

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

**Minutes of the meeting of Curry Mallet Parish Council
held on February 11th 2019, in the Curry Mallet and Beercrocombe Village Hall, Curry Mallet.**

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

Part-time Attendance: Cllr Sue Steele, Cllr Clare Paul & Cllr David Hall (SCC Cabinet member for Economic Dev., Planning & Community Infrastructure (all re min. 1709), Mrs M F Hughes & Mr M Cavill (both re min. 1708).

1708. Public Participation Time.

Mrs Hughes, in her capacity as Tree Warden, apprised the Council of the intended felling of a chestnut tree within the village. As the tree was situated on private land, and was not covered by a Tree Protection Order or other legal provisions, the Council was not minded to take a view as to possible merits of its retention. Mrs Hughes was invited to canvass local opinion via the next issue of the parish newsletter, albeit with no recommendation from the Council. Mr Cavill introduced himself as a former farmer in Fivehead parish, and longstanding Chairman of its parish council, and stated his intent to stand for election in May as a prospective candidate for the District Council's Islemoor Ward.

1709. To Receive Reports from the District and County Councillors on items that may be of interest.

Cllr Sue Steele referred to MP David Warburton's Private Member's "Rivers Authorities & Land Drainage Bill" which, last Friday, had been passed, unopposed, at its Second Reading in the House of Commons; the bill, ultimately, would legislate the Somerset Rivers Authority as a Flood Risk Management Authority vested with powers to tackle and plan for future flood prevention measures, to be financed through raising a separate precept on Somerset householders. Presently, District Council members were pilot-testing the new SSDC website, for general roll-out at some future date.

Cllr Clare Paul noted her appointment to the Scrutiny Board of the Local Enterprise Partnership, based in Exeter. Also that representatives from the County and the 5 District Councils had met to discuss further the feasibility of forming a Unitary Authority for Somerset.

Mr Townrow noted adverse comment, due to prevalence of accidents given the recent snow and ice, resultant from the County Council's decision to cut-back its network of roads hitherto gritted by County Highways. (*Since rescinded*).

1710. Declarations of Interest. None.

1711. Apologies and reasons for absence. None.

1712. Minutes of previous meetings.

Minutes of the meeting held on January 14th 2019; version 3 was approved, *nem con*, as drafted.

1713. Matters of report arising from previous meetings.

1472 – Lloyds Bank. Mr McKeown, in his capacity as Chairman, would arrange an appointment with the local Lloyds branch business manager to progress the authorisation of online banking for Mr Allard and Mr Beck, thereby enabling BACS transfers to and from the current account; Mr Allard and Mr Beck had still not received online authorisation from Lloyds. Concern was expressed that lack of a BACS facility was hindering the Council's utilisation of its March 2018 Transparency Code grant (for purchase of a laptop computer & ancillaries for the Clerk). Moreover, other Lloyds administrative delays had prevented the Clerk from submitting an online VAT Reclaim Form, as preferred by HMRC, so that a paper submission had had to be made in order to avert any cash-flow difficulties arising from the large payments for the play equipment. (see mins. 1699.1 & 1717.1)

Letter authorising the Clerk to undertake telephone banking was duly signed by Mr McKeown and Mr Townrow.

Mr Townrow would email the Magna Carta account details to the Clerk; Lloyds mandate form could then be generated to authorise closing of the account, as previously agreed (min. 1699.1) in favour of setting up the required 'Sinking Fund' savings account linked to main business account.

1586.4 –Website Training Update. Subsequent to her training session with 'Teapot', the Clerk had been experiencing difficulties uploading documents to the 'Parish Council' area of the village website and would liaise with Lisa Turner, in order to resolve the issues as quickly as possible. *Update: issues now resolved and Clerk able to upload to website.*

Mr McKeown had spoken with Barry Tottle, of Teapot Creative; Barry had confirmed that 2 x training sessions (free of charge) had been 'banked' for use by Parish Council / Village Hall Committee members.

