

COSSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

The 2023 Annual Meeting of Cossington Parish Council was held in the Village Hall, Cossington on Tuesday, 9th May 2023 at 7.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillors J. Clasby, M.F. Dare, E. Ingram, J. Stradling, G. Terry and Mrs L. Woodward with Somerset Councillor Suria Aujla.

Apology for absence received from Councillor P. Blundell.

1. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Proposed Councillor Stradling, seconded Councillor Dare and agreed that Councillor G. Terry be elected Chairman for 2023/24. The Chairman signed a declaration of acceptance of office. Proposed Councillor Dare, seconded Councillor Ingram and agreed that Councillor J. Stradling be elected Vice-Chairman for 2023/24.

2. Interests

Members had no interests to disclose.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th April 2023 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. Reports of the Somerset Councillors

Somerset Councillor Suria Aujla outlined the current situation at Somerset Council and undertook to meet with members to discuss parish issues.

5. Report from Organisations

Councillor Dare reported that the Village Hall Committee were fundraising due to a need to carry out maintenance work on the hall in the near future. In respect of Neighbourhood Watch, Councillor Clasby reported that it was understood that a garage at Middle Road had been recently broken into.

6. Maintenance Items

A number of road defects had recently been reported and subsequently repaired. A further quantity of fly-tipping deposits at Cossington Level would be reported. A 30 mph repeater signpost at Middle Road had again been uprooted and would be reported. County Highways had agreed to replace the missing roundel in the near future. Regarding the Flood Group, the water course was flowing smoothly and the monitoring of dog fouling was continuing.

County Highways would be reminded of the need to carry out the further work previously agreed to rectify the drainage issues in Brent Road. Sustrans had advised that they had not yet received the results of the recent survey on the condition of the former railway bridge at Broderip. It was suggested that consideration be given to restoring the stone parapets.

With regard to the field crossed by footpath BW 37/14 to the north of Combe Lane, the landowner explained that the work being undertaken during recent months was to level the land due to historic safety concerns. The infill soil was being transported from a housing construction site and the landowner also reported that the work conformed to Environment Agency permissions and exemptions and that planning permission was not required – but was unable to provide a likely completion date. The Public Rights of Way Officer had also visited the site. The infilled land was planned to be stabilised with the planting of a hedge along the boundary upon completion, which was important due to the proximity of the watercourse just across the eastern boundary of the field but at a much lower level. It was agreed to monitor the situation until completion.

The Bell Lane nameplate, which had been temporarily moved during construction of a new field access, would be relocated to its original position. The landowner was again reminded that the new access should have had the necessary Highways licence.

7. Finance

The following payments were authorised

001038 Zurich Municipal	premium	£731.04
001039 Parish Clerk	payroll & sundry payment reimbursement	£753.98

It was noted that the Internal Auditor had no issues to draw to the attention of Members in respect of the 2022/23 Accounts.

Open Meeting 7.55 p.m.

Members of the public referred to planning enforcement and highway issues.

Open Meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

8. Planning Applications

There were no new planning applications to consider.

The issue of a lack of response to reminders for the promised follow up meeting with planning officers regarding the impact of the traveller sites in the vicinity of the playing field upon the village had been escalated as a formal complaint with Somerset Council. In response, a meeting by the Development Management Service Manager had taken place with the Chairman, Councillor Clasby and other planning officers. A new paper on traveller site provision in Somerset was being considered in June and views expressed at the meeting would be taken into consideration and a follow up meeting had been promised.

It was also agreed to seek an update on the previously reported enforcement issue regarding the unauthorised construction of a large storage building/workshop at Brent Road.

9. Playing Field

Councillor Stradling reported that he was investigating possible new play equipment for younger children. A wildlife and biodiversity survey had been undertaken and it was agreed to apply for a grant from Wessex Water for up to £2,000 on behalf of the community group

10. Village Survey

The Chairman reported that the completed survey forms had been checked by Councillors Dare and Stradling. A summary of the results would be released to the community in a newsletter in mid/late June and a draft would be prepared in advance of the June Meeting. It was agreed that a drop-in type of event for residents be held in the Village Hall on the survey results and work of the Parish Council in general, on Saturday 8th July and other village organisations such as the Village Hall Committee be given the opportunity to promote their work at this event.

11. Cossington in Bloom

It was agreed that Councillors Clasby and Ingram compile a shortlist for each category by the end of June with a view to the external judges visiting Cossington in early July. Consideration would be given at the next Meeting to developing ideas for the prize giving event to be held in the Village Hall on Saturday, 7th October 2023.

12. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Meeting be held on Monday, 12th June 2023.

The Meeting closed at 8,35 p.m.

Chairman