

## **East Coker Parish Council 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023**

**Attendees:** Cllr Cowen, Cllr Hodge, Cllr Sugg, Cllr Wakely, Cllr Hall, Cllr Comstive, Cllr Wilkins, Cllr Wintersgill, & Clerk J. Heggarty.

**Public Attendance:** 1 members of the public.

Meeting commenced at 7.00pm at East Coker Pavilion.

### **23/138 Election of Chair and Vice Chair**

Cllr Cowen put himself forward for election as the full time Chair for the Parish Council. He explained he had more time available due to changes in his job and wanted to unburden the other co-Chairs (Cllrs Hodge and Comstive) as they are extremely busy with other commitments. **Proposed:** Cllr Wilkins **Seconded:** Cllr Wakely **Vote:** All in favour **Action:** Cllr Cowen was elected as Chair of ECPC.

Cllr Hodge put herself forward to be elected Vice Chair for this month (and to share this duty in future with Cllr Comstive). **Proposed:** Cllr Hall **Seconded:** Cllr Wintersgill **Vote:** All in Favour **Action:** Cllr Hodge was elected Vice Chair for this meeting.

### **23/139 To receive apologies and reasons for non-attendance**

Apologies were received from Cllr Warwick- Mortimer, Cllr Carter-Uren, Cllr Mead for not attending.

### **23/140 To receive declarations of interest in items on this agenda**

No Declarations of interest where received.

### **23/141 To receive and approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

Meeting minutes for the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023 where approved. **Proposed:** Cllr Sugg **Seconded:** Cllr Wintersgill. **Vote:** 5 in favour, 3 abstentions due to non-attendance. **Action:** the minutes were agreed and signed by the Chair.

### **23/142 Public Question Time**

- (1) Members of the Public. One member of the public spoke on item 123/146.1
- (2) UC None

### **23/143 To discuss and make observations on SC - Planning Applications**

A **15/01000/OUT Location:** Keyford. Cllr Comstive will speak to Stoford Chairperson, to find out if the letter regarding the road layout on Hendford Hill has been finalised and sent.

B. **23/01172/LBC Location:** The Old Vicarage East Coker, Yeovil **Application:** To change existing kitchen window to a glazed double opening door. Application withdrawn.

### **23/144 Finance.** To approve the following items of expenditure and those paid under delegated powers.

Clerk advised that the following invoices had arrived since agenda publication totalling £2,146.78. Playground inspection £ 83.40, K M Dike £1,007.70 Ranger £1,056.28 Xero £29.40

**Proposed:** Cllr Comstive **Seconded:** Cllr Sugg. **Action:** Finance accounts approved for the month and Clerk to pay all invoices, and Cllr Hodge to investigate possible discount/query increase for Xero with Old Mill.

### **23/145 Memorial Requests:**

1. Request received for an additional inscription to remember the late Reginald Strong. Cllr Sugg felt the wording was unacceptable and proposed that the Clerk went back to the stone mason and told them that the PC were happy with the names and the dates but not the verbose additions. Clerk and Cllr Hodge advised that ECPC did not have a policy on memorial stone wording and said that without that, the Council could not really object, however it was felt that in this case the wording was not suitable. Cllr Hodge suggested that Cllr Wakely worded a policy for the next meeting. **Proposal:** Names and dates are permitted but not further wording. Cllr Wakely to write a cemetery policy and bring to next meeting.

**Proposed:** Cllr Comstive **Seconded:** Cllr Sugg. **Vote:** 7 in favour, 1 against **Action:** Clerk to update stone mason and Cllr Wakely to write a cemetery policy and bring to the next meeting for approval.

## 23/146 Matters for discussion and resolution:

**1. Possible co-option of new Councillors.** James Walker had sent a letter of intent to the Clerk prior to the meeting which had been circulated to Councillors. James addressed Cllrs giving information about his experience and background and was then asked to leave the room.