1621.1 – Clerk's Employment. Re-drafted SLCC Model Contract. Mr Townrow had modified the generic SLCC model employment contract for the Personnel Committee's evaluation. The Committee would meet prior to the Council's March meeting, to progress the Contract to the stage of signing. Mr Townrow noted that satisfactory completion of the Contract would entail the Personnel Committee's formulating of policies regarding Expenses, Grievance & Discipline and Health & Safety, for which guidance would be sought from SALC.

Over the Summer, the Clerk would undertake filing on the external hard drive of historical Council documents; initially, an additional C. 6 hours had been envisaged for this work.

1622.2 – Installation of power-spur & defibrillator purchase. Mr Allard had spoken with Adrian Payn the electrician; Mr Frazer would determine lead time for installation of Adrian's power-spur and the Clerk would contact Anna Smith to establish timings for purchase and delivery of defibrillator.

1646.3 – Chapel House, Overgrown Burial Area. Mr McKeown had spoken with Louise Webb, the local representative of the Baptist Union; she would locate their records for the Chapel House burial areas to clarify their obligations and responsibilities; in the meantime the Clerk would write to Louise, setting out Mr McKeown's findings from scrutiny of SSDC Planning documents, and noting the Baptist Union's responsibility for ensuring reasonable access to these areas.

1678.1 – 'William Malet' GWR Train naming. Mr McKeown reported that Great Western Railway had yet to commit to the naming of engines in memory of Magna Carta barons.

1689/1693.1 – Winter Grit; Replenishment of Bins & Procurement of bags. Mr McKeown had collected the 8 x 24kg bags of Winter Grit from the Yeovil Highways' Depot (as well as providing payment, cheque #621, as authorised at the November 2018 meeting); these bags have since been delivered to volunteers within the parish in preparation for the next bout of bad weather. However, the grit bins in the parish had yet to be replenished by County Highways.

1692– Village agent's profile for February newsletter. The current Village Agent had recently resigned; Community Council for Somerset advised they hope to fill the post in the near future.

1714. Village Hall Issues.

- 1. Lease.** Mr Townrow proposed that, based on the recommendations per his e:mail of Feb. 6th, version 8 of the lease be approved by the Council; this proposal was agreed unanimously. For consistency of approach between the Council and the Village Hall Committee, and as prerequisite to authorising Rachel Saltonstall to finalise this lease with Farrer & Co., Mr Townrow requested that acceptance of version 8 of the lease be formally confirmed by the Hall Committee; this was agreed and the Clerk would contact Paul Jervis, the Hall Committee Chairman. Mr Townrow would endeavour to arrange at a time convenient to Rachel Saltonstall, the Chairman, and the Clerk for signing the engrossed copies of the lease, and for obtaining photocopies for the Council and VHC records.
- 2. New Hall Trust Deed.** Mr Allard reported that the Village Hall Committee had approved the new Hall Trust Deed, in principle; the Deed, as amended by Robert Horn, required to be cleaned up as a 'fair copy', and Mr Allard undertook so to do, preparatory to its signature by the Chairman and witnessed by the Clerk, and taking copies. In submitting the new Deed to the Charity Commission, Mr Allard would advise that the conditions per paragraphs 4(1) and 4(3), regarding composition of the Hall Committee (4 from Curry Mallet; 2 from Beercrocombe), could not necessarily be guaranteed given that the VHC was a body comprised of volunteers. Clerk would write Covering Letter to Nicola Greenslade, with cheque no. 632, thanking the Community Council for Somerset for Robert Horn's professional services in reviewing and advising on the Trust Deed documentation.
- 3. Secure Storage of Engrossed Copy of New Lease.** It was agreed by all members, that the manufacturers' warranties for the play equipment be placed in secure storage, together with the signed copies of the new Lease and Hall Trust Deed, be lodged with Porter Dodson solicitors.
- 4. Minor Building Repair Programme (to reflect Duchy Land Steward 18.01.18 recommendations).** Mr Allard would email Sarah Bird to notify the Duchy Land Steward of the repairs now successfully undertaken. *Done; email dated 15th Feb. 2019, refers.*

1715. Village Play Area Project.

- 1. Annual Inspection; choice of company.** Clerk had contacted Donna Davies (of Hatch Parish Council & Village Hall Committee), to request details of the company used by for the annual inspection of the Hatch Play Area.

