

CURRY MALLET PARISH COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING of the PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Curry Mallet Parish Council

held on Monday 10th October 2016 in the Curry Mallet and Beercrocombe Village Hall, Curry Mallet.

Present: P McKeown, (Chairman), L W Frazer, G K Townrow, R J Allard, D R Beck.

In attendance: Mrs L Frazer (Public participation time)

1376. Public Participation Time

Mrs Frazer, in her capacity as a governor of Curry Mallet Primary School, informed the Council that the school had been granted permission by SCC Education Dept. to set up a pre-school nursery, albeit without any local authority financing. The school's library was to be converted to provide this nursery facility initially: While the Council was wholly supportive of this initiative to enhance community sustainability, allocation of the Lyddons Barns' re-development Section 106 money had been determined by SSDC for the parish council's share to be used for provision of play facilities and therefore not available to support the financing of a pre-school nursery. Mr McKeown was to visit the head teacher to learn more of the school's plans.

The governors were recommended to consult Audrey Mansfield (Village Agent) who had a great deal of experience in grant-awarding entities. Mr Frazer had previously advised that the Magna Carta Committee wanted a significant part of its 2015 Anniversary events' surplus to be used for setting up this nursery.

1377. To receive reports from the District and County Councillors on items that may be of interest

The report from Cllr Yeomans for September had previously been circulated.

1378 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

1379. Apologies

Mrs A J Clarke, for family reasons (see min. 1355).

1380. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2016

These were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

1381. Matters arising

1270 Village Hall Lease Renewal – The next meeting of the Committee was set for 25th October. Mr Townrow reported his conversation with Nicola Greenslade of Community Council for Somerset, whose parent body ACRE had been contacted regarding similar hall lease arrangements in other Community Councils' local authorities.

1302 Village Web Site – Mr McKeown was to set a meeting date for forming a Steering Board. Mr Townrow had undertaken to prepare a draft *modus operandi*, based on that for the Ilminster Forum. Mr Burrough of Beercrocombe had been invited to join, for the Board to benefit from their successful website experience. Urgency for setting up the Steering Board reflected continuing concerns regarding uncollected advertising revenue, the impact on the website's viability and the extent of future financial support from the Council.

Mr Townrow still to liaise with Mr Hearn & the newsletter's Editorial Board regarding its governance policy.

1320 Village Play Area – Mr Allard advised that the Village Hall Committee had endorsed the Council's suggested approach to provision, management and maintenance of the play area, and ownership of its equipment, as previously set out (see min. 1368.4).

1349 Church Street Highway Resurfacing. Still scheduled for works to be undertaken on 17th February 2017. It was noted that the SLOW markings had been painted on roads near the school and that bollards had been installed beside the pedestrian entrance to the Village Hall. The Council asked Mr Townrow to thank Highways for undertaking these important safety works in times of financial constraint and it appreciated the support this showed for the community. Mr Allard advised that the VHC were considering re-positioning the path's movement-activated light to closer to the road, to alert vehicle drivers to people's presence close by.

1355. Council Membership. The next issue of the newsletter will again include reference to the vacancy. Members were asked to elicit expressions of interest through their contacts with residents. It was accepted that the various portfolios needed to be spread more widely among the Council's members.

1362. Relocation of village entry signs. The final sign remained in Mr Frazer's garage awaiting Highways' contractors to erect on Rockway, opposite the layby. This work was now for completion by the end of the year, following a survey of underground services in the proposed location. (*installed on October 28th*).

1370. Planning

Crimson Hill Enforcement Notice Appeal APP/R3325/C/16/3154414 - Mr McKeown had, with input from Mr Townrow, lodged the Council's statement of objection with the government's Planning Inspectorate.

Stud Farm Bund 16/02691/AGN – it was noted works had started and Mr McKeown was to liaise with SSDC Planning over safety measures for bunds in time of sustained and heavy rainfall.

1375. Popes Cross Notice Board – a quotation from a local carpenter was being sought and the Clerk would provide an additional quote for a pre-made noticeboard (eg. from Weavo of Hatch Beauchamp).

1382. Footpaths & ROW

Clearing of path L8/10, should be progressed now the crop has been harvested and the path remains firm. Stream clearance, from Headwell Bottom to the school, would be undertaken in the coming weeks by a work party to be organised by Mr Townrow.

Provision of dumpy bags, for March 2017 gravelling of L8/24 west of the sheepwash, had been discussed with Mr Adams; post receipt at Manor Farm, the bags will be transported and placed by the Headwell kissing gate.

1383. Planning

April Cottage – External Extension 16/04136/FUL

After consideration of the submitted plans, the Council had no observations to make on the submission since the proposed development was not detrimental to visual amenity for the wider community.

1384. Annual Return 2016

1. The External Auditor's certificate and opinion for 2015/2016 had been received and previously circulated to members. The Clerk was to arrange a meeting of the Council's finance group to review the observations and recommendations in detail. A copy would be sent to the Internal Auditor. Grant Thornton had not levied any charge for their additional work in scrutinising the Council's Return for 2016. The NALC Practitioners' Guide 2016 edition would also be downloaded and circulated to members for their reference.
2. At the finance group meeting, a half-year trial balance will also be reviewed.

