

# CURRY MALLET PARISH COUNCIL

## ORDINARY MEETING of the PARISH COUNCIL

Draft minutes of the ordinary meeting of Curry Mallet Parish Council  
held on Monday February 9th 2015 at Curry Mallet Village Hall.

Present: Mr L W Frazer (Chairman), Messrs. R J Allard, D R Beck, R M Hughes, G K Townrow, and G D Turner.

In attendance: Sue Steele & Derek Yeomans (respectively District & County Councillor) (both part-time), Belinda Magee & Marjorie Hookham, (village entry signs), Mr D and Mr & Mrs E Orme, (planning application), Ann Collett, (Magna Carta) & Bernie Collett.

### 1135 Public Participation:

Belinda Magee, the designer of the gateway signs at the Langport parish boundaries, presented her designs for the two Curry Mallet village entry signs commemorating the parish's association with the Magna Carta; Belinda explained her rationale for the crusader-knight foreground motif, and showed various background motifs (oak tree and Seal), together with lettering style options: It was agreed that visibility was the key criterion in the design to be selected. It was further agreed not to incorporate the wording "Please Drive Carefully" either to the main design or to a separate panel. In conjunction with the Magna Carta Committee, the Council would select an overall preferred design by the end of February, and would notify Belinda accordingly.

Belinda advised that the signs would be fabricated from fibre-glass substrate material and were expected to last for 15 – 20 years before replacement, although some loss of definition through weathering was likely within the period. County Highways would be consulted regarding allowable point sizes for the lettering and positioning of the signs vs. the carriageway edge, as part of the process to obtain their licence of authorisation.

The overall timescale required that the preferred design be defined by mid March in order to facilitate delivery of the signs from Market Drayton by mid May. Delivery costs could be avoided if someone from the parish could collect the signs from Sheppy Signs Ltd.'s factory. Belinda was thanked for all her work and for having presented her designs in person.

### 1136 Reports from District & County Councillors:

Mrs Steele advised that renewal notices were being sent out by the Waste Partnership to users of its (green bin) garden waste service. Mr Yeomans referred to the need for householders to make greater use of the kerbside recycling collection service, and particularly the food waste (brown bin) facility, in order both to reduce the overall amount of household waste (grey bin) destined for landfill and also to avoid it becoming contaminated by food. Costs of landfill were escalating due to the incremental tonnages produced by new housing, at a time of great budgetary constraints on service provision. Arrangements were progressing for kerbside re-cycling of small domestic batteries, and for plastic film, as of end June. Recycling revenues had suffered from the diminished rate of growth of the Chinese economy, a major consumer of such materials in recent years.

Mr Hughes noted the County Council's proposed reduction in subsidy for the 608 Thursday bus service to Ilminster, and was advised to lobby Cllr. Harvey Siggs, SCC Portfolio-holder for transport, for retaining the current subsidy.

Mr Townrow referred to the SSDC Leader's letter dated February 9<sup>th</sup> seeking communities' interest for holding a Water Management event in April; re Curry Mallet's vulnerability to future flooding, the prevailing inadequacy of the historic drainage system through lack of attention accorded since 1974 to the maintenance of road-side ditches was a major concern. In the absence of landowners and tenants taking responsibility for this work, Mr Yeomans envisaged that in future years parish councils would become obliged to having it undertaken under their own aegis with costs borne through the parish precept.

### 1137 Declarations of Interest:

Mr Townrow reiterated his personal interest in the planning application (see min. 1089) and noted that, as owner of a nearby property, he had been invited by the local planning authority to comment directly on the application.

### 1138 To Approve & Sign the draft Minutes of the Meeting held on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2015:

The minutes, as per the draft circulated to Members, were approved *nem con.* and duly signed by the Chairman.

### 1139 Matters of Report arising from the previous Minutes:

- **re 1126.1, Repair to Footpath L8/24; Parish Volunteer Work Party March 22nd.**

Mr Turner would order the 5 tonnes 'stone-to-dust' grade gravel from Dearden's, for delivery to Manor Farm, preparatory to the March 22<sup>nd</sup> session. He would ask the SCC Rights of Way team for a quantity of 'Terram' membrane and would seek recruits for the work party session via an article in the forthcoming parish newsletter issue. Mr Yeomans noted that the Rights of Way budget for 2015/2016 had been cut back by £63,000 (~12%).

- **re 1126.2, Chapel House hedge-trimming for access to Selby family burial plot.**

Mrs Steele thanked Mr Turner for his work to clear the access to the plot; a letter would be written to Mr W E Hall, owner of the Chapel House, asking that the overgrown prunus tree at the entrance to the plot be cut back.

