

**CURRY MALLET PARISH COUNCIL**  
**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

Minutes of the meeting of Curry Mallet Parish Council  
held on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2017 in the Curry Mallet and Beercrocombe Village Hall, Curry Mallet.

**Present:** P McKeown, R J Allard, LW Frazer, D R Beck, G K Townrow

**In Attendance:** Cllr S Steele (District Councillor) for part of the meeting

**1460. Election of Officers and Responsibilities for 2017 / 2018**

- Chairman - Mr McKeown proposed by Mr Beck, seconded by Mr Frazer and elected unopposed.
- Vice Chairman – Mr Allard proposed by Mr McKeown, seconded by Mr Frazer and elected unopposed.
- Other liaison responsibilities were agreed as:-
  - Village Hall Committee representative - Mr Allard
  - Playing Field Inspections – Mr Allard
  - Personnel Committee – Mr Allard, Mr Townrow, Mr Frazer
  - Planning – Mr Beck (*SSDC Planning to be requested to provide a short familiarisation session*)
  - Footpaths and Rights of Way – Mr McKeown
  - Highways and Waste Services – Mr Townrow
  - Web Site Steering Group – Mr McKeown
  - Newsletter Editorial Board – Mr Beck

**1461. To receive reports from County and District Councillors on items that may be of interest**

It was noted that Clare Aparicio-Paul had been elected as County Councillor for the Curry Rivel & Langport Division. Cllr Steele updated the meeting on SSDC's "Transformation Project"; this will be ongoing for the next 18 months and, once completed, would change the way in which external contact between members of the public and the SSDC officers was managed and services delivered.

In her capacity as a Partnership Governor on the Musgrove Park Hospital Board, Mrs Steele made reference to its 'Love Musgrove' registered charity's recent appeal to raise £1million for a 3<sup>rd</sup> MRI scanner for the hospital, to reduce the number of residents having to travel to Exeter, Bristol or further afield, for scans. The appeal aimed to raise the sum in time to provide the machine by October 2017. Mrs Steele hoped that parish councils and individuals within her Islemoor Ward would contribute to the appeal. CMPC to consider a donation at the next meeting. Mr Townrow suggested that an article be written for the July/August issue of the parish newsletter, to promote this fund-raising campaign.

The recently announced closure of the Nat West Bank's branch in Langport was noted to be effective on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

**1462. Declarations of Interest**

All members notified their non-personal and non-prejudicial interest in the Village Hall Lease Renewal.

**1463. Apologies for Absence**

Mrs Clarke was absent for personal reasons.

**1464. Minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

Approved and duly signed by the Chairman.

The Clerk was reminded to ensure that draft minutes of the previous meeting were to be posted on the main notice board to accompany the agenda for the next meeting; the board was the property of the Council and had been provided for publicising its business. As such, the Council had primacy for utilisation of the available space over and above notifications posted there by other organisations or individuals.

**1465. Matters arising**

**1375 – Popes Cross Notice Board** – Mr Beck had received a quotation of £1,070 + VAT which was considered excessive. He & Mr McKeown would continue to seek additional quotations for the replacement notice board.

**1427 – Verge Cutting.** This was completed by the Parish Council's contractor on 2<sup>nd</sup> May. Comments from the community confirmed the view that this had been a useful activity. It was agreed that a payment not exceeding £320 + VAT (*ie.* as per 2017/2018 budget) would be made to Mr Harris upon receipt of his invoice. Consideration will be given to including the verges on Headwell in the cutting plan for next year.

**1441 – Freedom of Information Publication Schedule** – The documents will now be updated following the Council’s Annual Meeting, and presented for adoption at the next meeting.

**1453 – Review of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April.** The attendance was rather disappointing, compared to some previous years, and consideration will be given in due course to include the 2018 APM as a prelude to the Council’s April meeting. The value of the meeting in providing an opportunity for members of the community and the parish council to interact was valuable.

**1467. Village Hall Lease Renewal**

Mr Allard set out recommendations of the EPC report that the Duchy had commissioned. The current EPC for the hall was ‘E’; proposals ranged from double-glazed windows & lower energy neon lighting tubes to air or ground-sourced heat pumps, albeit without estimates of likely cost-savings. Mr Allard to discuss the report with the Duchy Land Steward and with the VHC.

Retention of the VHC’s ‘registered charity’ status was considered essential, as were its obligations as Managing Trustee. The VHC would continue to have management responsibility for the building & grounds, including all financial, legal and insurance aspects. The Council, as the Duchy’s preferred tenant, would be responsible for payment of the annual rental, which would be re-imbursed in full amount by the VHC. This arrangement, it was hoped, should ensure retention of the VHC’s ‘registered charity’ status as an entity entirely separate from the Council. The potential need to finance legal fees incurred for formalising these new arrangements between all parties was discussed. A further meeting with the Duchy to be arranged for late May or early June, with a view to finalising the new lease by end of June. The current lease expired on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

**1468. Footpaths and Rights of Way**

Gravel had been spread on sections of paths L8/24 & L8/9 by 9 volunteers on 24<sup>th</sup> April. The volunteers were thanked by the Council for their endeavours and it was pleasing that 4 of the volunteers were newish residents to the Parish. The work now needed to be inspected by SCC Rights of Way (for compliance purposes) - most likely by their ranger George Montague. Mr McKeown would arrange for this. The colour of gravel was lighter than that previously used, and it was confirmed that this was the grade of material now specified by SCC for such work.

