toilet Repairs – P Fletcher Plumbing £503.00 (8,11, & 22 April) **JJ**
- C-2024-120** - Old School Centre step strips – Safe Tread - £269.36 **JJ**
- C-2024-121** - High Bank car park fence repairs – J Chilcott - £560 **JJ**
- C-2024-130** **Earmarked Reserves changes submitted for approval**
- C-2024-122** PROPOSED: Cllr. D Heath SECONDED: Cllr. S McCanlis VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR
- C-2024-123** - 322 'SCC Climate Grant' to be renamed 'Water Refill Units' **JJ**
- C-2024-124** - 328 'Doverly Manor' to return funds of £20,000 to General Reserves **JJ**
- C-2024-125** - 330 'Allot Revenue Reserve' renamed to 'Treasury Stock Grants' **JJ**
- C-2024-126** **Doverly Manor Committee Lease review fees**
 The Clerk gave a summary of the events leading up to this request. Council were asked in principle to consider paying the legal fees to conduct the required lease agreement reviews on this occasion.
 Cllr. M Stenning stepped out of the meeting to take a call
 Council RESOLVED in principle to pay the legal fees to conduct lease agreement reviews on behalf of Doverly Manor Committee
 PROPOSED: Cllr. C Gardner SECONDED: Cllr. S McCanlis VOTING: 5 IN FAVOUR
 1 ABSTAINED
 Cllr. M Stenning rejoined the meeting
- C-2024-127** **Thorne Segar legal fees of £570 on behalf of Doverly Manor**
 Council RESOLVED to pay the legal fees of £570 on behalf of Doverly Manor Committee **JJ**
 PROPOSED: Cllr. S Colson SECONDED: Cllr. C Gardner VOTING: 5 IN FAVOUR 1 ABSTAINED
 (Cllr. M Stenning not present for the first vote)

C-2024-128 Write to grantee following West Somerset Radio's announcement to cease broadcast.
In 2021, PPC agreed to a grant £1,000 to Grant Dennis to help fund providing radio transmission to Porlock of the West Somerset Radio shows. At the time no money was paid due to no license. In 2022 the Grantee requested that the grant be paid and, despite the situation remaining the same, the grant was paid.

Council RESOLVED the Clerk should write to the grantee requesting the £1,000 funds be repaid. JJ

PROPOSED: Cllr. M Stenning SECONDED: Cllr. D Heath VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

C-2024-129 Volunteering request

Council agreed that this would be a good opportunity and, if successful, could open the door to more volunteering opportunities within the Council. The applicant is under 18 and therefore will only be in attendance with her mother, Council's Admin Officer. It was agreed for safeguarding that a risk assessment will be conducted along with defining a volunteering role profile.

Council RESOLVED to approve the volunteering request subject to a risk assessment and role profile being satisfactorily completed and approved DM/JJ

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

C-2024-130 Civility & Respect Pledge

Council discussed the Civility and Respect pledge. Cllr. S Colson suggested that, as the pledge requires Cllrs. to undertake training, he requested that Cllrs. took the new SALC Code of Conduct training.

Council RESOLVED to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge JJ

PROPOSED: Cllr. C Gardner SECONDED: Cllr. S Colson VOTING: ALL IN FAVOUR

C-2024-131 The specific requirements needed to implement the pledge will be brought back and discussed at the next ordinary Council meeting. JJ

C-2024-132 Meeting Time Extension 21:00

Council Resolved to extend the meeting by an additional 20 mins from 21:00

PROPOSED: Cllr. D Heath SECONDED: Cllr. S Colson VOTING: All IN FAVOUR

C-2024-133 Community Plan

Cllr. S Colson gave a summary input received from the Annual Parish Meeting which was generally very positive. The next steps are to publicise the plan with a view to getting further community input on the plan which would then allow Council to discuss order of priorities.

Council RESOLVED to adopt the Community Plan as a live working document and that this would be published on the Council website, with a follow up discussion at Council on the order of priorities at a future meeting. SC/JJ

PROPOSED: Cllr. S Colson SECONDED: Cllr. D Heath VOTING: All IN FAVOUR

C-2024-134 Bio Diversity Policy

Council have a legal obligation to have a Bio Diversity Policy. The Chair proposed Council adopt the draft Bio Diversity Policy from NALC and use this to create a policy and plan for Porlock.

