DUNSTER PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD At DUNSTER TITHE BARN ON Monday 12th May 2025 7.00pm

<u>Attendees</u>

Councillors: Geoff Dibble (Chair), Carol Ell, Peter Finney, Tony Melnyk, Steve Harris and Chris Oliver

Clerk: Mrs Sarah Towells

Other: Marcus Kravis (SC)

<u>Apologies</u>

Councillors: Kevin Sully, Tessa Williams, Alan Vicary and Matt Griffiths

Other: Christine Lawrence (SC)

Cllrs absent without apology: Cllr Morley

25/01 Elect a Chair: It was unanimously resolved Geoff Dibble would be Chair and he duly signed his acceptance of office.

25/02 Elect a Vice Chair: It was resolved to defer this until the June Meeting

25/03 To note apologies for absence: As noted above.

25/04 Any New Declarations of interest and dispensations: There were none.

25/05 Minutes of the meeting held on 14th April 2025 for approval: It was resolved to approve the minutes.

25/06 Review of delegation arrangements to committees and staff: It was resolved no committee had any delegatory powers other than is written within its terms of reference. The Clerk had delegatory powers that are included within the financial regulations and the standing orders and no others.

25/07 Review of terms of reference for committees and groups:

25/07.1 Allotment Committee: It was resolved to adopt the following:

- The Allotment Committee will elect their chairman at their first meeting of the year.
- The committee will meet as necessary and consist of no more than 4 councillors.
- The committee will work with the Clerk on plot allocation and tenancy agreements.
- The Committee will report back to Full Council and has no delegatory powers.

25/07.2 Finance Committee: It was resolved to adopt the following:

1. The finance group will elect their chairman at their first meeting of each year.
2. The group will meet at least twice a year as requested by the Town Councils Finance Officer.
3. The group will consist of no more than 4 councillors.
4. The finance group will make recommendations setting the budget to Full Council each November/December and make recommendations on the reserve allocations.
5. The finance group will review grants each year to check that they meet the requirements of both the finance regulations and conditions of the grant application form and make recommendations to Full Council.
6. The Finance group will meet to discuss any other financial item that Full Council ask them to investigate and then report back to Full Council.
7. The Town Councils Finance Officer will keep the group up to date with any changes in the finance regulations and legal requirements.
8. The group have no delegatory powers and will always report back to Full Council for their approval.
9. The Clerk will attend these meeting and take minutes.

25/07.3 Cemetery Committee: It was resolved to adopt the following:

- The Cemetery Committee will elect their chairman at their first meeting of the year.
- The Committee shall consist of no more than 4 councillors.
- The Committee will meet as necessary, and The Clerk would attend where possible.
- The Committee will report back to Full Council and has no delegatory powers.

25/07.4 Climate Group: It was resolved to disband this group as the Council felt it was no longer required.

25/07.5 Planning Committee: It was resolved to adopt the following:
1. The planning committee will elect their chairman at their first meeting of each year.
2. The committee will meet monthly to look at planning applications.
3. The committee will consist of no more than 4 councillors.
4. The committee will make recommendations on planning applications to Full Council each month.
5.The committee will contact the Clerk if a site visit needs to be arranged.
6. The Committee will be elected by Full Council.
7. Any vacancies will be filled by Full Council.
8. The group have no delegatory powers and will always report back to Full Council for their approval.

25/07.6 Community Plan/Neighbourhood plan group: It was resolved to adopt the following:

- The group will elect their chairman at their first meeting of the year.
- To meet as and when necessary.
- Maximum of 4 councillors.
- The group could invite members of the public to the group if they feel they would be of benefit to the process of producing a plan.
- The group is responsible for researching the possibly of the production of a Neighbourhood or community Plan. (To include feasibility, to develop a clear understanding of the Neighbourhood. What a Neighbourhood Plan is and how/or it is progressed in Dunster.
- To develop a plan based on Neighbourhood Plan/Community Plan process.
- Take a broad community approach to Neighbourhood Planning/Community Planning to include conducting surveys once they have been approved by Full Council.
- The Committee will report back to Full Council and has no delegatory powers.