Repairs to three Ditch Crossings have been completed to a very high standard by the County Council’s contractor. Mr McKeown noted that a number of residents had made positive comments on the work. These will be conveyed to Rachel Pearce, the SCC Rights of Way Warden. Photographs of the repaired crossings would be provided to Mr Townrow for the 2018 APM photo montage.

**1469. Playing Field Fence**

Mr Frazer advised that a recent inspection of school premises by the Education Authority had highlighted a concern with the fence along the rear of the field by the ‘Woodland School’ area. Mr Frazer and Mr Allard were to inspect the fence this week and to arrange for work parties on 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> June to replace the defective posts and rails. Members noted that £150 + VAT had been budgeted in 2016/2017 for effecting repairs of this boundary fencing. The School had offered to publicise the work party dates in the hope that parents might also help.

**1470. Planning; - Crimson Orchard Planning Appeal Hearing.**

The informal Appeal Hearing was scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> May at SSDC offices in Brympton Way. Mr McKeown and Mr Townrow would attend on behalf of the Council and would participate in support of their written submission.

**1471. A358 Improvement Plans**

The public consultation had been suspended due to the general election, although plans remained available to view and comments could still be submitted.

**1472. Finance**

The Council’s insurance was due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> June and the premium has increased by £3 over last year. The key elements of the policy were reviewed by the Clerk; in particular, the new requirement that both members and the Clerk had had no history of being declared bankrupt, nor insurance ever refused, nor directors of companies that had been taken into receivership. It was noted that the Council’s valuation of assets was well within the limits of the policy, although the excess for any one claim (£200) was likely to preclude any redress for damage or loss of street furniture items. Activities such as fetes and bonfires needed to be conducted in accordance with be considered, when appropriate, in terms of the Outdoor Play Area project. The Clerk to

confirm with AON any restrictions or requirements concerning cover for Parish Volunteers when working on improvements and maintenance within the parish. The Clerk is to check with Aon regarding Maven's public liability cover in respect of depth-markers for guidance in locations prone to flooding.

#### **Invoices for payment**

The following invoices were approved for payment and cheques issued

- Dearden's (Gravel) £237.12 Cheque 556 issued
- AON Insurance £234.92 Cheque 557 issued
- Westley Harris Verge cutting Cheque 558 issued (to a maximum value of £320 + VAT)

An invoice is awaited from SSDC Streetscene for 2 x pairs of 'pond gloves' (each £11.99 + VAT) and a bucket of wet wipes for use by parish volunteers, to be set against the 2016/2017 budget £50 for volunteers' expenditure.

**Bank reconciliations** to 31<sup>st</sup> March were reviewed by the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

**Electronic / Internet banking** was discussed and the need to instigate such a system was recognised, especially as HMRC would not be accepting cheque payments in the future. The Clerk to review the Council's Standing Orders and seek guidance from SALC to enable a formal proposal to be considered at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the Magna Carta 800 Account be renamed "Curry Mallet Maintenance Fund", and that the £1,500 of budget contributions to the Play Area Sinking Fund & maintenance costs plus the £782 surplus from the 2012 Jubilee Celebrations (Total £2,282) be transferred to this Account from the Council's Business Account. This should ensure that these amounts were identified as distinct from general expenditure and were allocated to the purposes for which they had been designated.

#### **1473. Annual Return**

The Finance sub-group to meet on 25<sup>th</sup> May to review the External Auditor's Observations on the 2016 Annual Return and also to finalise the 2016/2017 Receipts & Payments Schedule in advance of formal presentation to the Council's June meeting. It was hoped that the Internal Audit would also be completed in advance of the June meeting.

#### **1474. Reports from and attendance at meetings by Councillors.**

Mr Townrow had circulated his Notes following the meeting with SSDC Streetscene on 21<sup>st</sup> April. It was agreed that Flood Training for parish volunteers will take place in the autumn and would be open to volunteers from neighbouring parishes.

Risks to residents, and particularly to children, from falling and becoming trapped in deep or fast-flowing water had been highlighted by Chris Cooper of Streetscene. Means to achieve safe and timely egress from the sheep-wash chamber, when the stream was in spate, would be identified and expedited.

The previously circulated Notes of Mr Townrow's April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting with Chris Weeks of Highways' South Somerset Area were noted without comment.

#### **1475. Items of report from Councillors**

Mr Allard had had confirmation that the Lyddons Barns S106 money would be available until December 2017 and will be released by SSDC upon production of an invoice for supply and installation of Play Area equipment. Mr Allard was to review, and update as necessary, the budget and plans. It was noted the currently projected costings for the whole scheme amounted to £20,000 and that grant awards to cover this level of expenditure were unlikely to be forthcoming by December 2017. Cash flow implications would need to be considered, and this will be an agenda item at the June meeting. It was noted that any grant application to SSDC would need to indicate a substantial level of financial support from the parish and Council.

Mr Townrow reported the death of Beryl Hayllar on the 25<sup>th</sup> April at the age of 91. She had lived in the village for over 30 years and was a past treasurer of the PCC. The condolences of the council were expressed.

**The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Monday June 12<sup>th</sup> at 19:30 in the Village Hall**