

Clatworthy Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on 25 August 2015 at 7.30 in Clatworthy Village Hall

Present

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

1 Apologies

S.Branfield

2 Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12 May 2015 were accepted as correct and were signed by the Chairman.

3 Matters Arising

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 continues to pursue the matter and is attempting to make direct contact again with Eric Kidner.

Action: P.Goodwin ONGOING

The Clerk reported that the annual precept has now been successfully transferred to the Parish account at Lloyds, Williton. the District Councillor has been assured by the Council that the problem would not recur.

Action: COMPLETE

Quotes were obtained for the Parish Council insurance with and without including the village hall and it transpired that no money would be saved by including the village hall in the current Parish Council insurance. In addition, the Village hall is insured under a three year contract which does not expire until August 2016. The District Councillor suggested that the PC should investigate insuring with Community First when renewal is next due.

Action: COMPLETE

All councillors have completed Registrable Interests forms, which have been submitted to the District Council.

Action: COMPLETE

4 Update from County Council, County Councillor Frances Nicholson

This item was moved up the agenda as Frances could not stay long.

Frances reported that the County Council had, as expected, no spare funds.

4.1 Roads

Following up a query from the Clerk, Frances had contacted David Peake to ask for the Clerk to receive notification of road works direct from him, as no notification had been received of the recent surface dressing between Washbattle Bridge and Clatworthy. It was noted that councillors also thought the work was below standard, unlike the earlier high quality work carried out at Forches Cross.

Frances will report the problems raised by the parish council about the quality of work and ask for this to be looked into.

Action: F.Nicholson

The District Councillor raised the issue of the recent planning application concerning the extraction of timber from Cording's Cleeve for which no travel plan had been provided. There was great concern that the expected volume of heavy traffic would cause serious damage to local road surfaces and verges over an extended period as well as inconveniencing local traffic on our very narrow and twisty roads; these problems would be accentuated by the use of trailers which would make it impossible for them to reverse. It was also pointed out that there was a serious risk that the culvert under the road at the entrance to Fryan Farm would be damaged by heavy lorries en route between Forches Cross and the B3224.

It was hoped that one or two councillors would be able to attend the planning committee meeting to represent Clatworthy's interests.

As a precaution, Frances was asked to arrange for photos to be taken to record the state of the road before any work started, so that the cost of necessary repair work can be reclaimed from the contractors.

Action: F.Nicholson

5 Financial report

5.1 Current position

Balance at Lloyds Williton 31/1/15	0.00		
Receipts	£	Ref	Details
	561.55	500001	Account balance transferred from Lloyds Wellington
HMRC	52.00	535625	Reclaimed VAT 2012-2014
Precept	2000.00	500002	Transferred from Wellington a/c *
Total Receipts	2613.55		
Payments	£	Cheque #	Details
D.Cowling	70.00	2	Reimbursement for gift to retiring clerk
SALC	55.00	1	Clerk training
Judith Bryant	32.00	4	Internal auditor's fee
SALC	22.49	3	Affiliation fee
Broker Network	278.95	5	Parish Council Insurance
West Somerset Council	100.00	6	Uncontested election fee
Total Payments	558.44		
Balance at Lloyds Williton 16/7/15	2055.11		

* Precept for 2015/16 was paid into redundant Wellington account in error by West Somerset District Council

5.2 Invoices

Invoices for the Parish Council insurance and the election fee became due in June and July respectively. Agreement to pay the former was gained by e-mail.

It was proposed by Peter Goodwin, seconded by Sally Moran and agreed by Council, that these payments be recorded as formally authorised.

5.3 Comments from Auditors

The internal auditor had recommended that a limit be placed on the value of cheques that could be signed by the Clerk. It was agreed that this limit would be £300 and that the limit would be reviewed annually.

Minor comments had been made by the external auditor 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.

5.4 Transparency

There was some discussion as to the best way to meet the requirements of the new Transparency code. It was agreed that care needed to be taken to safeguard the interests of the electorate, in particular those who are not in a position to access information over the internet. The Clerk will liaise with Peter Goodwin to provide suitable information for dissemination with the Christmas Party invitations which are sent to all electors.

Action: N.Martin, P.Goodwin

6 Correspondence

- Brendon Hills Surgery – relocation of dispensary. Noted, no action required.
- Exmoor signposts project – Lewis Baker has volunteered to be responsible for identifying relevant signposts in Clatworthy and will attend the meeting on Friday 11 September.
- Conference on Isolation and Loneliness – Sally will attend the conference on Saturday 17 October. Sophy will accompany her if possible.
- SALC AGM – Peter and Chris showed interest in attending the AGM on Saturday 26th September, but Somerton may be too far away.
- Adopt a Path Scheme – If this scheme acquires some local adopters, the Somerset Rights of Way team will appoint a local co-ordinator, unless the Parish Council wants to act as co-ordinator itself. It is noted that our local Rights of Way liaison person, Lewis Baker, has offered to act as co-ordinator if necessary and the Council willingly agreed.
- Submission to the Secretary of State of the Draft West Somerset Local Plan to 2032 – Noted, no action required.
- Exmoor Panel meeting, Tuesday 1 September. Council feel that the Brendon Hills Group performs the same role and is more relevant. No representative plans to attend.
- Wiveliscombe Area Partnership, Annual meeting, Thursday 24 September – David and Ron will attend.

7 Update from District Council, District Councillor Keith Turner

Keith pointed out that the draft Local Plan referred to above was no longer open to public comment but also reported there would be some delay in final publication as the Exmoor National Park had requested a new housing survey in an attempt to reduce the additional housing requirement placed on them.

He warned that the Government was reducing its rate support grant for village halls from 80% to 50% and that the District would not necessarily be able to cover the remainder as it has done to date. The Council should be aware that a specific application may be needed, which may not be successful.

District finances may also be adversely affected by the Government's decision to allow EDF a rate rebate of £1.5m, to be paid by the District Council. This is being challenged on the grounds that the original rates went directly to the Government and are not therefore in District funds, but there are other adjustments which complicate the picture.

Keith encouraged councillors to attend the Isolation and Loneliness conference if possible, as it is an area of particular relevance to his Housing, Health and Wellbeing role.

Lastly he reminded the Council that the next meeting of the Brendon Hills Group is on Monday 5 October, 7.30 at Raleigh's Cross. Up to three representatives are welcome, of which one should ideally be the Clerk.

Date of next meeting

Tuesday 24 November 7.30 in Clatworthy Village Hall

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.00pm