(19:25) 1 Member of the public left room

Cllrs Sugg said he would be the perfect person to take the lead on highways issues. Cllr Hodge was impressed at the way he had prepared and spoken as a member of the public at the June meeting. **Proposal:** that J. Walker be co-opted as a new member. **Proposed:** Cllr Sugg **Seconded:** Cllr Wakely **Vote:** All agreed **Action:** Mr Walker was voted onto the ECPC. (19:29) Mr Walker rejoined meeting and was welcomed by the Chair onto the PC. Mr Walker completed the relevant paperwork. Clerk will arrange an email address, and have the website updated and submit all relevant paperwork to Somerset Council.

**2. Possibility of erecting a T S Eliot brown 'heritage' sign.** Cllr Comstive said he had been approached by the Church Warden who asked for the PC's approval for a brown T S Eliot heritage sign to be placed under the church direction sign, to make visitors aware where his memorial is. Cllrs agreed this in principle but it would be subject to funding. **Action:** Cllr Comstive to feed back to church Warden.

**3. Village Stones.** Cllr Sugg advised that the broken village stone had been taken up to Harvey's Stone so that the inlay could be taken out and re-used. Cllr Sugg said that Harvey's had agreed to make a new stone for the same price as the original (£1688 + VAT) plus installation costs. Clerk advised that the insurance company had paid out for the original stone £1,688.00 and she had also received a quote of £255 + VAT for the new metal "East Coker Kings Coronation 2023" sign and hoped this could be claimed through insurance but said that this may not be possible. She asked that if insurance would not pay for it were Councillors happy to spend £306.00 for the new metal inlay sign? Cllr Sugg also said that there would be costs involved with installing the replacement stone but thought it would be under £300.00, Cllr Sugg also advised that Cllr Mead had met Somerset Highways at the location where the sign is to be re-sited just to double check the location was suitable. They agreed that it was the only viable place on the Yeovil Road. Cllr Sugg said that Somerset Highways are going to email the Clerk with this information. **Proposal:** The Council is happy to proceed with metal sign £306.00 if the insurance company don't pay out and happy to pay for re-installation cost. **Proposed:** Cllr Wakely **Seconded:** Cllr Wilkins **Vote:** All agreed **Action:** Clerk will confirm placement costs with contractor. Clerk to chase insurance company for possible payment on metal sign. Clerk to chase Somerset Highways for site confirmation email.

**4. SIDs.** Cllr Cowen presented the results of a meeting with Andy Barron of the Somerset Council Traffic Management team. Mr Barron said there were 3 options to reduce traffic in the village: 1. Reduce speed limit from 30 to 20mph. Expensive (approx. £15,000 for parish council to pay) and lengthy process. 2. Install a Speed Indication Device (SID). Cheaper (approx. £2500 per SID + post installations + training for moving SID from post to post), quicker, possibility of a grant from Avon and Somerset Police. 3. Install traffic calming infrastructure such as sleeping policemen and chicanes. Expensive (no money available from Somerset Council) and not encouraged by Somerset Council. Agreed with Mr Barron that SID(s) were the preferred option and two sites for post installation were agreed: at entrance to Burton on opposite side of road to Broadacres and at entrance to North Coker opposite drive to North Coker House.

In accordance with July ECPC meeting Cllr Cowen had been in contact and met with representatives of both Odcombe Parish Council and East Chinnock Parish Council to ascertain whether costs for SID(s) could be shared. Both were interested and it was thought that it would be best to get 2 SIDs between the 3 villages. In subsequent discussion Cllr

