

COSSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of Cossington Parish Council was held in the Village Hall, Cossington on Monday, 10th February 2025 at 7.30 p.m.

Present:- Councillor Ms G. Terry (Chairman), Councillors P. Blundell, J. Clasby, M.F. Dare, E. Ingram and Mrs L. Woodward with Somerset Councillors M. Healey and Suria Aujla

Apology for absence received from Councillor J. Stradling.

78. Interests

Members had no interests to disclose.

79. Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th December 2024 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

80. Reports of the Somerset Councillors

Somerset Councillor Healey referred to a monthly report which had been circulated and also to the Dunball Roundabout improvements.

81. Avalon and Poldens Local Community Network

The Chairman reported that a full meeting of the LCN was held on 21st January when an initiative called Step, Ride and Thrive was presented. The project proposed an integrated approach to transport and active travel – improving accessibility to the Avalon Marshes while promoting walking, cycling and public transport use. It was agreed to support the project but not to make a financial contribution at this stage. A meeting of the Highways and Transport Working Group would be held on 25th February.

82. Report from Organisations

Councillor Dare had nothing to report on behalf of the Village Hall Committee but reference was made to a Race Night at the Hall on 15th March. Councillor Clasby had nothing to report in respect of Neighbourhood Watch.

83. Maintenance Items

A number of highway defects had been reported and repaired since the last Meeting. Two fly-tipping deposits at Bell Lane had recently been reported. The monitoring of dog fouling was continuing. In respect of drainage, County Highways had agreed to check and update the gully inventory in the vicinity of the triangle and also to arrange for the highway surface water drainage system in this vicinity to be jetted during 2025/26. The jetting works would be in addition to the planned gully emptying and would cleanse the piped systems and highlight if there were any problems that might need follow up works. Jetting works would also be arranged at Millmoot Lane and to the north of Bell Lane. It had already been agreed to take up Kier's offer of a free survey of Cossington gullies and this was now scheduled to take place on 17th February. It was also noted that the owners of Cossington House had carried out private works to the drainage system flowing from the of their property to reduce the flood risk to their home.

The Bridge School had been reminded of the need to repair the external school clock and their premises department was looking into quotes for maintenance in du ecourse. County Highways would consider provision of cattle warning signs at Bell Lane during 2025/26. It was agreed to consider the possible replacement of a memorial bench by the Brent Road bus stop at the next Meeting and to ascertain if the bus company were likely to trim branches on a tree at Locks Way which were being struck by double decker buses.

84. Finance

The following payments were authorised

DD	EDF Energy	playing field electricity	£19.05
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001084	Parish Clerk	payroll & sundry payment reimbursement	£512.46
001085	GWB Services	grass cutting & maintenance	£647.40
001086	Coss Community Wood	grant	£264.00

The Council considered and approved a Risk Management Report and a Statement of Internal Control for 2024/25.

Open Meeting 8.05 p.m.

No members of the public were present.

Open Meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.

85. Planning Applications

The following new planning application was considered.

22/25/00002 – Partial dismantling and rebuild of west stone boundary wall. Old Rectory, Middle Road – J. Stanley – recommend refusal – although the need for repair was appreciated, there are concerns regarding the materials proposed and structure (public visual impact and flood sensitivity) – and also whether the necessary authorities, had been properly consulted prior to the proposal, as required (relating to work on or around a watercourse).

Somerset Council had previously advised that a shortage of qualified staff in the planning section and illness in the enforcement section had resulted in a delay in dealing with issues including the report lodged over eight months ago relating to suspected contravention of Condition 4 of planning permission 54/23/00002 (Land at Green Paddock, Cossington Lane). It was noted that the number of mobile homes in the area continued to increase without the necessary planning consents being sought. At least some were known to be occupied by non-members of the travelling community. Recently the hedgerow and trees along the western side of the playing field had been severely cut back reducing the screening of the site and earth and debris had been piled along the boundary with litter falling into the playing field. It appears some fencing works may be planned, and the situation would continue to be monitored, although it more clearly illustrated the previously reported issue of the number of mobile homes and their proximity to the playing field boundary. It was agreed to further seek the assistance of the MP in trying to address the situation, following on from recent contact made by Somerset Councillor Healey – who was also going to raise the matter at a full meeting of Somerset Council on Wednesday 12th February.

It was also noted that work on a new Local Plan for the unitary authority would shortly be launched with a view to adoption in 2028, following a mini-workshop recently held by the Avalon and Poldens LCN.

86. Playing Field

It was reported that motorcycles or quad bikes had been recently ridden in the playing field during the hours of darkness. It was agreed to check the field for any tracks and damage to the playing surfaces.

The Cossington Community Wood Group had recently had an open day when 13 fruit trees were planted.

87. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next Meeting be held on Monday, 10th March 2025 at 7.30 p.m.

The Meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.

Chairman