

**Draft Minutes  
of the Meeting of  
Yatton Parish Council  
held on**

**Monday 16 January 2023**

At Hangstones Pavilion, Stowey Road, Yatton.

Meeting opened: 7.30 p.m. Meeting closed: 8.58 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors: David Crossman, Jonathan Edwards, District/Parish Councillor Wendy Griggs, Graham Humphreys, Steve Humphrey, Chris Jackson, Robert Jenner, Steve Lister, Peter Lomas, Jessie McArdle, Caroline Sheard, Bryan Thomas and Roger Wood.

**Also in attendance:** Clerk and District Councillor Steve Bridger.

**Prayers were led by Rev Jill Flowers.**

**MATTERS FOR DECISION**

**COU72/23: To receive apologies for absence, and to approve reasons where appropriate.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Massimo Morelli.

**COU73/23: To receive declarations of interests by Parish Councillors and to consider any written applications for dispensations.**

NONE.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**COU74/23: Public participation.**

No members of the public present.

**North Somerset Councillors' Report.**

District/Parish Councillor Wendy Griggs reported that she had received many concerns regarding the lack of any bus service in the Parish. There were a few examples of the extreme difficulties having no buses had caused. A father of three children all at different schools had been unable to access the home to school bus service because the service had been overwhelmed. An elderly couple had moved to Yatton because neither drove a car and at the time there was a bus service adequate for their needs but are now having great difficulty making appointments etc. in places a train cannot reach.

District Councillor Steve Bridger reported that there may be a new scheme coming forward in due course entitled 'Demand Responsive Transport' funded by central government which has already been trialed successfully in Kent. The scheme will divide the county into zones with two wheelchair access 9-12 seater minibuses operating in each zone and will collect passengers from their door or a pre-arranged location. This will allow them to take people to a lot of places a normal bus service would not be able to go.

The High Street Improvements would possibly be starting next month but will take until July to complete and will cause quite a lot of disruption. There were still a couple of elements of the scheme that needed to be consulted on including the Stowey Road and Mendip Road improvements which will mean they will probably not be done until later on this year.

The closure of Backwell Recycling Centre had caused many complaints that North Somerset Council were currently considering.

Parish Liaison Officer Report.

No report as new Liaison Officer not appointed yet.

Police report.

The Police were unable to attend the meeting but PC James Rochford sent the following report:

The Neighbourhood Policing Team have been patrolling the area on a regular basis, working with the schools and young children. PCSO's have continued with the Mini Police programme every week, since returning to school from the Christmas break, we have been learning about the roles within the Police Force and also they all know their phonetic alphabet. We are looking forward to booking in some Talk to Us events and also Bike Register marking in the next few months.

**MATTERS FOR DECISION**

**COU75/23: Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**COU76/23: Exclusion of public:**

**If the Council wishes to exclude the public for a particular agenda item, the following resolution must be passed:**

'That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda item(s) ... on the ground that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest [by reason of the confidential nature of the business] or [for other special reason which must be stated].'

**NOT REQUIRED.**

**COU77/23: To discuss rejoining membership to the Parish Council Airport Association and the Campaign to Protect Rural England.**

**RESOLVED:** to renew membership of both organisations – Parish Council Airport Association £50 and Campaign to Protect Rural England £100.

**COU78/23: To consider and approve the Parish Council's budget and to set the precept for 2023-24.**

The Clerk had circulated her report, the draft budget papers, ear marked reserves and notes prior to the meeting. The agenda item was led by Councillor Peter Lomas, Chairman of the Finance, Personnel and Administration Committee who had recommended the budget and precept figure for the consideration of the Council. He highlighted the approach that had been taken on setting the figures for certain key areas within the 2023-24 budget as follows:

- **Administration 101.**

4001,4002, 4003 and 4007 payments relate to staff costs.

In November last year NALC (National Association of Local Council's) agreed a pay rise with the Unions effective 1 April 2022. The effect of this increase was to raise salaries by between, roughly, 2.5 per cent for those on the highest grade and 9 percent for those on the lowest. NALC have stated their intention to try to reach a negotiated pay settlement effective 1 April 2023 before that date but, as yet there was no news. The Finance committee therefore took the view that our salary budget should be increased by 7

percent and, inclusive of any agreed contractual incremental rises, this gives the figures on lines 4001 and 4003. NI contributions have been calculated using the new budgeted figures and are shown on line 4002.