Hodge said she thought the saving to be made from sharing with the other villages was not enough to make it worthwhile. Cllr Comstive agreed and said it would be complicated to set up a rota to move the 2 SIDs between villages. Cllr Sugg mentioned that the village Ranger was trained to Chapter 8 requirements and could therefore move the SID when required. Cllr Walker suggested that when the virtual pavement on Yeovil Road was repainted that we should encourage Highways to raise the footpath line to make it clearer and ask if it was possible to add red reflective studs, as coloured road studs help drivers at night, especially on wet roads, or in poor visibility. **Proposal:** ECPC to purchase one SID and 4 posts and not share with other villages. **Proposed:** Cllr Comstive **Seconded:** Cllr Sugg. **Vote:** 8 for, 1 abstention. **Action:** Cllr Cowen and Cllr Walker to undertake necessary measures to purchase one SID and 4 posts, agree an MOU with Somerset Council, agree 2 more post positions (entrance to East Coker from the east and Halves Lane) and apply for a grant from Avon and Somerset Police. Cllr Cowen to inform Odcombe and E. Chinnock parish councils of the decision.

The Clerk said she had been in contact with Somerset Council regarding the possibility of a Wig Wag traffic speed reduction sign similar to the two already installed for the East Coker School and was advised this would be installed at no cost to ECPC on the entrance to North Coker at the junction with Mill Close. Mr Barron also said he would get the 'virtual pavement' white line repainted on the entrance to North Coker and on the Yeovil Road, Clerk will contact him regarding possibility of getting this raised and studded. Mr Barron will also arrange for a 30mph reminder painted on the road coming into Burton.

**5. Discuss quote for repairs to the bus shelter.** Clerk presented 3 quotes, two for a complete refurb of £2,625 and £1,228 and the other was just tidying up and making good for £170.00 + £50.00 materials. Councillors felt that spending a large amount could not be justified at present so will proceed with the lower quote. Cllr Sugg also suggested installing guttering and a down pipe to the structure. Suggested traditional black style which will look like iron but is plastic, but will need to be quoted for. Clerk also advised that all books would need to be removed prior to decoration. **Proposed:** Cllr Hodge **Seconded:** Cllr Walker. **Vote:** 8 for 1 abstention. **Action:** Clerk to contact contractors with update and get quote for guttering.

**6. Notice board repairs.** Clerk advised that a quote had been received for a new notice board of £412 + VAT but Cllr Cowen said he thought that he could make repairs to it and make it waterproof again. It was suggested that the contractor working on the bus shelter could also prepare and paint the noticeboard. **Proposal:** Cllr Cowen to repair as best he can and Clerk to obtain a quote from contractor to repair damaged wood and paint the outside. **Proposed:** Cllr Wintersgill **Seconded:** Cllr Wakely. **Vote:** All agreed **Action:** Cllr Cowen to repair and Clerk to obtain quote.

**7. Clerks phone line.** Clerk advised she was having issues with the phone provider and requested to change it. This would be on a pay monthly contract with O2 of £10.17 + VAT a month and she would use her old mobile phone. **Proposal:** Clerk to go on O2 contract **Proposed:** Cllr Wakely **Seconded:** Cllr Wilkins **Vote:** All agreed **Action:** Clerk to contact Phone company and set up contract.

**8. Future Proposals and village improvement ideas.** Cllr Hodge advised she and Cllr Hall had had a meeting with the Clerk this month. The way proposals were brought to meetings where discussed and it was felt that if Cllrs had an idea, they should fill in a brief form outlining what the project was, what it would cost and what benefit it would be to the village. This form would then need to be emailed to the Clerk prior to the Agenda publication date so she could add it to agenda and send to Cllrs. There would then be a clear understanding when discussing proposals and this would hopefully help the meetings run more smoothly. Cllr Hodge showed Cllrs an example form and it was felt that this would be a good idea. **Action:** Clerk to email form to all Cllrs.

**9. Traffic meeting feedback.** See item 23/145.4

**23/147 To receive the Clerk's report.**

1. **Deterioration of the wall by millennium stone.** Clerk advised that she had forwarded a letter to Symonds and Sampson about the deterioration of the wall, and they have confirmed that they have forwarded it to the new owner of the field. As yet there has not been any response to that letter and no works have been carried out so far.

