

Clatworthy Parish Council

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

Present

S.Moran (Chair), S.Branfield, A.Cowling, M.Deer, C.Giddings, S.McIntosh, J.Ward, F.Nicholson (Somerset County Councillor), K.Turner (West Somerset District Councillor), N.E.Martin (Clerk)

1. Apologies

None.

2. Minutes of last meetings

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21 November 2017 were accepted as correct and were signed by the Chair.

3. Matters Arising not covered on the agenda

Common land at Raleigh's Cross: Following the lighting of the beacon for the Queen's 90th Birthday, Councillors had 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.

The Clerk had acquired a copy of the registration of the land as 'Clatworthy Village Green' from the County Commons Register, but the register had no further information regarding the sale of part of the land to Raleigh's Cross. This will be pursued with Land Registry if no further information can be discovered by Cllr Chris. The Council may also investigate the possibility of registering the land as common land owned by the parish.

Cllr Chris had made no progress with this specific topic. Cllr Margaret thought it was possible that Andrew Deer might have some relevant information.

Cllr Margaret reported that Andrew believed the land to be glebe land and therefore not the responsibility of the Parish Council.

Action: Complete

Drainage works: Councillors were pleased this work had started, but were concerned about the lengthy overrun on the schedule. The closure of the road towards Forches Cross necessitates a long detour for parishioners from the outlying farms who need access to the village. The closure had now been in place for nearly five weeks rather than the planned 11 days. It was agreed that a complaint should be made to the County Council.

Council agreed that it was now too long after the event to warrant a letter.

Action: Withdrawn

Broadband: It was noted that there had been no further communication from Connecting Devon & Somerset regarding the £500 broadband vouchers, which the Brendon Hills group were told were to be reissued this autumn. However, following the update regarding the Hinkley Point C Community Funds, it was suggested that we should contact Gareth Hughes, Chairman of Skilgate Parish Meeting with a view to submitting a combined application.

Norma had hoped to follow this up at the Brendon Hills meeting scheduled for 6 February, but the meeting has had to be rearranged for 22 February.

Action: N.E.Martin Ongoing

Signposts: A general update on the Signposts Project was provided in December by the project manager, Charlotte Thomas.

Newsletter: Clatworthy News, No 12 was approved for distribution and will be sent out in the next few days.

Action: Complete

Stray cattle: Cllr John reported that several parishioners had complained to him that cattle had been loose once again in the village and on surrounding roads. This was particularly dangerous to road users after dark, as well as damaging to hedges, banks and private land. Council acknowledged that this was not a new problem and several Councillors supported the reports. It was agreed that a direct approach to the farmer concerned was unlikely to be very productive, but the matter needed to be reported to the police. A letter would be drafted.

Following the meeting Cllr Sally had occasion to speak to the farmer in question in person while removing his cattle from her garden. It was felt that the discussion might be more likely to have a positive effect than writing to the police, but this does not seem to have been the case. Council were undecided as to the best way forward.

Action: Withdrawn

4. Update from District/County Councils

4.1 County Council

Drain opposite Wry Lane: Cllr Frances reported that highways had now agreed to remove the kerb round the drain opposite the entrance to Wry Lane. They will notify the Parish Council of what they intend to do and when they will do it (not before the new financial year) and the Council should ensure that the design is acceptable and that the result conforms to the agreed design. Council thanked Frances for her hard work on this matter.

Action: All

Large vehicle movements through Clatworthy: A letter had been received by the Council regarding the movement of an exceptionally large vehicle through the village en route to and from Clatworthy Reservoir that had caused damage to both private and public property in the process. The Council is asked to take the matter up with the Highways Department.

Cllr Frances will look into this, but noted that, with reference to the measures suggested by Messrs Baker and Hays:

- the County Council could set a width limit for the road, which would probably deter strangers, but it could not be enforced to deny access;
- the provision of guard posts at the narrowest point to protect Welshes Cottage and The Old Shop might be possible if Highways owned the verge at that point, but not if it was private property.

Action: F.Nicholson

Council tax: Cllr Frances warned that the County Council portion of council tax will rise about 6% this year and, in addition, that substantial borrowing would be necessary to meet the need for new school places as a result of all the houses being built in and around Bridgwater and Taunton.

4.2 District Council

Still awaiting the final decision on the merger of Taunton Deane and West Somerset Councils.

Council tax: Cllr Keith warned that the District Council portion of council tax will increase by around £5 pa for a Band D property. He also reported that policing costs would rise by 6% and the fire service cost would also increase.

Seaward Way, Minehead: Major development is going ahead; half for two large industrial units and the remainder for new homes, half of which will be 100% affordable. Some homes will be for rent and some for shared ownership. Substantial income is expected from renting the industrial units and from business rates.

Somerset West Lottery: This is proving very successful and Cllr Keith encouraged everyone to buy tickets (available on-line at <https://www.somersetwestlottery.co.uk/>).

5. Finance

5.1 Current position

	£			
Balance at Lloyds Williton 21/11/2017	1992.89			
Receipts	£	Ref		Details
None				
Total Receipts	0.00			
Payments	£	Cheque #		Details
SALC	25.55	29		Affiliation fee 2017-18
WAP	100.00	30		Donation to Wivey Link
St Margaret's Hospice	100.00	31		Donation
Total Payments	225.55			
Balance at Lloyds Williton 20/2/2018	1767.34			

5.2 Investment monies

Council agreed that the money previously held in the NS&I account should continue to be separate from the main account and, if possible, in an interest paying account.

Very few savings accounts allow 'group' ownership, but our Lloyds current account has an associated savings account which can be opened with as little as £1 and which pays interest (albeit currently very little). Council authorised the Clerk to open one with the money from the NS&I account.

Action: S.Moran, N.E.Martin

5.3 Web site funding

As the end date for applying for funding to establish a Parish web site is approaching, Council agreed to look into the practicalities of setting one up for use in the future.

The Clerk advised that the set up cost was reasonable, but that the annual rate thereafter to maintain the web site would be ~£250. Council agreed that that was unjustifiable expense while we had access to a free site to meet the legal transparency requirements.

Action: Complete

5.4 Audit of accounts for FY 2017/18

It was agreed to approach Judith Bryant, last year's auditor, in the hope that she might be prepared to audit our accounts again.

Action: N.E.Martin

6. Planning applications

3/06/17/001

Council had notified the Planning Authority in writing that it had no objection to the erection of a greenhouse in the walled garden of the Old Rectory.

3/06/17/002

Application is from a Watchet resident to erect a stable/store in his newly purchased field on the edge of Clatworthy beside the road to Huish Champflower. Council discussed the responses to the application, which is not supported by the parish, and agreed that representation should be made to the Planning Committee at their meeting on Thursday 22 February.

Cllr Sally would attend to present the objections of the Parish Council and Cllr John agreed to put the objections from Peter Goodwin, who was unfortunately not able to attend in person.

Action: S.Moran, J.Ward

7. Correspondence for consideration (previously distributed by e-mail)

Councillor training session: Cllr John was already booked on. No-one else was available.

Somerset Strategic Housing Framework: the Plan had been sent to Councillors who were encouraged to complete the survey if appropriate.

Hinckley Point C Small Grants Programme: it was still hoped to follow this up as a source of possible funding for broadband connectivity, as discussed in Matters Arising above.

8. Meeting dates for 2018

Councillors were reminded that the next meeting is the Parish Council AGM, preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting which starts at **7pm on Tuesday 15 May**.

20 February, 15 May, 21 August, 20 November.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.04pm.