Flax Bourton Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

Held on **Monday 13th February 2023** commencing at **7.30pm** at the Flax Bourton Hub (formerly known as the Village Hall).

Those present were noted as Councillors: Andersson, Coombs and Crawford.
Also present Mrs Clare Melton, Parish Clerk.

138(22) **Apologies and reasons for absence**
Apologies were received from Cllr Walker (holiday) and Cllr Moss (holiday).

139(22) **Declarations of interests from members regarding the agenda**
Declaration of non-pecuniary interest as Trustee of the Flax Bourton Hub Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) by Cllr Coombs.

140(22) **Public Forum Session**
No members of the public were present.

141(22) **Minutes of previous meeting**
It was resolved to approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9th January 2023.

142(22) **Finance and Personnel**

a) **It was resolved** to ratify the payments made since last meeting totalling **£878.23**. **It was agreed** that the Clerk would arrange for disposal of the broken laptop by donating to a local charity (the hard drive has been removed and retained)

b) **The Playing Field Section 106 reserve fund-** Cllr Coombs explained that seeking to alter the terms of the endowment fund to include the Hall would be a major undertaking with potential legal complications. Cllr Coombs proposed instead that the Parish Council pay into a sinking fund for the future maintenance of the village hall and playing fields with the intention that the Hub also contribute in the future. After discussion, **it was agreed** to continue to pay running costs of the field from the fund and it was proposed to set up a sinking fund with **£3,000** per year at the next Budget revision

c) **Upgrade to the the Electrics at the Village Hall-** Cllr Coombs explained that the quote had increased slightly since it was first obtained in October 2021. **It was agreed** to ratify the updated quote of **£3,200 plus VAT**. The Hub are arranging a date with the contractor for the works to take place

d) **New laptop and software-** Already discussed under item 142 a)

e) **Dog bin maintenance contract-** After extensive discussion, **it was agreed** to accept the lowest quote due to the current financial situation. **It was noted** that this is not a reflection on the current contractor and the service that they have provided. The continuing issue of the overflowing rubbish bin on Stancombe Lane was also discussed. The Clerk stated that it has been reported to North Somerset Council via their website and clarification has been sought as to whether it is on their regular schedule to empty. The bin was not put in by and is not owned by the Parish Council but the Village Orderly appears to be the only person emptying it. It was noted that it may be Stancombe Quarry if not North Somerset Council as it seems to be most regularly used by their lorry drivers

f) **Minor changes to the Budget for 2023-24-** After discussion **it was agreed** to approve the changes to the Budget. As part of this discussion, **it was agreed** to renew the Parish Council's CPRE membership

g) **Stancombe Quarry Grant application-** Cllr Andersson reported that the application for the village entryways has been submitted to the Stancombe Quarry Fund. The meeting to allocate grants is due to take place in March

h) **It was resolved** to approve the monthly accounts statement and new invoices totalling **£7196.00** for online payment. The Clerk reported that the invoice from GB Sport, for the newly installed basket swing in the Farleigh Green play area, would be paid once the match funding grant payment from the Improving Play Spaces fund has been received.

143(22) **Policies and Procedures**
In demonstrating the Parish Council's commitment to standing up to poor behaviour across the sector, **it was resolved** to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge. The Pledge document will be signed at the

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next meeting. The Clerk will also draft a Dignity at Work policy based on the NALC model template.

144(22) **Planning**

Prior to the meeting, there were no planning applications. However, a new application (144 a)) and a an email from Backwell Flax Bourton Cricket Club (144 b)) were received today and after discussion **it was agreed** to consider both at this meeting:

a) **23/P/0219/TPO – 2 The Grange, BS48 3QH** Maple reduce and spread of crown by approx 3 mtrs from branch end – Neutral
b) **Email from Backwell Flax Bourton Cricket Club regarding a possible new Clubhouse** – After discussion, **it was agreed** that the Parish Council would like to be kept in the loop, via the Clerk initially, as the plans formulate further. The Parish Council would be happy to meet in the future to understand their proposals better.

145(22) **North Somerset Local Plan 2023-2038**

Cllr Moss circulated an update prior to the meeting. In Cllr Moss's absence, Cllr Andersson provided an update on their recent meeting with Backwell Parish Council. As local elections approach, and therefore personnel at councils may change, it is likely that any joint collaborations with other councils will wait until after the elections in May.

146(22) **Flooding**

Cllr Andersson proposed that all the hard work put in by Cllr Coombs to resolve the recent flooding issues should be formally acknowledged. **Agreed** by all and thanks given to Cllr Coombs. Cllr Coombs reported that repairs are needed to a major culvert and North Somerset will be returning to carry out these works and clear blockages. Cllr Andersson raised that silt and mud will still cause problems. Cllr Coombs is in contact with the temporary manager at Stancombe Quarry and has asked that they propose that the quarry carries out a road/gully clear twice a year, in addition to that carried out by North Somerset Council. The temporary manager also floated the idea of offering two personnel a month to help in the community. Cllr Crawford suggested that they could clear pathways and it was **noted** that this had been done following the flooding. Cllrs Coombs and Moss met with a resident of Church Lane about issues at the bottom of the lane. This has not been caused by an overflowing stream, as previously thought, but by water pouring down Church Lane from a drain at the top of the lane which gets blocked.

