



Queen Camel Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the **PARISH COUNCIL** held in the Marples Room of the Memorial Hall on **Monday, 8 June 2015 at 7.30pm**

Present: Chairman **Angus Davidson (AD)**
Councillors **Chris Bennett (CB)**
Andrew Hoddinott (AH)
Simon Thornewell (ST)
John Brendon (JB)
John Carnegie (JC)

In Attendance: Clerk **Christine Richardson (CR)**

Members of the public: 16

- 1. Welcome, Introduction & apologies for absence** – AD welcomed Councillors and members of the public to the Meeting. AD introduced JC to members of the public and informed them that 5 members of the Council had met between Meetings for an informal get to know you session to exchange views and explained how the Council were still looking to co-opt 3 more members.

Apologies from Thelma Mead & Mike Lewis

2. Public Session

Opened to the Public: 7.35pm

The Chair of Governors for Countess Gytha Primary School felt that he should give an update on the new school as it was one of the Agenda items in tonight's Meeting. He confirmed that the Project Manager is Graham Holt and the Site Manager is Clive James. He also informed the PC that there was a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/pages/BAM-New-Countess-Gytha-Primary-School/299051480219328?ref=profile) and Blog (www.countessgythaprimary.co.uk/our-new-school-blog) set up outlining all progress being made on the site. A turf cutting ceremony will be taking place at the beginning of July for the new school. He stated that the Planning Applications cover many of the external elements of the school ie lighting, gateways & planting of trees. He has asked the developers for clearer pictures of the external finishes. CB asked whether sample panels would be available to view and the Chair said this was in hand with the Project Manager.

A member of the public asked whether there was a policy for transparency in the new Council and if the PC were planning to publish emails between Councillors. AD asked the PC how they felt about this as an option. The PC answered that they should work together as a collective, not as individuals and the transparency policy would remain the same as it had been in previous Councils.

Closed to the Public: 7.40pm

3. Election of Vice Chairman

Election of Vice Chairman to be deferred until July PC Meeting or later. **JB proposed, CB seconded. Unanimously agreed.**

4. Co-option of Councillors to fill Casual Vacancies

4.1 **Record of receipt of JC's Acceptance of Office** - CR confirmed the Declaration of

Acceptance of Office had been signed by the co-opted member JC.

- 4.2 **To agree procedure to fill Casual Vacancies** – It was agreed by the PC that more ‘gender balance’ was required within the PC to give a more proportionate representation of the community. With that in mind the PC decided that an advertisement would be placed in the Village Magazine and in addition Councillors would inform the Parish by word of mouth that 3 vacancies in the Council needed filling. JC also volunteered to write an article for the Parish Magazine.

5. To review Councillors’ portfolios

The PC agreed that the Financial Portfolio needed to be filled first in order for the Clerk to be supported. **AH proposed JB for this role, JC seconded. 5 Councillors were in favour and 1 was against.** JB to meet with the Clerk to discuss the portfolio in due course.

It was agreed by the Council to defer all other Portfolios until the next meeting in July.

6. To review the Terms of Reference of Parish Groups

See Minutes item 0615.06.

7. To inspect any deeds and trust investments in the custody of the Council as required

It was agreed by the Council to defer this to next meeting in July when AD has had a meeting with the other Trustee of the Poores Charity. ST asked whether the Charity Commission had any say of how the Poores Charity was conducted.

Opened to the Public: 8.00pm

A member of the public confirmed that this was not the case.

Close to the Public: 8.01pm

8. To agree a schedule to review the Council’s Policies & Procedures

Due to the Disciplinary and Health & Safety Procedures being in the Clerk’s Contract of Employment it was agreed that these 2 polices / procedures would be dealt with first. AH volunteered to review the Disciplinary Procedure and JC volunteered to review the Health & Safety Policy. **CR to forward soft copies.**

CR to send a Schedule of all other Policies & Procedures to the PC for consideration at the next meeting in July.

9. Declarations of Interest

- 9.1 **To record Declarations of Interests have been received from all Councillors** – CR confirmed that all Declarations of Interests had been received and they would now be sent to Ian Clark at SSDC for signing and then they would be published on the PC website.

- 9.2 **To resolve what interests would be declared at each meeting** - Councillors to adhere to their Declarations of Interests Forms and although not a requirement, it might be considered good practice to declare their interest at the beginning of each Meeting. Discussion to take place at a future PC Meeting to ascertain whether it would be beneficial to get SALC or Ian Clark from SSDC to address the Council relating to the Declaration of Interest Policy.