25/07.7 Buttercross Orchard: It was resolved to adopt the following:
1. The group would meet as necessary.
2. The group would consist of no more than 3 councillors and can include members of the public.
3. The group report back to Full Council.

25/07.8 Personnel/Staffing Committee: It was resolved to adopt the following:

- The Staffing Committee will elect their chairman at their first meeting of the year.
- The Staffing Committee is responsible for setting out contracts of employment for all employees and any alterations to the contract of employment and ensuring that payments are kept up to date with the Inland Revenue.
- The Staffing Committee will meet at least once a year with additional meetings as necessary.
- The Committee shall not be responsible for electing Committee members and the election of Committee members must take place annually by the Council. Any vacancies occurring within the year must be filled by the Council.
- The Committee will consist of no more than 3 councillors and non-members of the Committee may not attend the meeting without receiving an invitation from the Chairman of the Committee.
- The Committee have the power to employ an outside Clerk if deemed necessary and report back to Full Council.
- The committee agree annual leave with the Clerk.
- The committee can agree annual wage increases in line with the pay scales.

25/07.9 Grievance Committee: It was resolved to adopt the following:
1. The Grievance Committee is responsible to deal with any allegations made
2. The Committee will consist of no more than 3 councillors
3. The Committee will meet as necessary

4. Elect a Chair at the first meeting of the year
5. The Committee shall not be responsible for electing Committee members and the election of Committee Members must take place annually by Full Council. Any vacancies occurring within the year must be filled by Full Council
6. Non members of the Committee may not attend the meeting unless invited by The Chair of the Committee
7. The Grievance policy adopted by the Council on 12/05/25 must be followed
8. Review Terms of Reference annually

25/07.10 Disciplinary Committee: It was resolved to adopt the following:
1. The Disciplinary Panel is responsible to deal with any allegations made
2. The Committee will consist of no more than 3 councillors
3. The Committee will meet as necessary
4. Elect a Chair at the first meeting of the year
5. The Committee shall not be responsible for electing Committee Members and the election of Committee Members must take place annually by Full Council. Any vacancies occurring within the year must be filled by Full Council
6. Non members of the Committee may not attend the meeting unless invited by The Chair of the Panel
7. The Disciplinary policy adopted by the Council on 12/05/25 must be followed
8. Review Terms of Reference annually

25/08 Appointment of members to existing Committees: It was resolved that all councillors would stay on the committees they are already on.
25/08.1 Allotment Committee: Cllrs Sully, Griffiths, Dibble and Ell
25/08.2 Finance Committee: Cllrs Morley, Dibble, Finney and Williams
25/08.3 Cemetery Committee: Cllrs Sully, Oliver, Vicary and The Clerk
25/08.4 Climate Group: It was resolved to note this group is no longer required
25/08.5 Planning Committee: Cllrs Oliver, Vicary, Finney and Harris
25/08.6 Community Plan/Neighbourhood Plan Group: Cllrs Harris, Melnyk, Morley and Griffiths
25/08.7 Buttercross Orchard: Cllrs Harris, Vicary and Sully
25/08.8 Personnel/Staffing Committee: Cllrs Dibble, Finney and Ell
25/08.9 Grievance Committee: Cllrs Vicary, Griffiths and Oliver
25/08.10 Disciplinary Committee: Cllrs Melnyk, Morley and Sully

25/09 Appointment to any new committees in accordance with standing order 4
Affordable Housing Group: Cllrs Melnyk, Ell, Finney, Morley and Williams
Appeal Panel: Cllrs Williams, Harris and Dibble
Terms of reference for the affordable housing group:
- The Committee would elect a chair at the first meeting of the year.
- The Group would consist of no more than 5 Cllrs.
- The group to work with Mr McDonald from the rural Housing team.
- The group would meet as necessary.
- The group would report back to Full Council and has no delegatory powers.

Terms of reference for the Appeal Panel:
1. The Appeal Panel is responsible for dealing with employees who feel their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved
2. The Panel will consist of no more than 3 councillors
3. The Panel will meet as necessary
4. Elect a Chair at the first meeting of the year
5. The Panel shall not be responsible for electing Panel Members and the election of Panel Members must take place annually by Full Council. Any vacancies occurring within the year must be filled by Full Council
6. Non members of the Panel may not attend the meeting unless invited by The Chair of the Panel
7. The Disciplinary policy adopted by the Council on 14/10/19 must be followed regarding The Appeal
8. Review Terms of Reference annually

25/10 Review of Standing Orders: It was resolved to note the updates regarding section 18 and adopt them within our standing orders. The updated standing orders would be published on our website.

