



# Queen Camel Parish Council

**MINUTES** of the **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
held in The Marples Room at the Memorial Hall  
on **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018** at **7.30pm**

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**Present:** Councillors **John Brendon (JB)** – Chairman  
**Chris Bennett (CB)**  
**Bryan Norman (BN)**  
**Jo Pender-Cudlip (JPC)**  
**Simon Stapely (SS)** – Vice Chairman

**Apologies:** **John Carnegie (JC)**  
**Andrew Hoddinott (AH)**  
**Zelda Sowerby (ZS)**  
**Kit Stapely (KS)**

**In attendance:** **Patrick Pender-Cudlip (PPC)** - Clerk  
**Mike Lewis (ML)** – District & County Councillor

**13 members of the public**

## Procedural Items

- Welcome and introduction:** JB opened the meeting, welcoming Councillors and members of the public. For the benefit of those intending to talk about the A303 Improvement Scheme he passed on what Highways England (HE) representatives had told Councillors at an informal meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017 (see also 04.1 below):
  - HE is committed to Route 1 and is keen to hear design suggestions to make the new road better for local people.
  - HE had ruled out the idea of keeping the existing A303 and it will not feature in their Controlled Development Order (DCO) application, but HE acknowledge that the idea enjoys local support and may reconsider it during the statutory consultation phase.
  - HE is committed to managing traffic during the construction period in a way that will cause the least possible disruption in Queen Camel and other local villages.
- Public session:** Members of the public put forward the following points and questions:
  - When cars park on the pavement at the southern end of the High Street it can be impossible for mobility scooters and wheelchairs to squeeze past. The Council asked the Clerk to write to residents of nearby houses reminding them that obstructing the pavement is not just anti-social but is also an offence under the Road Traffic Act.
  - Have the developers behind the proposed Garden Settlement been in touch with HE? JB said that the Council had no knowledge of any such communications. ML added that Somerset County Council (SCC) and SCC Highways (Highways) are making representations about the proposed Garden Settlement in their submissions to the South Somerset District Council (SSDC) *Issues and Options* consultation.
  - If the Garden Settlement were to go ahead it would likely have an effect on possible housing development in Queen Camel and also on the A303 improvement scheme.

- Extrapolation from the recent High Street traffic survey suggests that currently there are c. 2.2m. vehicle movements through the village every year and any extra traffic generated by large scale developments would have a significant impact on the village. JB observed that some might expect a faster, improved A303 to result in fewer vehicles travelling between Yeovil and the A303 via Queen Camel High Street.
- If the West Camel protest group is dissatisfied with Highways England's response to its complaint and goes to the Parliamentary Ombudsman the whole project could be put back to 'square one'; this would put Option 2 back on the table.
- The Parish Council should call a Parish Meeting to enable residents to have their say.

**[Clerk's note:** *The Council discussed these matters under items 04 and 06.2 below*].

3. **Apologies:** JC, AH, ZS and KS sent apologies for being unable to attend.
4. **Declarations of interest:** JPC declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of Procedural Item 6. BN declared a personal interest in respect of a previous relationship with the developers of the proposed Garden Settlement (item 06.2 below)
5. **Council Committees:** Councillors agreed to hold an informal meeting where the idea of setting up Council Committees could be reviewed, enabling the Council to debate and resolve the matter at the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> May or an earlier meeting.
6. **Clerk's appraisal:** **[Clerk's note:** *Being an employment matter this item was discussed in closed session at the end of the meeting but for ease of reference these minutes follow the Agenda order*]. JPC and PPC left the room. Councillors reviewed the appraisal by AH and expressed themselves satisfied with the Clerk's performance.
7. **RESOLVED 4-0-1 [for-against-abstained] that the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017 be confirmed and signed as a true and accurate record.**

### **Business Items**

**01 [0118] County and District Councillor's report:** ML reported that SCC plans to increase its element of the Council Tax by 2.99%. SCC is not one of the Local Authorities in the South West chosen to pilot the retention of business rates to make up for a reduction in the Government subsidy to County Councils (which is due to be completely phased out by 2020).

**[Clerk's note:** *Items 04 and 06.2 were discussed at this point but for ease of reference these minutes follow the Agenda order*].

**02 [0118] Crime and Safety:** 1 offence of anti-social behavior was reported for Queen Camel in November.

**03 [0118] Updates** – The following unresolved matters were reviewed:

1. **Playing Field:** The Playing Field Committee (PFC) is discussing the best way forward and will keep the Council informed.
2. **Fingerposts, rubbish bins:** CB is making arrangements for the Parish's historic fingerposts to be registered with SCC. The PFC is investigating the most suitable bin(s) for the Playing Field/Glebe gateway; they will be bought by the Council and installed by the PFC.
3. **Playing field ownership transfer:** After a short discussion it was **RESOLVED 5-0-0 that the Council ask SCC to consider transferring part of the playing field (c.1 acre) currently owned by SCC to Queen Camel Parish Council, under the Community Asset Transfer scheme.**