Clerk would follow up with the company recommended, to determine price and suitability for undertaking the Curry Mallet annual play area inspection. Also, to check this company's credentials with Rob Parr of SSDC.

2. **Paint from Wickstead for covering scratches on 'Big Foot'**. Cheque in favour of Wickstead to be raised for March meeting of the parish council, in the sum of £47.50. (min. 1701.2 refers)
3. **Pedestrian Access Chicane**. A meeting between the contractors Simon Williams and Neil Dove, and the Chairman, and Clerk to the Parish Council, had been arranged for 2nd March at the Village Hall, to confirm plans and timings for installation of pedestrian access chicane and attendant additional concreting of the footpath. *(A Work Party to remove the hedging and excavate to ground level, took place on February 20th).*
4. **Safety & Responsibility Signage**. Mr McKeown would progress the signage re-design with JAAMS Design; in the meantime, Mr Townrow would devise the contact details element of the sign, with a view to having it laminated and installed on the Play Area site as soon as possible.
5. **Planting of Hedging**. A work party would be convened to clear a trench along the line of the Play Area fencing, and to plant the thorn wips supplied via the Duchy Land Steward.

1716. Footpaths and Rights of Way Updates.

1. **Inspection of replaced rail on L8/24 by the sheep-wash**. Still awaiting response from SCC's George Montague.

1717. Finance.

The following were authorised;

1. Community Council for Somerset (see min. 1714.2) £50.00 (no VAT) Chq. No. 632
- VAT Reclaim submitted, covering period April 2018 – January 2019; for the amount of £1,258.25.
- Precept submission for 2019/20 (for £4,987) acknowledged by SSDC Finance.
- Mr Townrow referred to the £114 (+VAT) residue of the December 2016 CRISP grant for clothing and equipment for the parish volunteers; it was agreed to progress his recommendation for purchasing a second manure drag (~£26 + VAT) and two more 750mm traffic cones (~£17 + VAT). His proposal for purchasing 'breathable' hi-vis trousers was deferred pending further details of cost through purchase at 'trade cost' from Greenhams or via SSDC Streetscene.

1718. Annual Return for 2019. Mr McKeown would ring Mr Steve Altria, and Clerk would write formally to request Mr Altria's services for the 2018/19 Internal Audit. Clerk to contact PKF Littlejohn, to establish whether there were to be any changes to the AGAR systems and processes this year's External Audit process.

1719. Agree attendance by Councillors to forthcoming meetings & report on meetings attended.

- Clerk had arranged to attend SSDC Election Training on 28th February 2019.
- Mr Townrow to attend a meeting of the SSDC Standards Committee on 25th February 2019, at which the Committee on Standards in Public Life's recent 'Review of Local Government Ethical Standards' would be discussed; points from the Review pertaining to parish councils were (a) tighter 'Code of Conduct' conditions, relating to public perceptions of council members' disclosable interests, and that council members would be assumed to be acting in their official capacities when making observations on social media, and (b) that parish Clerks be required to hold appropriate qualifications.

1720. Items of report from members.

- 1 **Annual Parish Meeting**. Mr Townrow pressed the Council for re-instatement of a separate Annual Meeting, as had taken place each year between 2005 & 2017. As there was little enthusiasm for this re-instatement, Mr Townrow would write an article for the February newsletter, to solicit views from the parishioner body.
- 2 **Village Hall Assembly Area (for emergency evacuation)**. Mr Townrow noted that the Greenham catalogue included signage for an 'Assembly Area', which might be of benefit for any emergency evacuation from the hall, and could be affixed to the fencing in front of the Play Area.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Monday 11th March, 2019, in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.

SLD (17/02/19).