147(22) **Place & Movement Framework plus Active Travel Action Plans**

After extensive discussion, **it was agreed** that Cllrs Coombs and Crawford would draft a response stating that although the Parish Council aren't opposed to traffic calming methods, closing roads won't help and there should be more emphasis on safe routes to school. Cllr Andersson mentioned a recent public rights of way discussion. A footpath through fields which is used by many locals may not currently be a public footpath.

148(22) **Communications**

Cllr Andersson provided an update. Despite previous understanding by the Parish Council, Breakthrough Communications are not going to moderate the Google Group initially. Cllr Coombs raised that it was not supposed to be the Parish Council moderating. Cllr Andersson agreed to moderate initially whilst volunteers are sought. **It was agreed** that the Clerk would set up the Google Group with support from Breakthrough Communications. Once set up, the Councillors will test the group before the graphics for flyer and poster are signed off.

149(22) **Flax Bourton Hub**

a) Cllr Coombs reported that the plan to convert the old referee's room to a WC unfortunately does not appear to be feasible at this time as the drainage system is not the right configuration and it would be too difficult and expensive to replace. The Hub are proposing a project to improve the acoustics in the hall and are planning to apply for a Lottery Grant. The Parish Council are still holding Lottery Award funds totalling **£3759.71** which it was awarded on behalf of the Hub whilst the CIO was being set up. After discussion, **it was agreed** that the Clerk should contact the Hub to suggest that this outstanding amount could fund part of the project but this would be subject to agreement from the Lottery
b) Deferred until after the Local Elections.

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150(22) **Highways**

a) **Proposed revision of 30mph limit** – Cllr Coombs reported that he is awaiting a response from North Somerset Highways

b) **Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS)** – Cllr Coombs reported that he he is awaiting an update from North Somerset Highways

c) **Pavements and Footpaths** – Cllr Crawford reported that another clean up will hopefully be scheduled for April. Cllr Andersson raised whether it could be part of the King's Coronation Big Help Out on Monday 8 May. The village noticeboards are showing signs of wear and could also be included in such an event. It was discussed whether the Parish needs five noticeboards. **It was agreed** that the Clerk would look into the cost of new noticeboards before any refurbishment takes place. **It was further agreed** to consider a volunteer day and discuss again at the next meeting. Cllr Coombs also suggested contacting Stancombe Quarry to see if they could be involved

d) **Public Rights of Way** – Cllr Andersson reported that she is attending a Health Walk Leader training course in March. The hope is that others will sign up and the Clerk has sent information to residents signed up to the mailing list and posted on the website and Facebook page. Cllr Andersson also reported that an alternative route to school is still being investigated

e) **Lengthsman** – The Clerk updated on communication with Wraxall Parish Council and North Somerset Council. A Village Orderly Grant totalling **£106.75** has been received from North Somerset Council and, on the Clerk's recommendation, **it was agreed** that this amount should be used towards the Village Orderly's next pay which will be paid tomorrow, 14th February. After further discussion, **it was agreed** that the Clerk will seek quotes from contractors to carry out maintenance of the verges and footpaths

f) **Stancombe Lane waste bin** – Already discussed under item 142 e).

151(22) **Basket Swing**

Already discussed under item 142 h).

152(22) **Meeting dates**

It was discussed whether Parish Council meetings being held once a month could affect regular bookings at the Hub. The Clerk reported that an email has been sent to the Hub Administrator for clarification. The proposed meeting dates for April 2023-March 2024 were **noted and agreed in principle** subject to a response from the Hub Administrator.

153(22) **Local Council Elections**

Cllr Coombs suggested a maildrop to encourage applications to be a Parish Councillor. **It was agreed** that Cllr Coombs would put together some wording for a flyer.

154(22) **Coronation**

Cllr Coombs suggested marking the King's Coronation with a gift to the children of Flax Bourton School as with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. The Clerk reported that the school have already been in contact to start discussing ideas. Various ideas were discussed and **it was agreed** that the Clerk should continue contact and pose the idea of a storytelling chair for the school's Forest School area.

155(22) **Clerk's Report**

The Clerk's Report was received and **noted**.

156(22) **Date of the next meeting**

The date of the next **Parish Council Meeting** was noted as **Monday 13th March 2023** at the Flax Bourton Hub (formerly known as the Village Hall) at **7.30pm.**

Meeting ended 22:00

Chair …… **Date**……

Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

Claire Melton

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