

Pitcombe Parish Council

Minutes of the Pitcombe Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 10th December 2024

Present: Councillors R. Waller, N Hartnell, M Hutton, A Hobhouse, E Craigie R Shylan, M Groom,
In attendance: 6 Members of the public , Tom Power, Somerset Councillor, Lucie Reader, Flood Warden Pitcombe, and Mrs Tuck, clerk.

Before the meeting Mr Rawson from The Newt advised the Council advised the meeting that they had a road sweeper coming on Thursday and that they would be sweeping the Lane up to the Church as well. In the recent storm damage a tree had fallen on telephone lines at Pitcombe Rock and a pole fallen at Cole Manor. Bits of trees had fallen by the River at Rye Ash. Cllr Hutton to report.

Another member of the public reported cattle trailer stolen, a land rover and Cllr Groom had a tractor stolen. The river gauge ended up facing the road, not sure if that was potential theft?

We will try again to get Police presence at our meetings, We have advertised for someone to take on the Neighbourhood watch role with no response but will put it in the Parish News again. Cllr Power will try and contact the police for us.

2024.94. Apologies were received from Somerset Councillor Lucy Trimnell

2024.95 Declaration of Interest – Cllr Hobhouse declared that her husband is on the board of Governors of Kings Bruton and Bruton School for Girls.

2024.96 Minutes of the last meeting: Discussion about the Councils comments that were given to the planning department are not worded in the minutes. Clerk to amend and bring to the next meeting. A request for Flooding and footpaths to take place at the beginning of the meeting so the Officers concerned can give an early report. The Chairman said he would reserve the right to change the order of the meeting depending on what was on the agenda.

2024.97 Matters Arising: None not dealt with elsewhere.

2024.98 To receive reports: Cllr Power has sent his report via email faults with Roads, fallen trees are not always being dealt with – Advise Tom and Lucy if not dealt with. Planning issues have a large backlog. Where there were several planning areas now one planning committee covers the district formerly South Somerset, if planning goes through delegated powers they may get passed but there is a backlog if the go to committee.

2024.99 Planning applications, footpaths and road closures.

i. To consider new planning applications - None

ii. Update on Planning applications currently under consideration by Local Planning Authority

None advised

ii. Outcome of Planning applications considered at previous meetings:

None advised

Cllr Hobhouse has prepared an excellent draft report of any outstanding planning issues we can keep up to date, Thank you we will keep it for our internal use.

iv. Footpaths Clerk to write a letter of thanks for clearing up to Mr M Berry of Wyke Road Caste Cary.

v. Temporary Road Closures None

2024.100 Correspondence SWR Funding letter – not appropriate for us..

2024.101 Finance

a. Cheques for approval were agreed apart from the SALC cheque as Emma had not attended due to not receiving joining in info - clerk to contact SALC but Emma would like to do Code of Conduct in February and Councillors Essentials.

b. Financial report was given and approved

The budget for next year was discussed and agreed for 25/26 with regard to the precept it was agreed to increase the precept by 2.5%, in addition we will have to pay £100 every three years for the rain gauge data as we share it with 2 other villages, also need to add emptying the dog bin £383 pa. #

Need to increase the maintenance budget.for supporting Council services.

2024.102 Council Matters –

a) Flooding – The section 19 report has been circulated in draft to which we will respond following comments from Lucie. Richard made a further report from Pitcombe, they said they wouldn't amend the report but felt Pitcombe's experience was not considered in the report. Cllr Hobhosue reported for Hadspen, the report has been delayed but is expected in January 2025.

Lucie had a notification of Storm Bert @2am and the gauge had lost transmission, at one time it overtopped so they realised how vital the river gauge is but it needs to be kept clean at all times so it doesn't give a false reading as by the time it gets to Pitcombe its too late. We've had no heavy rain for 2 weeks, the transmissions kicked in on 4th December with another alert on 5th, normally about 30mm of rain but had a red alert on 20mm, the river broke its bank, all gauges were moderate but the Pit broke the river bank. The comms are working well across the village the red alert notified everyone before the sirens, its a useful means of communication. Lucie is struggling with how to find a wider approach talking to farmers, It brought to the attention of the SRA, EA and MAFF, our course of action should be to approach them to respond at catchment level. Cllr Hobhouse is reaching out beyond Hadspen to see who is responsible for maintenance, the section 19 reports gives extra weight to this. Need to do landscape measures to hold water on the land and good woodland management, observing, so when it rains heavily, it holds it and releases it slowly, need an area of land that is suitable. Galhampton and Shepton Montague had properties flooded so trying to benefit those properties,

b) Village- Plan Cllr Waller has been approached by two people who would support the work and who were involved before – does anyone want to lead this? need to identify someone to head it up. Cllr Hutton asked how much work was involved, its a smaller job than last time - we have moved on since then and there may be more happening in community with the Sunny Hill site. Could we hold a workshop to talk about it- change has happened since the last plan. We need someone dedicated to head it up, need to link with Cary and Bruton plans to understand the bigger picture. Decided to hold a workshop in March to generate interest and advertise it in February Parish News. Date to be decided at the next meeting.

c) Drains a371 – No progress, John Nicholson out of office,

d) Pitcombe Rock Falconry Cllr Waller to chat to Mr Wells ref building and also to check on state of defibs batteries and pads.

2024.103 Items for report and for the next agenda Please note this item can only be used for statements of information and requests for items to be included on the agenda at the next meeting.

Flood funding

Barclays – online banking – or bank card for our account.

Pitcombe Phone box – volunteers to paint in the spring if we get the paint.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Date of the next Parish Council meeting: Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 7.30pm at Hadspen Village Hall