- 9.3 **Dispensations for PFC Lease** – none necessary as PFC Lease was not discussed at the Meeting.

0615.01 Minutes of Meeting 18 May 2015 – approved and signed by AD.

0615.02 County & District Councillors’ reports – ML not present.

0615.03 Police & Safety matters

- 03.1 **Police report** – read by AD - Avon & Somerset Neighbourhood Statistics May 2015
0 Crimes

Calls to Force Services Centre
A total of 4 were received for the month.
Made up as follows
Road Related incident x 2
Contact x 1
Harassment x 1
This is for Queen Camel - part of the Wincanton Rural South AE030

03.2 **Safety Group** - see 0615.06

0615.04 Highway's matters – deferred until July 2015 Meeting.

0615.05 Planning Applications

05.1 **New applications to consider – 14/04945/R3C/Cond.5 / 14/04945/R3C/Cond.6 / 14/04945/R3C/Cond.7 / 14/04945/R3C/Cond.8** (all relating to Countess Gytha Primary School, West Camel Road, Queen Camel, Yeovil – GR:35944 – 124367)

CR advised that she had spoken to SSDC that day to arrange an extension on the deadline for the PC to submit their observations. The SSDC agreed to extend the date until the 30 June 2015. ST questioned what the role of the PC in these applications would be and how the Council should proceed.

Opened to the Public: 8.15pm

Chair of Governors at Countess Gytha School responded that the PC could possibly influence how the new school would look, it was not too late and that it was a good thing to consult and comment in an objective fashion.

Closed to the Public: 8.30pm

As the date for observations is before the next PC Meeting on 13 July it was agreed by the PC that an Extraordinary Meeting would be arranged to discuss the applications. The Extraordinary Meeting will be publicised so that members of the public and QC Village can attend if they wish. All Councillors are to forward their ideas / solutions to the Clerk prior to the Extraordinary Meeting which will take place towards the end of June (date to be confirmed).

05.2 **Updates received since last meeting** – None

05.3 **Applications ongoing:**

For information – 14/00215/FUL – Land at Southfield Farm, Yeovilton – Revised Scheme for Solar Park – ongoing – decision expected June 2015.

0615.06 Parish Group Reports – Report on Community Plan 2005 by RHC

Opened to the Public: 8.35pm

RHC suggested that if the PC decide there should be a review of the Community Plan the Council could ask the Communications Group how it could be done and ask them to do a proposal.

ST suggested that there should be a review of the Plan and it must involve consultation with the public. Initially ST is to have a meeting with RHC to ascertain the way forward and come up with ways to involve the community. ST is to then report back to the PC at the July Meeting.

Closed to the Public: 8.45pm

06.1 **Environment**

- **Phone Box Testing** – CB reported that the phone box electrics were due to be tested as the last tests by BT were 3 years ago and were now the responsibility of the PC. CB is to get an estimate from Ian Jenner for checking the phone box as well as disconnecting the phone box just in case it proves to be costly.
- **Glow worm survey on 10 July 2015** – request by the Environment Group for the glow worm survey to be covered by Came & Co. insurance for this activity. AH proposed, CB

seconded. Unanimously agreed by Council that they would be covered.

0615.07 Other Reports

- 07.1 **CLT** - AD confirmed that at present 8 houses were occupied and that everyone was pleased with their homes. By 1 July 2015 all properties would be ready for occupation.
- 07.2 **PFC Lease** - a clean / final copy of the Lease has now been received from Ben Turner. CR to circulate a copy electronically to each Councillor.
- 07.3 **'Our Place Programme' seminar** – CB attended on 20 May and his report is Appendix (I) of these Minutes. The seminar was organised by the Somerset Towns forum.
- 07.4 **Queen Camel Solar Park** – CR reported that an email had been received from Abercormyn Solar Limited on 1 June. This email advised that the site's capacity reached 6,657.12kWp which meant that further monies were owed, a cheque for the outstanding money would be sent in due course. CR to inform the Councillors how much this is when it is received.
- 07.5 **Cleaveside House (Old Health Centre)** – AD advised that an email from the owners of the property had been received requesting a meeting with the AD and ML. AD confirmed that he and JC would be willing in principal to attend the meeting, however he was waiting to hear back from ML (who is on annual leave) with regards to the purpose of the meeting.
- 07.6 **Primrose Lane Development** – CR registered the Council's interest on the F.O.M.A.G website and the PC should now be kept up to date with the scheme.