Council RESOLVED to adopt the Bio Diversity Policy, with the Environment & Community Portfolio Members taking the lead on its adoption as it sits above the Grounds Policy.

DH/SM

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

C-2024-135 Porlock Parish Council Performance Review

Cllr. D McCanlis gave an overview of how the process would work including submission, collation and that answers will remain anonymous, unless a councillor wants to register their input.

Council RESOLVED to adopt the Performance Review Process with it being completed and returned to the Clerk by the 1st July.

Council

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

C-2024-136 Somerset Council's Chair Award

There were no nominations received.

C-2024-137 Disposal of land

Council RESOLVED to respond to Somerset Council acknowledging the reply and explanation, noting that they do not appear to have followed due process. Council requested conditions are put in place regarding usage and that any such future request should follow due process, in particular consulting with Porlock Parish Council.

JJ

PROPOSED: Cllr. D Heath SECONDED: Cllr. S Colson VOTING: All IN FAVOUR

C-2024-138 Meeting Time Extension 21:23

Council Resolved to extend the meeting by an additional 7 mins from 21:23

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

C-2024-139 Asset & Property Portfolio Report

Report was received – Cllr D Thornton was not present to summarise the report

C-2024-140 Environment & Community Portfolio Report

Report was received – Cllr L Thornton was not present to summarise the report

C-2024-141 Parish Rights of Way update

The Clerk gave an update. The survey had been completed and submitted ahead of deadline. Following discussions with Exmoor National Park Authority a meeting will be called of interested parties: Somerset Council, Porlock Manor Estate, National Trust and the Council, to discuss how we collectively better manage the footpaths that criss-cross through the village. It is intended the meeting will take place in the next couple of weeks with an update at the next ordinary Council meeting

**JJ/DH/
LT**

C-2024-142 Wildlife board for the Visitor Centre

The request for funding was retracted as a board has been located in storage which will be refurbished and donated to the Visitor Centre, subject to suitability.

C-2024-143 3 Hill Climb cycling event 14th & 15th September '24

Council agreed to support the three hill climb event taking place in September.

Cllr. D Heath to talk to Cllr. D McCanlis with regard to raising this with the Traders of Porlock group.

DH/DH

C-2024-144 Council Stall at Recreation Country Fair 4th August '24

Council RESOLVED to have a stall at the fair at a cost of £20. Cllrs. volunteering to man the stall on the day: Cllrs. D Heath, S McCanlis and S Colson and the Clerk.

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

Clerk to write to Recreation Ground requesting a stall

JJ

C-2024-145 Planning

No planning matters to note

Reports from outside bodies

C-2024-146 Somerset Council

Received early in the meeting (ref: C-2024-095-98)

C-2024-147 Dovery Manor Committee

Report Received

C-2024-148 Porlock Library

Report Received

C-2024-149 Funding request of £200 for future events at Porlock Community Library

Council RESOLVED to approve the funding of £200

JJ

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

C-2024-150 Library Manager payment of overtime in May and June, for implementation of new library system training, instead of TOIL

Council RESOLVED to approve the payment of overtime recognising the great work and extra time commitment that had been done by the Library Manager during this transition

JJ

PROPOSED: Cllr. C Gardner SECONDED: Cllr. S McCanlis VOTING: All IN FAVOUR

C-2024-151 Porlock Village Hall

Report received

Council noted that the Village Hall Committee does not think it is practical to install a defibrillator without incurring excessive cost, due to the construction of the walls and the electrical supply modifications required. Their suggestion is that the Old School Centre would be a good alternative. The Chair requested that this be added to a future agenda for further discussion and solutions.

JJ

C-2024-152 Local Community Network
Report received

C-2024-153 Council Action Log
Council RESOLVED to approve implementation of the new Actions Log

JJ

PROPOSED: Cllr. D McCanlis SECONDED: Cllr. S Colson VOTING: All IN FAVOUR

C-2024-154 Outstanding Items
Council noted items deferred and meetings proposed

C-2024-155 Date of the next ordinary Council meeting
Cllrs. noted the date of the next Ordinary Council meeting 12th June '24, at 7pm in Porlock Village Hall

The meeting closed at 9:32pm