

CURRY MALLET PARISH COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING of the PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Curry Mallet Parish Council

held on Monday 13th February 2017 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: Cllr S Steele (District Councillor), Cllr D N Yeomans (County Councillor), part meeting

1418. Public Participation Time

No members of the public were present.

1419. To receive reports from the District and County Councillors on items that may be of interest

It was noted that Curry Mallet Primary School had been identified as the most successful in Somerset and 16th most successful nationally. The Council extended congratulations to the Head, governors and staff for obtaining this accolade. Cllr Yeomans reported that the more successful schools in the County were run by the County Council Education Dept. rather than self-governing Academies.

1420. Declarations of Interest

Mr McKeown advised that, as a Village Website Steering Group member, he had an interest in the grant request.

1421. Apologies

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

1422. Minutes of the meeting held on 9th January 2017

These were approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

1423. Matters arising

1302. Village Website - Free training for a limited number of users had been offered by Teapot Creative; this will spread the load of updating web-pages among a number of people. Before commencement of the training, website formats, styles and ground rules would need to be defined by the Steering Group. Possible enhancements under consideration included functionality for on-line village hall bookings and automatic reminders of forthcoming events, via residents' e:mail addressees. Recruitment of a volunteer advertising manager was to be progressed.

1320. Play Area – Mr Allard reported that initial plans for the area had now been received from SSDC and he was arranging a meeting of the Working Group to review these. Concern was expressed as to possible impacts on the project arising from the SSDC staff-reduction programme and any loss of Leisure Services' expertise. Since the initial Play Area Sinking Fund cost contribution had been incorporated within the Council's budget for 2017/2018, and therefore reflected in the 2017 Precept amount, the Working Group was asked to report progress of the project at this year's Annual Parish Meeting on April 24th.

1349. Church Street re-surfacing – Although the work had been carried out successfully on January 27th, the raising of the carriageway and the smoothness of its surface had resulted in more run-off water encroaching onto verges of nearby residential properties. Several residents had been in contact with Highways, and means to alleviate this issue, through improvements in drainage, were being examined (*Highways on-site meeting Feb. 24th*).

1355. Parish Council Membership – A recent article in 'The Langport Leveller', highlighting the vacancy, had been complimentary about how this Council was run and the Chairman was seeking permission to republish it in the forthcoming parish newsletter.

1369. Footpath bridge repairs - Mr McKeown reported that dates for work to commence on improvements to the three ditch crossings were awaited from the County Council Rights of Way team. It has been confirmed that their contractors will undertake all the necessary work, in order to ensure compliance with SCC specifications.

1375. Pope's Cross Notice Board – On-line quotes have been obtained and Mr Beck continues to liaise with local tradesmen to obtain quotes for the work. Mrs Steele suggested that a Brian Cleal, who had fabricated the Ilton notice-board, could be contacted as a possible supplier.

1399. Annual Parish Meeting - Mr Townrow was awaiting a response from the Community Safety Officer at Taunton Fire Station. The Clerk had confirmed the Smart Meter 10 min. presentation and, so far, had had 6 affirmative replies from local organisations for providing speakers.

1412. Gravel for footpaths - Revised date for spreading by Work Party is now 23rd April – see item

1416. SCC Civil Contingencies - Village Co-ordinator for Emergencies; Mr Townrow had now been registered. Mr Allard noted that the Civil Contingencies Unit had had his agreement to designate the Curry Mallet village hall as a potential centre for use in emergencies.

1417.5. Hedgerow Maintenance - Back Lane & Marshway. Subsequent to the last meeting, the vegetation at both locations had been cut-back. Mr Beck noted encroachment of verge-side hedge branches onto Silver St., west of Halfway House in Beercrocombe Parish, and undertook to report the obstruction to Highways.

1424. Village Hall Lease Renewal

The Chairman reported on his recent 'phone conversation with the Duchy Land Steward: He advised that the most likely term of a lease would be 15 years, being the usual duration for all new Duchy leases, allowing flexibility for both parties. The Duchy would prepare all legal documents relevant to the new lease, at their cost, and written in plain English. Sarah Bird had made clear that the Duchy would neither cede the freehold to the parish council nor institute a 'peppercorn rent'. However, the Duchy recognised the importance of the hall facilities, - both building and land, for the well-being of the local community and Ms. Bird would instruct that the underlying level of rental be held constant, other than for rises in inflation. The new 'Full Repair & Insuring' Lease, would stipulate Curry Mallet Parish Council as tenant. A letter setting out the Council's understandings of the proposed terms and conditions would be prepared and sent to the Duchy by the Chairman. Ms. Bird considered that an EPC Survey should be conducted on the building prior to commencement of the new lease, and that the Duchy would bear the cost. The Duchy would provide technical input regarding suitable, more economical, forms of heating and would assist in identifying possible grant-awarding bodies to defray the cost of installation. Members were encouraged by the positive nature of the Duchy in this matter.

