

Trudoxhill Parish Council Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8th August 2024 at 7.30pm (White Hart)

Present: Diana Francis, Chris Kenyon, Jack Symes (Chair), Charlie Bonham Christie, Sheila Salmon, Barry Clark
Clerk: Sam Winstanley
Members of Public: 0

24/538 Apologies

None

24/539 Disclosure of Interest

None

24/540 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved.

Meeting suspended to take questions or comments from the Public

24/541 Planning

24/541.1 2024/1182/VRC – Removal of Agricultural Occupancy at Pot Farmhouse, Gare Hill

When planning was granted for renovation in 2018, the property had the tie for the resident needing a connection to agriculture. Originally a derelict foresters cottage. Renovations completed. Owners have reported that no workers need the cottage and they cannot fill as a rental with the tie requirements. Councillors discussed if the lack of jobs for this tie will persist, weighing up the requirement for housing over protected housing for rural workers. It was noted that 2 cottages over the road had ties removed recently and discussed that removing a tie would not preclude an agricultural worker renting the cottage in the future. There was also no requirement for the rent to be affordable, so councillors questioned whether the tie actually did anything to help rural workers with rent anyway.

RESOLUTION: 4/5 voted to recommend approval.

24/541.2 2024/1229/HSE – Extension to Existing Dayroom at Caravan 2, Layby off Marston Road

Councillors remembered that initial extension had been granted and agreed a larger space would be important for SEN child including disabled access. Councillors discussed a lack of material finishes on the planning but were reminded that this was not material to the application.

RESOLUTION: 5/5 voted to recommend approval.

24/541.3 2024/1245/FUL - Erection of a Barn (Retrospective) at Land East of Westend Lane, Trudoxhill

It appeared that the applicant did not think they needed planning, but due to the land in question being under 5hc the size of barn was too large for PD. Councillors visited and agreed height is not excessive and the machinery and vehicles in it require the height. It does not appear to affect neighbours and is well constructed. It was discussed that the large lorry in the barn on visit was not on the list of equipment, but the clerk noted the list does not need to be exhaustive or complete, as long as use is agricultural it should be lawful and allowed.

RESOLUTION: 1 approve/0 refuse/2 refer/2 abstain, there was no quorate agreement on any recommendation.

24/542 Finance

24/542.1 Financial Report

The clerk reported £6,565.88 in bank, £900 ahead with some bills running late.

24/542.2 Accounts for payment

Clerk £339, K Gale £120, Dean Press £200, SALC £127.87 – no unexpected invoices, approved for payment.

24/542.3 Insurance Renewal

Clerk reported £605 is renewal quote, up from £520. Others, with less tailored coverage is similar. Clerk also confirmed that this policy would automatically cover the new SID devices. 5/5 approved

RESOLUTION: 5/5 voted to go ahead with renewal.

24/543 Reports

To receive reports and updates on:

24/543.1 Highways (SS)

SS reported on the long road closure, hopefully ending on time soon, it caused worse flytipping in the parish.

24/543.2 SpeedWatch & Speed Abatement Project (SS)

The clerk reported that the best fit for purpose SID, after a long and deeply researched procurement process, including liaising with other local parishes who had purchased similar SIDS, was the Evolis from Elan City. Their quote for approval is £2860.32, which was nearly £2000 less than rival units.

RESOLUTION: 5/5 voted to go ahead with purchase.

24/543.3 The Village Hall

Nothing to report

24/543.4 Unitary Update – LCN

Councillor Clark noted a correction on a previous statement and had received new info on the planning office's enforcement team and activity - 4 enforcement officers, 2 agency officers and 2 vacancies and over 1000 active cases, planning enforcement continues and residents should be encouraged to report anything they think untoward.

24/543.5 Parish Plan

The parish plan committee requested a vote to approve document for release which they had circulated to the council prior. The clerk suggested applying to the community funds for funding to print a copy for every household in the parish.

RESOLUTION: 4/4 voted to approve publishing, the apply for funding and to record a large thank you to the team, including John Salmon and Patrick Devlin for the efforts to bring the plan to fruition.

24/544 Correspondence and Emails Received

24/544.1 Devolution of Grass Cutting

The clerk reported that a note was received stating that as of next year, Highways will continue with verge and hedge cutting, but council owned areas of grass and tree maintenance will be devolved to the parish to handle, asking the parish to raise precept to do so. They suggested this could be done either as maintenance agreement or asset transfer. The clerk requested detail and was provided with maps, the areas in question are centered on grass patches in Ashfield close and the gare hill churchyard. There is also an area of woodland behind Ashfield close. The clerk suggested requesting the devolution through asset transfer to see if any value could be derived from the woodland for the community and to request a quote for adding the maintenance of these new areas from K Gale.

RESOLUTION: 4/4 voted to request an asset transfer, take on the maintenance and request a quote from K Gale to do so.

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24/544.2 Devolution of Litter Bin Emptying

The clerk then reported a similar note, stating that from April 1st 2025 Somerset council will begin charging for bin emptying. An example cost of £9.38 per bin was provided. The clerk reported the parish has 1 dog bin (by bus stop), 2 bins (playground, phonebox). The council discussed the implications of removing the bins, which was the only offered option to avoid further charges. It was deemed not an option to remove, as all are well used and the result would be littering and dog mess – both of which would be counter to our parish plan aims. The council wished to see the final charges Somerset levy, but would look to find solutions to emptying through the parishes means, should the value be deemed poor from Somerset's collections.

RESOLUTION: 4/4 voted to see eventual pricing, and to take responsibility for emptying and disposal should it be deemed poor value.

24/545 Other Business referred to the Clerk

24/545.1 Website & email move to .gov

The clerk would like leave to investigate moving to a .gov domain for security, authority, compliance and to investigate parish branded emails for councillors. The council was happy for the clerk to investigate and report back.

24/546 Date of next TPC meeting

September 5th