- **re 1126.3, Access for Walkers across Public Footpath L8/13.**  
Mr Turner would liaise with the tenant farmer regarding this difficulty in access to & from Crimson Hill.
- **re 1126.4, Replacement of Dog Bin at Headwell Bottom + Installation of Bin adjacent to Higher Street.**  
The Weavo wooden posts would be installed on Wednesday February 10<sup>th</sup>, on the specified areas of verge. Mr Frazer & Mr Townrow would assist. The bins would be affixed when suitable locking bolts had been obtained from Glasdon, and thereafter SSDC Streetscene would be notified to resume their routine scheduled emptying.
- **re 1126.5, Fieldgate Grit Bin, Suitable Location for Re-positioning.**  
Mr Townrow reported the agreement of both County Highways and the adjoining property owner to have the bin sited on the west-side verge of Staundle Lane, at a distance no less than 15 metres from the Fieldgate Lane/Redland Lane road junction, and with a minimum 0.5metre clearance from the householder's hedge edge. Posts would be sunk either side of the bin, to protect this parish asset from damage occasioned by passing traffic. Arrangements would be made to have the bin, with its existing concrete plinth, transported to the new location.
- **re 1126.7, Remedial Work to Bridge on Footpath L8/9.**  
Mr Turner undertook to effect whatever safety work was within his capability, and to liaise with Les Braunton of the SCC Rights of Way team for their collaboration and safety inspection/approval.
- **re 1126.10, Annual Parish Meeting; Date Amended to April 20<sup>th</sup>.**  
Bob Croft's availability to speak on April 20<sup>th</sup> was noted. (*subsequently amended to April 21<sup>st</sup>; details remain unchanged*). Mr Townrow would liaise with the Youth Club for permission to use their screen & projector.
- **re 1130.1, Parish Precept for 2015; Submission of Form.**  
Catherine Hood of SSDC Finance had confirmed on February 6<sup>th</sup> their receipt of the Curry Mallet Form.

**1140 Planning Application 15/00074/FUL; Proposed Erection of Dwelling & Garage on land on Marshway:**  
Members reviewed the plans, drawings and Combined Statement as submitted; Mr Turner, as the Council's portfolio holder on planning matters, drew the Council's attention to SSDC Planning Policy SS2 and contrasted it with the recent government directives which now accorded a presumption of approval for such in-fill developments where that development could be shown to be sustainable (*cf.* non-approval per the policy). Mr Turner noted that the local planning authority's Landscape Architect had visited the site and had raised no objections.  
Mr David Orme advised that the planning authority had received supportive letters from the two households either side of this proposed development. In line with its earlier sentiment (see min. 1094), the Council remained supportive of this application for a new dwelling in which a long-standing member of the community and his family would reside. Mr Frazer would notify SSDC Planning of this observation by the Council.

**1141 Outdoor Play Area Working Group Report:**  
The Working Group had attended the Village Hall Committee's meeting held on February 4<sup>th</sup>; representatives from Curry Mallet School PTA, Isle Abbotts' Play Group and other interested members of the community were present: Mr Turner outlined the VHC's several concerns, regarding both a play area being situated in close proximity to the hall building and also the resultant potential safety hazards obtaining in that vicinity. The impact on the VHC's ability to generate income from routine and occasional bookings was discussed, and the Council took the view that proximity of a facility for children to play could well be advantageous for securing future bookings. Howsoever, the VHC treasurer had recommended consultation with the Bridge Club and the Fly Fishing Club to establish their concerns. Means would have to be devised to mitigate any adverse effects of a play area nearby. It was noted that any play area facility would benefit primarily children from Curry Mallet and adjacent parishes, whereas those hiring the Hall often had negligible affiliation with this community, save for their financial contribution to defraying the hall's running costs. In response to the safety concerns, it was understood that the Play Area would be bounded by fencing sufficient to contain children within and dogs without. Safety issues would be a major concern for the Play Area Management Team, in order to satisfy the stipulations of the Council's insurer for Public Liability & Personal Injury. The inspection regime, and specific safety measures recommended by the SSDC Leisure Services officers, would ensure that these stipulations were met. The pub had undertaken to serve patrons with drinks in plastic cups, in order not to have any glassware in the vicinity of the play area. General responsibility for the welfare and protection of children using a play facility was noted to rest with their parents/guardians/child-minders, with the managers of the facility being required to provide reasonable safeguards commensurate with the likely level of risk.

The hierarchy of responsibilities for the hall building and grounds were again discussed (see mins. 434, 439.2 460(d) & 502 of 2008/2009); the extent of overlap vs. separate responsibilities for the two trustee parish councils and the VHC as management entity, would again be reviewed possibly through further consultation with the SSDC Assistant Director for Legal Services. If the VHC had absolute discretion regarding the use of the grounds, then the parish would have to accept its verdict regarding creation of a play area on their land. The VHC had undertaken to give its final decision by February 18<sup>th</sup>. It was unclear as to whether or not this would be a public meeting.

*The District Councillor left the meeting at this time*

**1142 Magna Carta Committee Report:**  
Mrs Collett gave a verbal report; key points were,-  
.1 The Committee had met with the Mayor of Taunton Deane Borough Council, who wished to include Curry Mallet in the itinerary for their Flag Trail tourism/fund-raising initiative over Summer 2015. This request had been accepted by the Committee as it offered an opportunity for incremental business for the shop and pub. Timings would be checked, in view of large crowds envisaged during the June 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> Anniversary weekend.

