

Clatworthy Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2018 at 7.30 in Clatworthy Village Hall

Present: S.Moran (Chair), S.Branfield, A.Cowling, M.Deer, F.Nicholson (Somerset County Councillor), K.Turner (West Somerset District Councillor), N.E.Martin (Clerk)

1. Apologies: S.McIntosh, J.Ward.

With regret Chair Sally reported that she had received a letter of resignation, due to ill health, from Councillor Chris Giddings. Council expressed its gratitude for his many years of service to the parish and will miss the knowledge and experience he has provided. There being less than six months to the next Parish Elections, no intervening election can take place.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 21 August 2018

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21 August 2018 were accepted as correct and were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising not covered on the agenda

Clearing of new guttering outside village: A road sweeper came through the village recently clearing the detritus at the road edges, but failed to clear the new gutters. He said he was responsible for sweeping the road, but the gutters were drains, which were not his responsibility. It was confirmed that road sweeping was the responsibility of the district council, whilst drain clearance was down to the county council. Councillors agreed that the new guttering was part of the road and should therefore be covered by the road sweeper.

Action: Keith Ongoing

Drainage of B3224 at entrance to Old Holcombe Water Farm: Councillor John showed a photo of the road with water extending half way across the carriageway and explained that there was no drainage on the south side of the road so that the problem could only be removed by clearing the nearby grip and diverting the water onto the neighbouring farmland. Councillor Frances had asked the roads section what could be done, but in the light of the current financial situation they could only suggest that the land owner take action himself. Councillor John will notify the farmer concerned.

Action: John Ongoing

Rural Economy Review: Comments gathered at the public meeting had been collated and sent to Councillors. It was suggested that it might be useful to identify some possible solutions, or at least mitigations, to the problems identified before submission to the review panel. Councillors will consider the matter and let the Clerk have any suggestions by Friday 31 August. No further mitigating actions were identified so the collated version was submitted 'as is' to the review.

Action: Complete

4. Update from District/County Councils

County Councillor Frances confirmed that the county council would be funding the provision of salt for parish use for the current winter, but this funding is unlikely to continue next year. She was also still trying to get our local access roads reinstated in the precautionary salting routes, but was not hopeful of success.

Whilst supporting the NHS's 'Fit for my Future' project, County Councillor Frances agreed that the 40+ page document that had been e-mailed was not useful. She provided a smaller pamphlet which she felt was clearer and Chair Sally will take responsibility for responding.

Action: Sally

Lastly, County Councillor Frances advised that a major parking review was under way across Somerset and, although councillors might assume it was irrelevant to Clatworthy, they should be aware that the effort involved is likely to have an adverse impact on local road maintenance.

District Councillor Keith reported that the challenge from Crowcombe and Stogumber to the ward boundaries proposed by the Boundary Commission for the new West Somerset and Taunton Deane council has been rejected. Clatworthy and Brompton Ralph remain with Wivey in the new Wiveliscombe & District ward. The new ward will also have a new Chief Executive.

District Councillor Keith warned that the District Council tax was likely to increase next year by around £3 for Band D properties.

Brompton Ralph PC has been approached, and given permission, for a bereaved family to erect a commemorative bench at Forches Cross, but the cost of gaining approval from highways runs to several hundred pounds. District Councillor Keith asked if Clatworthy would be prepared to make a contribution to help the family. After some discussion, Council thought that anything erected at Forches Cross could easily be damaged by the uses to which the verges are regularly subjected and, furthermore, agreed that this was not an appropriate use of public money.

5. Finance

5.1 Current position

Balance at Lloyds Williton 20/8/2018	£			
	2681.95			
Receipts	£	Ref		Details
Total Receipts	0.00			
Payments	£	Cheque #		Details
Clatworthy Village Hall	288.12	39	Village Hall insurance	
Total Payments	288.12			
Balance at Lloyds Williton 20/11/2018	£			
	2393.83			

5.2 Payments for authorisation

Council authorised donations as follows:

£100 to Wiveliscombe Area Partnership for Wivey Link (in budget)

£100 to West Somerset Advice towards maintenance of services at Minehead (see Section 6 below).

5.3 Budget and Precept

The Clerk presented a draft budget for 2019/20 which was discussed and accepted by Council with reluctance, as it represented a substantial increase on the previous year due to the need to allow for purchasing road salt for the parish next winter (previously funded by West Somerset District Council) and election expenses which could exceed £1500. It was agreed to set a precept of £2,000.

6. Correspondence

Permitted development classification for fracking: The following statement was previously approved by e-mail, submitted to the Government consultation and sent to all Somerset MPs.

Clatworthy PC notes that:

- *in May this year Ministers outlined a proposal in a Written Ministerial Statement to redefine non-hydraulic fracturing shale gas exploration applications as permitted development and to redefine large scale shale gas production sites as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, thus removing any local authority control and community involvement in decision-making;*
- *the Government consultation on these proposals began during the middle of July 2018;*
- *on 5 July 2018, a report by the cross-party Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee warned the Government against its proposal to bring fracking applications under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime, concluding that Mineral Planning Authorities were best placed to understand the local area and how fracking could best take place;*
- *the above report said the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime was unlikely to speed up the application process for fracking.*

Clatworthy PC is committed to the principles of localism and the involvement of local communities in decisions that affect their environment, their health and safety and their well-being.

Clatworthy PC believes that:

- *moving decisions about fracking, which have huge implications for local communities, to a national level would contradict the principles of localism;*
- *'Permitted Development' – the category of planning that the government wants to move shale gas exploration drilling into – which was designed for developments with low environmental impacts, is an inappropriate category for drilling with such wide-reaching implications for local communities and climate change;*
- *bringing fracking applications under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime will be harmful to local communities;*
- *local authorities are best placed to continue to make decisions throughout the planning process for shale gas exploration drilling, appraisal and production.*

Precautionary salting: See report from County Councillor Frances (Section 4 above)

Wivey library: Following the suggestion from Wiveliscombe Town Council that parishes should be asked to help maintain the town library service after Somerset County Council withdraw funding in 2019, councillors expressed strong reservations about any long term commitment. However, as Wiveliscombe Town Council are currently in some disarray, no decision will be made until a firm proposal is received.

West Somerset Advice centre: A request for funding has been received. It was agreed to donate £100 (see Section 5.2 above).

Proposed changes to NHS services: Chair Sally to pursue (see Section 4 above).

Proposal to grant rate relief on public toilets: District Councillor Keith reported that this had now been agreed at Government level.

7. Proposed meeting dates for 2019

Tuesday 19 February, Tuesday 14 May, (Elections Thursday 2 May),

Tuesday 20 August, Tuesday 19 November.

All agreed

8. Other items of Information

Policing – new neighbourhood policy – for information only.

Footpath review: Somerset County Council are asking parishes to check the classification of their footpaths according to current usage. This has been passed to the council's footpath officer for action; he asks that any councillors with footpaths across their land notify him if they are aware of any high seasonal usage.

Nuclear Reactor Design comments. The council's nuclear power officer considers that no response is required.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 21.03.