0615.08 Financial matters

08.1 Payments received -

Cheque from Abercormyn Solar Limited (Solar Park) – Community Benefit Fund	£5,500
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08.2 Payments made -

	None
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08.3 Payments to be approved -

RHC Expenses (AVM)	£34.99
Clerks Expenses – paper / postage	£23.29
John Calvert (external auditor)	£50.00
Glasdon Bin	£315.18
Bar Bill for AVM (Supply Stores Paul Price)	£200.64

CR confirmed that all payments made were in line with the 2015/16 Budget.

AD proposed, CB seconded. 5 were for and 1 abstained. Expenditure was agreed.

08.4 **Banking**

- Update regarding new bank account 'Community Benefit Fund' – CR informed the Council that she would be looking into getting a new account as soon as the new signatories were put on the two existing accounts.
- PC resolution required regarding transfer of funds from Poors Trust to Community Benefit Fund. AD, a trustee on the account, deferred this matter until the next meeting in June as he needed to discuss with Patrick Pender-Cudlip, the other trustee.
- New bank signatories – CR confirmed that all relevant bank forms were being submitted this week to Natwest and should take approximately 2 weeks to action.

08.5 **PC Income & Expenditure & Budget Update 2014/2015** – to be next circulated in July 2015.

08.6 **Internal Audit - 2014/2015** – PC resolution on Internal Auditor’s engagement for 2015/2016. **ST proposed, JB seconded. 5 in favour and 1 against.**

08.7 **External Audit – 2014/15** – CR confirmed that the Audit papers had been submitted to Grant Thornton and they confirmed receipt of the Annual Return on 1 June. CR to report to the PC once she has heard back from the Auditors.

0615.09 Incoming Correspondence (not included above)

09.1 **Letter from previous Councillors to Chairman (previously circulated)**

09.2 **Email from Nick Howman relating to Precept**

AD asked the Council for their views on a response to both the letter and email as they related to the same subject. ST stated that the Council should move on from what was detailed in the letter and email and should look to the future.

CR instructed to reply to both the letter and email.

0615.10 Advance Notices

10.1 AD confirmed he had attended a Chairman training course and said that it was beneficial. CB confirmed he would be attending a free Planning Training Course in early July. In addition JC, JB and CB would be attending Councillor training courses through SALC at a cost of £25 per person. CR to arrange the training for JC in Somerton, JB and CB to arrange their own training. **AH proposed, CB seconded. Cost unanimously agreed.**

0615.11 Matters for report or for the next agenda

- Old Countess Gytha School – what will happen to it once it is vacated.
- Fingerposts / signs.
- Possible name change for the new school.

0615.12 To confirm the date of the next meeting for Monday, 13 July at 7.30pm – Marples Room.

AD thanked everyone for attending and asked them to leave for the closed session.

0616.13 Closed Session: Review following Clerk’s appraisal on 4th June 2015 (following completion of 13 weeks’ probationary period)

AD offered the Clerk the position on a permanent basis. **ST proposed, CB seconded. Unanimously agreed to employ CR.**

End time: 9.45pm

Signed:

Date:

July 2015

Appendix (I)

The meeting was organised by the Somerset Towns Forum. Queen Camel will be invited to future events.

- Our Place is a government funded (DCLG) scheme to support Localism, by funding trial schemes by local councils (district & town) to provide community projects, including social care and support.

- The scheme requires a lengthy application, a detailed Operational Plan and a computer based cost-v-benefit analysis. A similar scheme called 'First Steps' is applicable to smaller / parish councils.

- Presentations covered 3 local schemes; Martock, Westfield Yeovil and West Somerset (Watchet & Williton). See attached email for details of presentations.

The KEY message to me were, that QC PC should;

- Plan the budget in advance, say up to 5 years ahead, not just from year to year.
- understand how much government money is spent in our area and what it is spent on.
- decide how big QC PC should be, what we should do and what we cannot do (budget & tasks).

[Note; Martock, population circa 5,500, now has a parish council budget of approx £250K pa and nearly a dozen employees, with a band D parish precept of £177.]

Regards Chris Bennett