

WAYFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Contact the Clerk: 01460 53378 / wayfordparish@gmail.com

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Wayford Parish Council held in Clapton Village Hall on Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 7.00 p.m.

Attendance and Apologies

| Those present: | Apologies | In Attendance |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Mrs Barbara Woodward (Chair) | Mr Mike Best (Somerset Councillor) | |
| Mrs Gill Thompson (Vice Chair) | | |
| Mr Piers Farley | | |
| Mrs Julie Shaw | | |
| Mr Andrew Vickery | | |
| Mr Steve Ashton (Somerset Councillor) | | |
| Mrs Sue Morley (Clerk) | | |

13/25 Minutes of the ordinary meeting held on Wednesday 15th January 2025 (agenda item 2)

The minutes of the ordinary meeting were agreed and were signed by Cllr Woodward as Chair.

14/25 Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on Wednesday 11th February 2025 (agenda item 3)

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting were agreed and were signed by Cllr Woodward as Chair.

15/25 Public Voice (agenda item 4) - There were no members of the public present.

16/25 Somerset Councillor Report (agenda item 5)

Cllr Ashton reported that the Council voted to accept a 2.5% rise in council tax above the 5% which will mean a rise by 7.49% this year. There is a £70 - £80 million overspend this year. To break even the council tax would need to rise by 27%. The overspend has been made worse by the huge rise in the interest rate plus minimum wage and the increase in employees national insurance. The Council has already lost 550 people plus it has sold off most of its properties so without Government intervention next year the Council will not be able to meet its commitments. The Council is staying afloat mainly by borrowing. The deficit is mainly due to the huge costs of adult and child social care. There are approximately 30 other councils in the country who will also go into special measures this year and many more next year. Approximately 50 Councils are affected. The only places still solvent are those with a lot of very expensive properties which have large council taxes.

One huge problem has been the increase in the number of children defined with special educational needs. There are more children needing help including immigrant children and those with mental health needs. An approximately 80% increase. There are fewer special schools and more children in mainstream schools who need help.

Car parking charges are increasing but the Council decided against charging for overnight parking. Langport car parks will no longer be free. There are other statutory requirements such as libraries, recycling, footpaths etc but no decisions yet on how many of these will be preserved.

Potholes are an ongoing issue with some roads being closed because they are too expensive to repair.

A question was asked about what the procedure will be if the Council does declare it can no longer meet its commitments. It is likely that Commissioners will come in and council tax could increase significantly, possibly up to 20%. One problem is that there may not be enough competent Commissioners to manage all the Councils likely to be in the same situation.

The Boundary Commission has sent off its recommendations. Wayford will fall in with Hinton St George.

17/25 Planning Applications (agenda item 6)

Proposal: Proposed solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels, with a generating capacity of up to 18.5 MWp including mounting framework, inverters, underground cabling, stockproof fence, CCTV, internal tracks and associated infrastructure and biodiversity net gain, substation for grid connection for a temporary period of 40 years

Location: Land OS 8186 Dunsham Lane Wayford Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8QL
Application Number: 24/00352/FUL

Comments have been submitted following the extraordinary meeting. There has been no further information.

7.30 p.m. Cllr Ashton left the meeting.

18/25 Highways (agenda item 7)

Drains

Work was done on the drains which were dug out from the verges using a digger and they are now clear. It was agreed to continue with the work and to do Dunsham Lane as well. It should be possible to get the work done before the end of March.

There are several drains which are blocked at the bottom of Wayford Hill by Clapton and the Clerk was asked to contact Highways. There is also a blocked drain at the bottom of Dunsham Lane. Cllr Vickery offered to scrape the road at the bottom of Dunsham Lane with a tractor bucket to remove the mud.

The Coast to Coast race is on Saturday 10th May and the Clerk was asked to request that Highways sweep the road. The road is covered in gravel which has not been swept since the road was re-surfaced.

ACTION – The Clerk

19/25 Allotments (agenda item 8)

There is still one vacant plot.

20/25 Cemetery (agenda item 9)

(a) Tree Survey

The tree survey will be done in the next 2 – 3 weeks.

(b) Grass Cutting

A new contractor has been engaged to cut the grass in the Cemetery.

21/25 Internet Banking (agenda item 10)

Cllr Woodward will contact NatWest again to find out the progress of our request for internet banking.

ACTION – Cllr Woodward

22/25 Accounts payments and receipts (agenda item 11)

(a) Lloyds Charges

The first monthly charge of £4.25 has been received from Lloyds.

(b) The Clerk presented the following payments which were set up by the Clerk and approved by Cllr Woodward:

| | | |
|----------------|-------------|--|
| Online payment | - £ 45.60 | - HMRC, paye |
| Online payment | - £ 214.93 | - Salary and expenses |
| Online payment | - £ 21.60 | - Village Hall rent extraordinary meeting |
| Online payment | - £ 600.00 | - Cosgrove Construction Ltd - Excavator for the drains |
| Online payment | - £1,547.98 | - Somerset Council, grass cutting in Cemetery |

23/25 LCN (agenda item 12)

No-one was available to attend the last LCN meeting.

24/25 Matters and Items to Report (agenda item 13)

There were no matters to report.

25/25 Date of next ordinary Parish Council meeting (agenda item 14)

The Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Parish Council Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 14th May 2025 at 7.00 pm.** in Clapton Village Hall.

The meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.

Barbara Woodward - Chair