Mrs Steele noted that grants for village hall heating installations fell within the SSDC Guidelines for Community Projects, provided that the assessment criteria were met. Installation of solar panels on the hall's west and east-facing roofs was suggested as an environmentally-friendly means of reducing VHC energy costs.

Scope for installing a Hearing Loop within the hall building would be progressed by Mr Allard with Adrian Payn, the village electrician.

1425. Footpaths & Rights of Way

The date for spreading gravel had been deferred to Sunday 23rd April and it was agreed that 4 bags of 10mm chippings would be ordered (as for the March 2015 improvements). Delivery to be delayed until April, subject to no price increases on the material.

1426. Planning

17/00389/ FUL – Brick Cottage Lower Street – Extension at rear.

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.

1427. Finance

Internal Auditor – The Chairman had contacted Pam Crafter and confirmed that she remained willing to undertake this responsibility again in 2017. Mrs Crafter was therefore re-appointed. As possible contingency, for future reference, it was noted that some parish councils utilised experienced Clerks from other parishes to fulfil this role.

The Precept and Grant application had been submitted to SSDC and acknowledgement received. The combined total of £4,500 would be paid on 7th April 2017 into the Parish Council's account.

Bank Reconciliation at 31st January 2017:

Current Account and Cash Book	£2806.94 (no outstanding cheques)
Treasurers Account	£2864.52
Total	£5,071.46

It was agreed that Mr Townrow would contact Westley Harris, to ascertain his flexibility for the annual verge cutting. Subject to his timings, and those of the Highways' contractor for Curry Mallet, his cutting would be sought either early season in May or late season in August.

Payment of the annual grant to defray costs of the village website, £100 as budgeted, was agreed. Cheque #549 was issued in favour of Curry Mallet Community Fund for £100.00.

The Council's Risk Assessment & Management Methodology, and Asset Register, were reviewed; inclusion on the Register of the village-centre Magna Carta sign was agreed. These updated documents to be re-issued by the Clerk.

The CRISP grant bollards and signs would be stencilled "property of Curry Mallet Parish Council", as possible deterrent against theft or mis-appropriation. Mr Townrow would seek the services of a sign-writer.

1428. Attendance at forthcoming & recent meetings and feedback on meeting attended

Area North meeting on 9th February at Compton Dundon was attended by Messrs McKeown, Townrow and the Clerk. This was an informative session covering a range of topics from availability of flood bags for civil contingencies to Crematoria & Graveyard practices.

Curry Mallet Pre-School Nursery Open Morning. Cllrs Beck, Frazer, Townrow and McKeown attended and reported on a positive session. The nursery has 8 pupils currently and is a great asset to the local catchment area.

SWRC Conference on 16th March – it was agreed that, at £60 per head, attendance could not be justified.

Avon & Somerset PCC meeting 2nd February in Yeovil – an enlightening session. The Police & Crime Commissioner had highlighted the government's £14million cut-back in the Constabulary's grant for 2017/2018. This reflected the extent of "damping" imposed by the Home Office, whereby Principal Authorities' budgets were adjusted according to Whitehall perceptions of greatest need. Similar 'damping' impacts adversely affected annual central grants accorded to some shire counties for education and health.

1429. Correspondence

Several items of correspondence had been previously circulated to members including:

- Police & Crime Commissioner's January Newsletter
- ONS Trial Census, on 9th April, for random households within South Somerset District; the trial would be highlighted in the forthcoming issue of the newsletter, as accuracy of the national census statistics was of great importance for determining nationally allocations of central government financing to each geographic area.
- Letters of thanks, in respect of this Council's 2016 grants, received from Royal British Legion, Curry Mallet School, Taunton CAB, and South Somerset Links, were noted.
- Garden Waste collection renewal date of March 8th, from SSDC circulated, added to the website and notice board
- Yeovil 'Shopmobility' – grant request noted but, as most residents utilised services in Taunton, no grant would be offered. Clerk to advise. Mrs Steele noted that Taunton had a Shopmobility branch, located near Chip Lane.

1430. Items of report from members

- Mr Townrow reported that he had, at their requests, met with PC Toni Lines, the Beat Manager (Jan. 12th) and with the ward's new PCSO Carole Brown (Feb.8th). PCSO Mal Thompson had been recommended by PC Lines for her presentation on Internet Safety, for inclusion as a speaker for the Annual Parish Meeting. Arrangements would be progressed by Mr Townrow.

Next meeting will be held on Monday March 13thth 2017 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm



Shaun Dale Clerk to the Parish Council