

# ***Clatworthy Parish Council***

Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 November 2023 in Clatworthy Village Hall

**Present:** Sally Moran (Chair), Stephen Branfield, Jake Forgham, Linda Sharp, Steven Pugsley (Somerset Councillor), Kevin Chesterman, Norma Martin (Clerk)

## **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Margaret Deer, John Ward, Frances Nicholson (Somerset Councillor).

## **2. Co-option of Kevin Chesterman and appointment of new Clerk.**

The co-option of Kevin Chesterman to the Parish Council (proposed by Linda, and seconded by Stephen) was agreed unanimously by all councillors present.

## **3. Minutes of meeting held on 1 August 2023**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1st August 2023 were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chair.

It was noted that Somerset Councillor Frances had confirmed that Clatworthy was not affected by the work at Flint Cross; also that reference to hedge trimming should also address road verges and banks (see Item 7 below).

## **4. Update from Somerset Council**

Steven Pugsley gave an overview of the situation under the new unitary council and warned that there was a possibility that it would have to go into administration due to rising costs (particularly of social care) which have so far not been offset by the intended savings of unification. As a result Somerset council is proposing to offer town and village councils the opportunity to take on responsibility for a number of the non-statutory services currently provided by the county. A letter with details is en route.

He also gave an update on the initiatives being promoted by the Exmoor Local Community Network (LCN) to address rural housing needs and planning, to promote and support rural businesses, and of course, roads.

## **5. Planning**

### **3/06/22/001 Agricultural development in Syndercombe Lane**

The Planning Department's Enforcement Team has reviewed the development and confirmed that it is as permitted.

### **3/06/23/001 Demolition, and replacement, of front porch and single-storey side-extension at Rowe's farmhouse.**

There were no objections to the plan from the parish or councillors.

## **6. Village Emergency Plan**

Jake summarised the elements of the plan as comprising: an 'emergency centre', a 'community contact network' and a 'plan co-ordinator'. The village hall committee had already offered the village hall as suitably located and equipped to be the emergency centre and were considering the associated management issues. Sally had started to identify individuals around the parish to act as community contacts in an emergency to report on events and provide feedback. Jake offered to take on the role of Plan Co-ordinator.

## **7. Roads**

### **7.1 Hedge cutting**

It was agreed that as well as hedge cutting, the maintenance programme should also include clearing drains, especially after heavy rain, and keeping the verges back, to stop them encroaching on the carriageway.

The current problems will be reported on the Highways website and the matter will also be raised at the next Exmoor LCN meeting.

**Action: Linda, Sally**

## 7.2 New road signs

The new village sign on the road from Forches Cross is in place, but does not have vandal proof bolts. The sign at the other end of the village is still awaited.

## 8. Finance

### 8.1 Current Position

	£		
<b>Current a/c balance at Lloyds June 2023</b>	<b>5183.66</b>		
<b>Receipts</b>			<b>Details</b>
None	0.00		
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>0.00</b>		
<b>Payments</b>		<b>Cheque #</b>	<b>Details</b>
N E Martin	43.16	79	Domain name registration – reimbursement
Judith Bryant	30.00	83	Internal audit fee
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>73.16</b>		
<b>Current a/c balance at Lloyds 6/11/23</b>	<b>5110.50</b>		
<b>Unpresented cheques</b>			
Clatworthy Village Hall	514.96	84	Re-furbishment of village phone box
SALC	23.26	85	Affiliation fee 2023-24

### 8.2 Payments for Authorisation

Council gave retrospective authorisation for payment of the following:

SALC affiliation fee £23.26

Phone box refurbishment £514.96 (increased from initial estimate to cover cost of materials)

Parish website monthly charge £11.99 (inc VAT) from October 2023 until further notice.

### 8.3 Budget for 2024-25

As a result of the acquisition by the council of a number of assets, the budget now contains provision for building the balance at the bank over a number of years to cover maintenance and/or replacement in addition to the usual forecast expenditure in the coming year.

Although next year's budget forecasts expenditure of over £1600, the current healthy bank balance enabled the council to agree to keep the Precept at last year's level (£1000) to avoid any additional burden on parish residents at this time.

## 9. Correspondence

All correspondence had been e-mailed to Parish Councillors before the meeting, for information.

## 10. Other matters for information.

None.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

Next meeting: 6 February 2024