**04 [0118] Highways - A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling scheme:**

1. **Meeting with HE consultants:** In his opening remarks JB referred to an informal meeting with the Mott MacDonald/ Newgate Communications project team. [**Clerk's note:** PPC's notes of the meeting has been published on the website]. HE will be pressed for more statistical detail on local responses to the Preferred Route consultation. BN will meet MOD representatives shortly to ask whether MOD land on Camel Hill might be used to keep the existing A303 alongside the new A303.
2. **Planning Inspectorate consultation:** In its comments on HE's Environmental Statement the Council stressed the vital importance of keeping local roads free from traffic trying to avoid the A303 roadworks during the construction period. [**Clerk's note:** The Council's submission to the Planning Inspectorate has been published on the website].
3. **Parish Meeting:** Following representations from the public it was **RESOLVED 3-2-0 to call a Parish Meeting so that residents can express their views about the A303 Improvement Scheme and how to ensure that it serves the best interests of Queen Camel.**  
[**Clerk's note:** *The Parish Meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 6th February in St Barnabas Church, Queen Camel, at 6.30pm*]

**05 [0118] Planning Applications:**

**17/04613/FUL Hayley Cottage, High Street** – erection of car port/ stores.  
**RESOLVED 5-0-0 to support the application.**

**06 [0118] Councillors' reports and motions - to table and discuss reports, concerns or motions as appropriate:**

1. **Environment and footpaths:** JPC continues to urge the SCC Footpaths Warden to carry out work on stiles and gates as promised.
2. **Proposed Garden Settlement:** BN noted that the proposed Garden Settlement could bring thousands of extra vehicles onto local roads so any development should include a bypass around Queen Camel village. CB noted that it was unusual for a private developer to propose a Garden Settlement without the support of the Local Authority, that airfields on military bases in the UK were not normally open to civil aviation. After further discussion in which Councillors expressed their reservations it was **RESOLVED 5-0-0 that the Council's response to SSDC's *Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation* should express support for the SSDC policies in the draft document and express considerable reservations about the proposed Garden Settlement.**

[**Clerk's note:** *The Council's response to the SSDC consultation has been published on the website*]

**07 [0118] Other reports and motions:**

**Flood Committee** - Councillors had seen the minutes of the Flood Committee meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> November. CB explained that he did not wish to become a member of the Flood Committee but was happy to attend its meeting as a Parish Council representative. He pointed out that his role as Road Closure co-ordinator was entirely distinct.

**08 [0118] Clerk's report - none**

**09 [0118] Finance:**

**1. RESOLVED 5-0-0 that the following two payments be agreed:**

£48.06	Bob Holland	Telephone box repair (glass, putty)
£375.86	P.Pender-Cudlip	December salary

**2. 2018/19 budget and precept:**

1. **Memorial Hall:** members of the Memorial Hall Committee (MHC) asked the Council to reconsider its decision not to grant £2364 for the refurbishment of the Hall floor. After a discussion it was **RESOLVED 4-0-1 to stand by the Council's previous decision to award the MHC a grant for upgrading the Memorial Hall electrical installation but not a grant for refurbishing the Hall floor.**
2. **Consolidated budget:** After a discussion it was **RESOLVED 5-0-0 to approve a budget of £18,908 to cover grants, donations and running costs plus £6,770 from the Community Benefit Fund for a mechanical roller for use on the playing field.**
3. **RESOLVED 5-0-0 to maintain the Council's income in line with the CPI rate (2.8%) by raising the precept to £16,554 which, because of a reduction in Government grant aid and changes in the tax base, means a total increase of £1.81 (3.9%) in the Parish Council element of the Council Tax payable by a Band D household.**
3. **Online banking:** The online banking facility should be in place shortly.
4. **Financial regulations:** review deferred to the February meeting.
5. **Jubilee account:** the group which set up the Jubilee Fund is planning to present a report for the Council shortly on the best way forward.

**10 [0118] Incoming correspondence received from:** West Camel Steering Group (copy of letter of Complaint to Highways England), a parishioner (traffic on the High Street), Memorial Hall Committee (grant request), Asset Optimal (Neighbourhood Plan sites), Somerset Waste Partnership Newsletters, SCC (Schools Admission arrangements consultation), KTD Gardening & Groundworks (parish maintenance).

**11 [0118] Advance Notices:**

- HE Statutory Consultation (A303), 26<sup>th</sup> January – 9<sup>th</sup> March
- HE Information Event (A303), Memorial Hall, Sat. 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 10am – 6pm
- Parish Meeting, St Barnabas' Church, Queen Camel, Tue 6<sup>th</sup> February, 6.30pm
- PCC Sue Mountstevens Drop In session, Sainsburys, Chard, 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 6-7pm

**12 [0118] Agenda items for next meeting:** Council Committees, Annual Village Meeting, Fingerposts, Playing Field Committee, Neighbourhood Plan, Parish Meeting feedback, Financial regulations, Online banking,

**13 [0118] Matters arising post Agenda:** none.

**14 [0118] Next meeting:** Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2018

The meeting concluded at 9.32pm

**Signed:**

**John Brendon**

**Chairman**

**[Date: 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2018]**