25/11 Review of Financial Regulations: It was resolved to adopt our current regulations and publish them on the website.

25/12 Review of Code of Conduct: It was resolved to adopt our current Code of Conduct.

25/13 Review of Contract with the retail unit and storage unit: It was resolved to amend item D on the first page by added (see 9.1 of tenant's obligations).

25/14 Appointment of representatives on outside Bodies and arrangements for reporting back: It was resolved that where possible a written report would be sent via the Clerk for the next Council meeting and if this is not possible a verbal update. The representative must contact the Clerk and ask for this to be added as an item agenda.
It was resolved the following Cllrs would be the representatives:
25/14.1 LCN Representatives: Cllrs Melnyk and Dibble
25/14.2 Marsh Playing Field: Cllrs Finney, Vicary and Sully
25/14.3 Packhorse Playing Field: Cllrs Ell, Dibble and Griffiths
25/14.4 Memorial Hall Representative: Cllr Morley
25/14.5 Tithe Barn Representative: Cllr Oliver

25/15 Review of Asset Register: It was resolved to note there was no updates, but the Clerk would find the original paperwork regarding the phone box as the Village Garden Society also has this on their insurance.

25/16 Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover and insurance renewal: It was resolved to note everything was covered in the schedule and it was further resolved to renew with Clear Councils at a cost of £1140.02.

25/17 Review of Council and staff subscriptions to outside bodies: It was resolved to continue to subscribe to SALC, SLCC. CPRE and The Exmoor Society

25/18 Adopt Complaints Procedure: It was resolved to adopt the complaints procedure and publish on the website.

25/19 Adopt General privacy Notice: It was resolved to adopt the policy and publish on the website.

25/20 Adopt Retention and Disposal Policy: It was resolved to adopt the policy and publish on the website.

25/21 Adopt Equal Opportunity Policy: It was resolved to adopt the policy and publish on the website.

25/22 Adopt Annual Leave Policy: It was resolved to adopt the policy.

25/23 Adopt Flexible Working Policy: It was resolved to adopt the policy.

25/24 Adopt Media and Press Policy: It was resolved to adopt the policy and publish on the website.

25/25 Adopt Management of Transferable Data Policy: It was resolved to adopt the policy and publish on the website.

25/26 Adopt Staff Absence Policy: It was resolved to adopt the policy.

25/27 Adopt Publication Scheme: It was resolved to adopt the policy and publish on the website.

25/28 Review Grievance and Disciplinary Policy: It was resolved no updates were required.

25/29 Review Data Protection Policy: It was resolved no updates were requires to the policy and publish on the website.

25/30 Somerset Councillor Report: Cllr Kravis reported the C Block at County Hall had been sold off for Key worker accommodation and the reconstruction of the Council was almost complete, with less compulsory redundancies than first thought. The new cycle path in Dunster is so far going to plan.

25/31 Accounts

25/31.1 Approval of expenditure: It was resolved to pay the payments on the attached list.
25/31.2 Current account expenditure analysis for April 2025: It was resolved to note the figures, and Cllr Finney would sign these.
25/31.3 Bank reconciliation for March 2025: It was resolved to note the bank reconciliation which would be signed by Cllr Finney.
25/31.4 Budget Monitoring: It was resolved to note the budget monitoring which would be signed by Cllr Finney.
25/31.5 PAYE figures for April 2025: It was resolved to note these were correct and a payment of £61.94 would be sent to HMRC.
25/31.6 NS&I Account: It was resolved to sign the paperwork to close the account and transfer the money to the NatWest Savings account.
25/31.7 Consider Exmoor Society Annual membership renewal: It was resolved to renew the subscription at a cost of £25.00.
25/31.8 Review the Councils expenditure incurred under S137 of the local government act 1972: It was resolved to note last years amount per elector was £10.81 this has increased this budget year to £11.10 per elector. The Council spent £3400.00 of the S137 last year.
25/31.9 To agree internal auditor for next year: It was resolved to ask Tammy Roper to conduct the internal audit next year.
25/31.10 To consider the findings of the internal audit review: The internal audit included accounting records, bank statements, policies, minutes, invoices, receipts, and review of council website. The audit confirmed that, in all significant respects, the control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet our needs.
25/31.11 To approve Annual Governance Statement: It was resolved to approve the annual governance statement.
25/31.12 To consider the accounting statements: It was resolved to note the statements were considered to be accurate.
25/31.13 To approve the Accounting Statements: It was resolved to approve the accounting Statements.
25/31.14 Chairman to sign the Accounting Statements: It was resolved to note the Chairman had signed the Statements.
25/31.15 To agree dates of the period for the exercise of public rights: It was resolved the dates would be 1st July – 11th August.