- .2 Incremental to the £5,600 grant already secured from the National Lottery Sharing Heritage Programme, a second grant of £4,450 had recently been received from the National Magna Carta Trust.
- .3 A four archer 'Malet Team' would participate in the national competition on June 6<sup>th</sup> at Windsor Great Park.
- .4 There would be four guests from Le Havre for the June 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> weekend events; the town was custodian of a femur bone believed to have come from the body of William the Conqueror. Further to min. 1129.1, Carina Adams, being a fluent French speaker, had agreed to be the parish's Cultural Ambassador.
- .5 To date, nine design entries had been submitted for the Village Sign to be erected on the verge in front of the Mallet Court stone wall. The judging panel for the preferred design comprised seven parishioners.
- .6 Becky Curry, a teacher at Curry Mallet School, was organising a choral concert for June 14<sup>th</sup> in All Saints' Church.
- .7 Elaine Going's quilts were to be included in Rhoda Nevin's national exhibition of embroidery commemorating the Magna Carta sealing, when exhibited during the period April 14<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> at Castle House, Taunton,.
- .8 the fee for the village sign planning application would be £192.50 (50% discount for a parish council application), and County Highways' approval would need to be sought from Judith Ellis of their Road Records Office (see item 9 of the Notes of the January 28<sup>th</sup> meeting with County Highways').
- .9 Mr Townrow noted that any incremental cost (2 x £250) from County Highways for the re-installation of the existing 2 village entry signs (at Beer St. & Rockway) could be absorbed within the Council's overall budgeted amount of £1,200 for village signs, as a result of the generous grant of £1,365 from SSDC. The Council and those members present of the Magna Carta Committee agreed to this use of the budgeted money, if so needed.

#### **1143 Council Election May 2015:**

The briefings on February 24<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> arranged for parishes by SSDC were noted; Mr Frazer would attend one of these sessions on behalf of the Council. Mr Townrow would write a piece for the March issue of the newsletter, with background as to the roles and responsibilities of a Council member, by way of encouraging parishioners to stand for election. Most likely, there would be at least two vacancies to be filled.

#### **1144 Finance:**

- .1 An exceptional and unbudgeted grant of £40.00 to Taunton & District branch of Citizens Advice Bureau was agreed. The extent of Islemoor Ward residents' use of this branch (25 in the last financial year) was noted to validate the decision to support this Taunton branch rather than that at Yeovil. Cheque no 481 refers.
- .2 Reimbursement of incurred expenditure was agreed for the following items, -
  - #478 for £21.54 + VAT for dog bin posts & concrete ex Weavo, to Mr Turner
  - #479 for £23.00 + VAT for the new minute book (min. 1130.5 refers), to Mr Townrow
  - #480 for £80.78 incl. VAT for Magna Carta Committee meeting expenses, to Mrs Hookham
  - #481 for £9.99 incl. VAT for a 100litre plastic container for parish records & documentation, to Mr Frazer
 It was noted that the former Clerk had still to tender her final claim for expenses, for photocopying etc.
- .3 Mr Townrow recommended that Mrs Crafter, the Council's Internal Auditor, be invited to attend the SALC training course on March 5<sup>th</sup>, at the Council's expense, in view of the more stringent scrutiny now applicable under the Localism Act's Transparency Code for councils no longer subject to external audit. This was agreed.
- .4 Addition of Mr Turner and Mr Allard, as authorised signatories to the Council's bank accounts was agreed, and would be implemented forthwith now that, finally, the forms had been received from Lloyds Bank.

#### **1145 Correspondence:**

Mr Hughes undertook to review the SSDC draft paper entitled 'Rural Lettings Policy'; he noted that his earlier concerns (see min. 1122), regarding Yarlinton's apparent acquiescence of progressive deterioration to the fabric of their 19 Pope's Cross property, had been drawn to the attention of the housing association's management by the District Council's ward member.

#### **1146 Items of report from Members:**

- .1 Mr Turner referred to his February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting with the Duchy Land Seward concerning thinning of the tree canopy adjacent to footpath L8/24 (Headwell Bottom ↔ School); Sarah Bird was amenable to having such work carried out under her aegis by the Duchy's preferred local tree surgeon, Andrew Glide. Mr Hughes queried whether recent deterioration to the surface of footpath L8/25 could be attributed to re-emergence of mountain bikes utilising this access route.
- .2 Mr Townrow's Notes of his January 28<sup>th</sup> meeting with Area Highways' staff were noted; key points were
  - re point 5, Mr Allard advised that yet further jetting of the surface-water drains at Fieldgate had had to be undertaken in order to ensure complete elimination of compacted slurry residues.
  - re point 8, Mr Hughes noted that several of the drain gullies on the west-side of Rockway had, early in 2003, been covered over by the earth embankment created to forestall further trespass onto that strip of open land.
- .3 Mr Townrow's feedback from the January 26<sup>th</sup> SALC meeting was noted; examples of house-extensions no longer requiring of planning permission were noted with some incredulity. The slides relating to "Material Considerations" (reasons for objecting, both valid and invalid), from Mr Norris' Planning Presentation, would be made known more widely within the parish, by way of providing general guidance.

**Date of next Meeting: Monday March 9<sup>th</sup>, at 7.30pm, Curry Mallet Village Hall**