**23/148 Receive correspondence from the Somerset Council.** None

**23/149 To receive and discuss Parishioner Correspondence.**

1. Call received from a parishioner regarding some branches which have fallen from the tree, which stands beside the scout hut. It was decided that: **Action:** The Clerk should contact a tree surgeon to come out and assess what needs to be done and any possible costings.

**23/150 Discuss Working Groups**

**1. The Pavilion Modernisation** meeting feedback and fund-raising ideas.

Fundraising Cllr Sugg and Cllr Wintersgill advised they were looking to start fund raising for the project. This would start on the 28<sup>th</sup> October by hosting a Pumpkin and Piano evening at the Village Hall where tickets would be sold by tables of 10 at £45.00 per person. This would include a three-course meal and entertainment from "The Piano Man". Whilst Cllrs thought this was a wonderful idea, Cllr Walker said that the date would clash with the 2023 Rugby World Cup Final and this could affect attendance. **Action:** Cllr Wintersgill will see if the "Piano Man" was available on any other date in October or November.

Building Project Cllr Comstive said that he had received a rough estimate for proposed costs which were between £450,000 and £500,000. So, a huge amount of fund-raising would be needed. He said he had also been contacted by a gentleman regarding a possible remembrance plaque to an ex-Somerset Cricketer who used to live in East Coker. From that contact he is trying to ascertain if they would be interested in organising a new cricket team and raising the profile of the Pavilion Modernisation project. This would also be of benefit when pursuing funding from any outside bodies. He also circulated two types of drawings of the new Pavilion building. One was CGI and the other an artist's impression. He asked Cllrs to decide which style should be used for the fund-raising pictures. CGI cost is £415 and Artist impression is £495. It was decided that the CGI was more up to date. **Action:** Cllr Comstive to instruct the company to go ahead with this.

**2. Parish Communications.** None

**3. Cemetery Working Group** Tree survey report findings had not been received yet so this item will be moved to next agenda. Cllr Comstive requested a budget of £650.00 to be agreed so that a topographical survey could be carried out at the cemetery in the hope that this may be able to free-up new burial plots. He also advised that he had been in touch with the Bath and Wells Diocese seeking its view on the possibility of using the land at the cemetery which is unmarked. They said that providing that there were no records of burials (which there is not) we would be able to use that area for interments. **Proposal:** To agree for the Topographical survey to be done. **Proposed:** Cllr Comstive **Seconded:** Cllr Wakely **Vote:** All Agreed **Action:** Cllr Comstive to instruct contractor to proceed with topographical survey

**4. Wellbeing:** None

**23/151 Group Representative Reports**

**Village Hall:** Cllr Cowen said that he had made contact with members of the Village Hall Committee to try and arrange an informal meeting with the Chair but had not got a date as yet.

**Alms Houses:** Clerk advised she had been informed by one of the committee that they no longer needed a committee member for ECPC. Cllr Sugg disagreed. She advised that she has resigned as a trustee because of this and however she had not put this in writing so ECPC believe she is still on the committee. **Action:** Clerk to contact the Alms House Association to see how resignation should be received.

**Primary School** – No report.

**23/152 To discuss and identify Highways Issues.**

There is a broken-down bus near the Village Hall. It is believed the owner is waiting on parts before it can be moved. If still there in September ECPC will look into possibilities for its removal.

**23/153 To discuss and identify items for the Village Ranger.**

Cllr Sugg to request that the Ranger repairs the stile near the water works on Moor Lane, cut the overgrown stone stile on Halves Lane and stile near the Mill on Mill Lane. Cllr Sugg advised that Somerset Council have not yet been to spray weeds which is normally done each year. **Action:** Clerk to chase this up.

**23/154 To discuss and resolve the following topics;** resolution sought to exclude the public (Non-Parish Council Members)

**23/155 Agenda items for the next meeting.**

Tree Report Survey, Cemetery Policy, Christmas/Events, Hymerford House Heritage sign.

Meeting ended at 9.56pm

Clerk..... Chair .....

Date.....