25/32 Planning:

25/32.1 Verbal report from the Planning Committee**:** The committee reported they thought The Council should support the application below as the trees needed works to make them safe.
25/32.2 To consider the following planning applications:

ENP	WTCA 25/11	Proposal: Works to trees in a conservation area: To reduce height and spread of a closely spaced group of three yew trees, and remove one large dead stem, to give the group an overall better shape.	**It was resolved to support this application**

25/33 Toilets: The Clerk reported the builder had done an excellent job with the refurb of the old gents' toilet. The Clerk had ordered the sign, and the builder would put this up when he started the next phase of work.
25.33.1 CCTV: Three quotes had been received. It was resolved to go with Taun-Tech.
25/33.2 Donation boxes/pay to use: The Clerk had tried to get quotes for a sturdy wall mounted box, but they are not custom made. The clerk had requested a quote for a custom-made box from Allerford Blacksmiths. The quote should be here for the next meeting.

25/34 Cemetery: It was resolved to defer all cemetery items as Cllr Sully was not present.
25/34.1 Wall by new gate in cemetery 1
25/34.2 Phase two works of cemetery 3
25/34.3 New gate cemetery1
25/34.4 Metal entrance gate in cemetery 2

25/35 Allotments: It was resolved to note there was no update.

25/36 Buttercross Orchard: Cllr Harris reported the picnic held on Somerset day went very well with approximately fifty-five people present. As only one cider was produced off the orchard this year some local pubs donated some. It was resolved Cllr Harris would write to the pubs to thank them for their donation.

25/37 Riverside Walk: It was resolved to note there was no report.

25/38 Correspondence:
25/38.1 Email from Alison Hall regarding coaches in the village: It was resolved to forward this to Highways and contact the coach company.
25/38.2 Email from Nina Dodds regarding the Dunster Travel Guidebook: It was resolved the Clerk would contact Nina and ask for a copy of the contract. This would then go on the June agenda.

25/39 Review of Risk Register: It was resolved to note there were no updates and this was signed by the Clerk and the Chairman.

25/40 Highways:
25/40.1 Light on priory Green: It was resolved there was no update.
24/40.2 Email from Highways regarding cycle path works: It was resolved to note that work had started on the cycle path.

25/41 Community/Neighbourhood plan/Top 5 priorities: It was resolved to note the group had not met so there was no update.

25/42 Determine the times and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council: It was resolved to hold meetings at 7pm on the 2nd Monday of each month in the Tithe Barn.

25/43 Consider quotes for changing to '.gov.uk' website and emails: It was resolved to defer this to the June Meeting.

25/44 Review Allotment Charges: It was resolved to defer this to the June Meeting.

25/45 Review of cemetery Charges: It was resolved to defer this to the June meeting.

25/46 Allotment cups: It was resolved to defer this to the June Meeting.

25/47 Damage to the Yarn Market: The Clerk would contact English Heritage to see when the repairs would be carried out.

25/48 Items to Report: the parish Assembly would be held on 20th May at 7pm in the Tithe Barn.
Due to the roadworks there is an issue when turning right out of the Marsh.

25/49 Matters for the next meeting to be held on Monday 9th June 2025:

25/50 Close Meeting: The chairman declared the meeting closed 21.31 p.m.

Signed ……………………………………………………… Date…………………………………………