

Clatworthy Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 August 2016 at 7.30 in Clatworthy Village Hall

Present

D.J.Cowling (Chairman), R.Barlow, C.Giddings, S.Moran, F.Nicholson (Somerset County Councillor), K.Turner (West Somerset District Councillor), N.E.Martin (Clerk)

It was noted that everyone was very pleased to have David Cowling at the meeting, and in his role as Chairman, following his recovery from his recent heart attack.

1. Apologies

S.Branfield, P.Goodwin, S.McIntosh

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 24 May 2016 were accepted as correct and were signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

Missing records: Peter Goodwin wrote to Risdon Hosegood requesting that the Clatworthy parish records (including original minutes and the parish maps) be returned to us, but without success. Peter made direct contact again with Eric Kidner with no further progress and subsequently wrote to the Senior Partner.

Following the suggestion from County Councillor Frances, a formal letter was sent to the Senior Partners restating the problem and detailing the lack of progress. As no satisfactory response has been received, the matter will now be taken up with the Solicitors' Regulation Authority.

Details of the correspondence relating to this matter have now been copied to councillors and the meeting agreed that a formal complaint should be raised with the Solicitors' Regulation Authority.

Action: P.Goodwin

Logging in Cordings Cleeve: County Councillor Frances reported that the Highways Department advised that any damage should be reported to them as soon as possible after its occurrence with supporting photographs.

District Councillor Keith notified us that the related planning decision has now gone to written appeal, but no decision has yet been made.

Action: COMPLETE

Auditor procurement: Having notified SALC and NALC that Clatworthy is opted out of the procurement scheme, it now transpires that a later amendment to the Transparency Code requires all smaller authorities to have an appointed external auditor – **even though they are not subject to external audit.**

In the circumstances Clatworthy will reluctantly reverse the opt out.

Action: COMPLETE

Common land at Raleigh's Cross: Following the recent lighting of the beacon for the Queen's 90th Birthday, councillors expressed some concern about the ownership of the land used for the beacon and agreed that an attempt be made to clarify the legal position. Clerk to make some initial investigations.

Action: ONGOING

Village sign: A new sign is now in place at the north eastern entrance to the village, but it has been attached with easily removable nuts and the supporting posts lack caps. Highways will be contacted to see if they will do anything about it. Highways have agreed to cap the posts and replace the nuts with vandal proof ones at no cost to Clatworthy.

Action: COMPLETE

District Councillor Keith asked that someone from Clatworthy attending the Brendon Hills' meeting in June would be prepared to talk about how and where we acquired our new road sign and what it cost.

Action: COMPLETE

Damage to road edge in front of church: The roadway has been repaired.

Planned drainage works in Clatworthy: The condition of the roads in the village was raised again. Although some work had been done to fill in potholes and ruts, the road in front of the village hall needs attention, but apparently that cannot be tackled until the 'planned drainage work' is done. County Councillor Frances confirmed that drainage works were indeed planned in the parish in late November and suggested we contact the Highways Department to ask for details so that we can request additional works as appropriate. **Action: N.E.Martin**

4. Updates from County and District Councillors

4.1 County Councillor, Frances Nicholson

Frances reported that there would be a shortfall in the county budget of £25m next year which could not be covered by further cutbacks and consequently a rise in Council tax would be inevitable. She warned that cuts in road maintenance, hedge cutting and public transport were inevitable, but held out some hope that community transport schemes might escape the worst.

4.2 District Councillor, Keith Turner

Keith reported that West Somerset was facing serious financial difficulty largely because the rate rebate to Hinkley B had effectively wiped out all the district's reserves. The problem would have to be notified and would result in a boundary review that would split the district into three. To avoid that situation, a Taunton Deane-West Somerset partnership has been proposed.

Keith had called an emergency meeting of the Brendon Hills group, which Sophy attended for the Parish Council, to explain the three choices presented:

- 1) to merge Taunton Deane and West Somerset into a single district with one support team;
- 2) to continue as two districts, but with a single support team
- 3) to continue as two separate district each with their own support team.

As the leader of Taunton Deane Council had made it clear that he would not support option 2 and the financial situation made it impossible for West Somerset to 'go it alone' as in option 3, Keith explained that he would, very reluctantly, be supporting a full merger.

5. Financial report

5.1 Current position

Balance at Lloyds Williton 17.5.16	£2,469.16
Receipts	£
None.	
Total receipts	0.00
Payments	£
SALC (Affiliation fee 2016/17)	23.22
P.Goodwin (Parish newsletter postage and ink)	33.20
Community First Trading (Parish insurance)	150.78
N.E.Martin (re-imburement Domain Name registration)	8.39
Total payments	215.59
Balance at Lloyds Williton 21.7.16	£2,253.57

5.2 External Audit

The report from the external auditors contained a minor comments relating to the presentation of the figures. These comments will be borne in mind should similar circumstances arise in future. The comments did not affect approval of the audit.

5.3 Limit on signatory powers of Clerk

The annual review of the Clerk's signatory limit concluded that it could be reduced to £250 now that the cost of the Parish insurance had been substantially reduced by the change of insurer.

5.4 Additional signatory

It was agreed that a third Councillor should be added to the list of signatories on the Parish account. Sally Moran agreed to take on the role. Clerk to arrange.

ACTION: N.E.Martin

6. Correspondence

Planning application 3/06/16/001 – Planning permission not required

Local Green Infrastructure – No action, not relevant to Clatworthy

SCC Listening, Learning, Changing: on-line survey – Noted

SALC AGM 17 September 2016, Edgar House, Somerton – No interest in attending

CCS AGM and workshop, 6 October 2016, Edgar House, Somerton – No interest in attending

Printing Services – Information noted

Avon & Somerset Police: on-line survey - Noted

Taunton Deane - West Somerset Partnership – Noted. See 4.2

Engage Somerset: GP Survey: on-line survey and Marketing Guidance document – Noted.

The Clerk also reported receiving a large number of e-mail newsletters, which will be forwarded to Councillors **once**, to enable them to subscribe individually if they wish.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.47 pm

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 22 November 2016, 7.30 in Clatworthy Village Hall