1385. Finance

VAT return – to be submitted by the Clerk as soon as the VAT registration number for Bradley (fabricator for Magna Carta village centre sign) had been obtained.

Financial Governance Documents – to be further updated by the Clerk to reflect the provisions of the NALC Practitioner Guide 2016 edition following further review by members.

2017/8 Budget Setting – the revised draft as circulated by the Clerk was discussed and the Clerk to amend in line with current expenditure predictions, now covering the £200 VHC grant for the mower, the purchase cost of a notice-board and a contingency for further grant support of community activities (eg. Round Window Club, if SCC Adult Services grant withdrawn, or the pre-school nursery), such that the projected March 2018 closing balance remained not less than £2,500. 2017/8 Budget to be finalised at next meeting following Clerk's update. It was noted that every parish's precept levy would be affected by the total amount of benefit claims across the SSDC area and that the recent redundancies announcement from GKN in Yeovil, if carried through, may have a negative impact on Curry Mallet's overall and individual householders' council tax levy. The need for clear explanation of the budget thinking, in the November newsletter, was again emphasised.

The 2016 Grants to local organisations were agreed and cheques to be prepared for signature at the November meeting.

The following payments were agreed and cheques will be issued in due course.

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| 1. HMRC July – Sept | £136.00 | Cheque no 538 issued |
| 2. S Dale – Jul – September | £203.96 | Cheque no 539 issued |

1386. Attendance at forthcoming & recent meetings

- SALC AGM 17th Sept; Mr Townrow reported back on the meeting and will circulate his notes from the session. The NALC Consultation on capping of precepts, and availability *gratis* to councils of 30 minutes' legal advice, were key topics of relevance. It was noted that £25K of transparency funding remains available until the end of 2016. This led to a discussion on the use of Cloud Services to store (as an additional historic record) the Parish Council documentation, *eg.* previous era minutes. Clerk to investigate. The Clerk confirmed that all Council-related documentation, including e:mail correspondence, was transferred immediately upon receipt from his own computer to the Council's remote hard-drive. It was recommended, therefore, that a second hard-drive be purchased for readily accessible back-up.
- Community Council for Somerset AGM 6th October; Mr Townrow reported on a useful and interesting session, concerning the Community Infrastructure Levy and the financial & planning policy benefits arising from councils preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. Such Plans could set down council policy in the event of local estates or landowners selling their land to developers. Justin Robinson of SALC had shown guidelines for sound financial governance by councils and other bodies managing large grants for capital projects.
- Neighbourhood Watch Coordinators' meeting 3rd October; Mr Townrow, among others, had raised concerns re the slow response times in handling 101 non-emergency calls and had been assured by Assistant Chief Constable Sarah Crew that recruitment and changes in working practices were being progressed. Comparative KPI data for 2015 & 2016 would be checked to confirm improvement in service. Mr Townrow had recommended that police representatives attend parish council meetings by prior arrangement, notwithstanding operational constraints, rather than their present *ad hoc* appearances. Yeovil Station Community Fire Officer's presentation on domestic fire safety and home emergency planning had been informative, and Taunton Fire Station would be contacted to speak at the 2017 APM.

1387. Correspondence

Several items of correspondence had been previously circulated to members

- Consultation on Capping, – discussed at length and agreed that the Council would make no formal response to government as Curry Mallet's precept was well-below the envisaged threshold. It was noted however that SSDC would face around £2m of income loss over the 4 years of the proposed settlement.
- Mobile Library Service, – notice of a review of the service provided for Curry Mallet 12:40 – 12:55 on 3rd November and 1st December. The stop is likely to be withdrawn unless at least three customers utilised the service on each occasion. Mr Frazer would post a notice drawing attention to this likely discontinuation.
- Somerset Restorative Justice – a call for volunteers has been received and circulated.
- Huish Episcopi Swimming Pool. The appeal for funding for a new pool was discussed. It was agreed that most Curry Mallet residents used the pools in Taunton and therefore the Council would not contribute to this appeal.
- South West Waste Partnership September Newsletter had been previously circulated. The introduction on 3rd October of the permit scheme for trailers was noted.

1388. Items of report from members

Mr Allard reported on the recent break-in to the Village Hall storage container. Security had subsequently been reviewed and improved. An insurance claim was being progressed, but the VHC now considered that a ride-on mower was more appropriate for cutting the grassed areas. It was noted that both the 101 call response and the police follow up had been very good. Mr Townrow to convey this back to the Constabulary.

A local resident had advised of a long-overgrown raised footpath along the west side of Church St. between Park Farm Cottage and The Old Rectory, and had sought its re-instatement. Highways would be appraised.

Mr Townrow noted the recent death of Melvyn Norris who had lived in one of the Bell Inn apartments for several years. He had worked for Yeovil Citizens Advice Bureau as a Macmillan Benefits Advisor and had been a staunch fund-raiser and generous benefactor for this charity. His funeral would take place on 21st October. Mr Norris was well-liked by many local people and the Council extended its sympathies to his family and friends.

Next meeting will be held on Monday November 14th 2016 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm



Shaun Dale Clerk to the Parish Council