

FITZHEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 22 May 2024 at the Tithe Barn, Fitzhead commencing at 8.15 pm.

MINUTES

Present: Cllr. Chris Summers (Chair), Cllr. Alison Kent, Cllr. Ian Coombes, Cllr W Jonas & Cllr. Martin Irish
In Attendance: Andrea Johnson (Clerk) & Cllr. Dave Mansell (Somerset Council).

Public Speaking Time: No members of the public were present.

- 24/001 Election of Chairman and receipt of the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**
Following a proposal by Cllr Irish, seconded by Cllr Kent Cllr Summers was unanimously voted as Chair, which he duly accepted. The Chair signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form, which was countersigned by the Clerk.
- 24/002 To note apologies for absence and approve reason, where appropriate**
Cllr. Gwil Wren (Somerset Council) gave his apologies.
- 24/003 Declarations of Interest/Dispensations.**
Cllr Jonas declared an interest in the payments to Jonas Maintenance Logistics and in the reimbursement of the costs of framing the Coronation cross stitch.
- 24/004 Minutes of Previous Meeting and matters arising**
The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2024 were **approved** and signed as a correct record by the Chairman. Notices had been put up asking that villagers refrain from parking on the grass and parking was no longer an issue.
- 24/005 Tithe Barn Management Committee**
There was nothing to add following the discussion at the Annual Parish Meeting.
- 24/006 Play Area and Pump House**
24/006.1 There were no matters to note from the weekly inspection reports, other than the ongoing issue with moles and the need to repair the roof of the pumphouse, now that the ivy had been removed. The pumphouse also requires repointing and a local contractor has been asked to advise.
- 24006.2 Work had been undertaken in April to tidy up the play area and address issues identified at the annual playground inspection. Cllr Irish is to trim back the overhanging branches near to the Monkey bars. The Clerk is to obtain a sign with emergency contact details and Darren's Den will be adjusting the height of the slide.
- 24/007 Highway matters**
There was nothing to add following the discussion at the Annual Parish Meeting.
- 24/0008 Local Government and Policing**
24/008.1 Cllr. Mansell (Somerset Council) reported that actions continue to address Somerset Council's financial difficulties, including restructuring and the sale of assets.

Cllr Mansell is part of a Transport Group, focusing in particular on the local bus services. There is currently no bus service in Fitzhead itself and services on the nearest route are subsidised and have been reduced. Cllr Mansell mentioned the availability of the Slinky bus, but it was unclear whether all villagers would be eligible to use this.

Airband are behind schedule and focusing on existing networks rather than expanding their

FITZHEAD PARISH COUNCIL

networks. Councillors expressed disappointment that broadband providers did not appear to be working together to make best use of the existing infrastructure.

24/008.2 Cllr Summers reported on the most recent LCN meeting. Attendee numbers appear to be reducing and it is unclear what is being achieved. More direction is required.

24/008.3 The Police Report for April on the Parish Council website was noted. The Clerk is to continue to invite a representative to attend the Parish Council meeting.

24/009 Finance.

24/009.1 The Bank Reconciliation Statements at 31 March and 14 May 2024 were noted, including the receipt of the precept of £13,738.

24/009.2 Having declared an interest, Cllr Jonas took no part in the discussion. It was noted that the cost of framing the cross stitch had been overstated on the agenda. It was therefore unanimously **resolved**, with one abstention, to pay the following payments totalling **£2,220.48**

Tithe Barn - hire	February meeting	15.00
Clerk Salary	March – May 2024	394.80
Clerk Expenses	March – May 2024	30.56
HMRC	PAYE	262.80
1+1 Internet	Domain registration	12.00
Jonas Maintenance Logistics	Work on Pump House	72.00
Quantock Art & Framing	Jubilee Cross stitch	659.85
Anthony Smith & Co	Payroll services 2023/24	120.00
Community Heartbeat	Defibrillator support	162.00
Gallagher Insurance	Insurance	491.47

24/009.3 Expenditure against budget at 31 March 2024 and 14 May 2024 was noted.

24/009.4 The Year End Accounts 2023/24 were unanimously **approved**.

24/009.5 The Internal Audit Report was noted.

24/009.6 It was noted that as the Council's expenditure for the year 2023/2024 was less than £25,000, the Council was entitled to send to claim exemption from the limited assurance review. It was unanimously **resolved** to claim exemption and the certificate was signed by the Chair and Clerk.

24/009.7 Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 was approved, which the Councillors agreed had been achieved correctly throughout the year. This was then signed off by the Chair and Clerk.

24/009.8 The Accounting Statements on the Annual Report agreed with the Year End figures. The Chair and Clerk signed off the accounts.

24/009.9 It was unanimously **resolved** to accept the ground maintenance quote from Richard Branfield.

24/009.10 The Clerk confirmed that having researched other providers, the quote for the annual Inspection of the Play Area remained competitive and it was unanimously **resolved** to accept the quote.

FITZHEAD PARISH COUNCIL

24/0010 Accessibility requirements for the website

The changes to website accessibility which come into effect in October 2024 were noted, together with the cost of an annual licence. It was agreed that as the changes did not come into effect until October 2024, the matter should be considered nearer the time.

24/0011 Correspondence

24/0011.1 The request to consider applying for the Fitzhead Inn to be listed as an Asset of Community Value was discussed. It was noted that to qualify as an Asset of Community Value the Fitzhead Inn must be presently used (or have recently been used) to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community - and could be used to do so in the future. Councillors noted that the Inn had been closed for more than 5 years and did not feel that there was a realistic prospect of the Community being able to re-open it in the future. Therefore, it was concluded that an application for listing was unlikely to be successful.

24/011.2 The request from Somerset Council in relation to footpaths was discussed. It was unanimously resolved to advise Somerset Council of the activities currently undertaken, but there was no present appetite or capacity to do more.

24/012 Matters for information only

Cllr Coombes raised the possibility of donating towards the costs of the village newsletter. It was agreed that he should obtain further details of the costings.

24/013 Next quarterly meeting

It was agreed to hold the next Parish Council Meeting on 21 August 2024 at 7.15pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.46 pm.

Signed as a true and correct record by Cllr. Summers.....

Dated 21 August 2024.