- Yatton Parish Council's pension fund was part of the Avon Pension Fund. The Parish Council's contribution to the Pension Fund was approximately 24% of gross salary. The Pension Fund is re-valued every 3 years. The results of the March 2022 re-valuation were released in December 2022. This showed a slight deficit when comparing the value of the fund against potential future commitments. The deficit is around £6k which the Fund will recoup over the next 3 years. The Chair of the Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee had been assured that YPC's pension fund is readily identifiable within the overall Avon Pension Fund and the deficit relates solely to our pension pot and is not a contribution to the overall deficit. The pension figure on line 4007 has, therefore, been increased by £2k to reflect this.
- **Transport and Lighting 251.**  
The Parish Council was responsible for 97 streetlights and was undertaking an on-going programme of streetlight upgrading by replacing conventional bulbs with LEDs and "dusk to dawn" timers with "part night" timers. The Council was fortunate in having a fixed energy contract with our supplier until 2025. The Budget figure was an estimate based on the current position, however upgrading work could potentially see costs reduce to approximately £350.00 per month, say £4200 per annum.
- **Precept 2023-24.**  
Yatton Parish Council raises the 5<sup>th</sup> largest precept in N Somerset after Weston, Portishead, Clevedon and Nailsea but, in terms of Band D, there are 11 councils who are higher. Previously, district councils were required to hold a referendum if they wished to increase council tax by more than 3%. Parish Councils are not subject to such restrictions.  
In his Autumn Statement, the Chancellor allowed district councils to increase council tax by up to 4.99% (up to 2.99%, plus 2% ringfenced for Social Care) without holding a referendum (parish council precepts are not subject to these rules). It is thought unlikely, given North Somerset Council's £17m deficit as announced in November 2022, that council tax would rise by less than 4.99%. The Finance Committee has, therefore, taken the decision to recommend a 5% increase in Band D precept from £78.81 to £82.75. In addition, the number of Band D properties in the area has increased from 3021 to 3116. This gives a precept of £257,875.00 an increase of £19,721.00.

Councillor Peter Lomas thanked the Clerk, Finance Officer and members of the Finance Committee for all the work that had been done to present the recommended budget and precept figure to the Full Council.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the recommended budget without amendment and to approve a 5% increase as detailed above in the precept request for 2023-24 of £257,875.00

**COU79/23: To consider approving the Action Plan 2023-24 as recommended on December 12th 2022 by the Finance, Personnel and Administration Committee.**

**RESOLVED:** to approve the Action Plan 2023-24 as recommended by the Finance, Personnel and Administration Committee.

**COU80/23: To discuss the closure of Backwell Recycling Centre.**

This item was deferred pending further information.

**COU81/23: To comment on a public consultation for North Somerset Council's Place and Movement Framework and the resulting seven Active Travel Action Plans (ATAPs).**

The Clerk had circulated prior to the meeting comments on the consultations drafted by Councillor Chris Jackson for consideration by the Council. Discussion ensued regarding 20 mph on Claverham Road, the suspended quiet lanes initiative started by Yatton Parish Council six years ago not progressed by North Somerset Council at the time but has now resurfaced within the Rural Lanes Action Plan. The co-ordination of bus and rail services was also raised. The Council thanked Councillor Chris Jackson for drafting the comprehensive comments.

**RESOLVED:** to submit the comments on both consultations without amendment.

**COU/82/23: Finance**

To authorise payments, including to note receipts and petty cash payments for January 2023.

**RESOLVED:** to authorise payments, including to note receipts and petty cash payments for January 2023.

**Matters for Information**

**COU83/23: Clerk's report.**

- i) An invitation from the Army Engagement Group to an evening reception at the Winter Gardens 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023 6.00pm. The aim of the reception is to give a better understanding of the Army and what it does within communities.
- ii) The Parish Council solicitor had been in correspondence regarding a small strip of land that did not appear to be adopted by North Somerset Council at the entrance to the drive down to the allotments/new cemetery. It will have to be included within the demise for the lease to ensure adequate access, she was waiting for confirmation regarding title to this strip. The Clerk was working on gaining one quote each for fencing, water supply and surfacing. Once these were obtained it will be clear how to apply Financial Regulations to each element of the work.
- iii) In November the Clerk had asked the Council if they wished to escalate the response from Royal Mail about the poor service in Yatton to the Postal Review Panel. Councillors decided it would be wise to wait and see how the service performs over Christmas and revisit it in January 2023. The Clerk asked again if they wished to escalate the matter but members thought due to recent strike action it was difficult to make a judgement on the service at the moment. This was deferred to March 2023 Full Council.
- iv) The clerk reported that the decision regarding a complaint against Councillor Chris Jackson had been received from North Somerset Council's Monitoring Officer. Councillor Jackson advised members that the decision concluded that there had been no breach of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct. Members thanked him for his transparency in the matter.
- v) The Clerk informed Councillors that her father had passed away just before Christmas and his funeral was on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January. She would not be in work that week after Tuesday lunchtime. Councillors gave their condolences.

**COU84/23: Future agenda items.**

The new proposed cemetery off Mendip Road.

Weight limit signs in the Parish.

Newsletter provision.

Lease with North Somerset Council for the new cemetery.

Ways to commemorate the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.

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Chairman

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