



Queen Camel Parish Council

MINUTES of the **PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**
held in The Marples Room at the Memorial Hall
on **Monday 11th December 2017** at **7.30pm**

Present: Councillors **John Brendon (JB)** – Chairman
John Carnegie (JC)
Bryan Norman (BN)
Jo Pender-Cudlip (JPC)
Zelda Sowerby (ZS)
Simon Stapely (SS) – Vice Chairman

Apologies: **Chris Bennett (CB)**
Andrew Hoddinott (AH)
Kit Stapely (KS)
Mike Lewis (ML) – District and County Councillor

In attendance: **Patrick Pender-Cudlip (PPC)** - Clerk
Thelma Mead (TM) – Police Community Support Officer
11 members of the public

Procedural Items

1. JB welcomed Councillors and members of the public.
2. **Public session:** Six members of the public spoke in support of the stand taken by the West Camel Steering Group (SG) formed to express concerns about Highways England (HE)'s A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling Scheme Preferred Route Consultation and urged the Council to pay particular attention to the following matters:
 - During the construction period the High Street would become a 'rat run' for large numbers of vehicles trying to avoid the congestion, delays and frustrations associated with long-term roadworks on the A303 which the choice of Route 1 makes inevitable.
 - This would cause particular problems and dangers for children, families and patients attending the School and the Medical Centre on West Camel Road.
 - Already gridlock on the road through Wales is a regular occurrence when the A303 is congested, on Friday afternoons or after a road traffic accident. Long-term roadworks on the A303 will make this a daily occurrence, not just in Wales but in the High Street and along the West Camel Road.
 - The High Street and West Camel Road will have to bear the additional burden of heavy construction lorries accessing the site on the A303.
 - HE's Preferred Route consultation failed to advertise plans to make the new road an Expressway, closed to slow-moving traffic like agricultural vehicles. It was alleged that this lack of vital information invalidated the consultation.
 - Previous plans for upgrading the A303 west of Sparkford specified a route close to the currently chosen Route 1. It was suggested that Route 2 was not seriously considered this time either but was included in the Consultation simply for the sake of appearances.

- Because HE's statistical analysis of Consultation responses cites percentages but not numbers the analysis is difficult to evaluate and therefore questionable.
- The Council was therefore urged to support the SG's demand for a rerun of the Consultation. Local opposition forced HE to review its plans for upgrading the A358 which suggests that evidence-based objections can be successful.
- The Council was also urged to work with the SG and West Camel Parish Council to ensure that in the event of Route 1 going ahead HE takes proper account of local needs. The most important of these were identified as the retention of the existing A303 (for local traffic and as a relief road) and the taking of whatever steps are necessary to ensure that local roads are not saturated by through traffic seeking to avoid congestion on the A303.

JB thanked members of the public for their contributions. He and was sure Councillors would bear these in mind when considering HE plans for the A303 (see 4.1 below).

3. Apologies were received from CB, AH, KS and SS.
4. No interests were declared by individual Councillors.
5. Councillors agreed to defer a review of the running order of Agenda items until the Council meeting in January.
6. Councillors agreed to defer a discussion of the idea of setting up of Council Committees until the Council meeting in January.
7. Councillors agreed to defer the Clerk's appraisal until the Council meeting in January.
8. **RESOLVED 6-0-0 [for-against-abstained] that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2017 be confirmed and signed as a true and accurate record**

Business Items

01 [1217] County and District Councillor's report: ML was not present to report.

02 [1217] Crime and Safety – Anti-social behaviour: TM reported that following a number of reports she and a Police Officer would be delivering Anti-social Behaviour Letters to three Queen Camel youths in the presence of their parents and she would continue to monitor the youths' behavior. She added that she made it her practice to park up in village locations popular with young people and engage them in conversation, thereby encouraging them not to behave in an anti-social manner.

03 [1217] Updates on Green Lane and Rubbish bins - deferred until the January meeting.

04 [1217] Highways:

1. A303 Sparkford to Ilchester Dualling scheme:

BN echoed concerns voiced in the public session and noted that nighttime road closures on the A303 could lead to streams of traffic passing along the High Street throughout the night. He queries HE's costings, urged the Council to challenge the Preferred Route Consultation process and stressed the importance of retaining the old A303 as a relief road.

JB advised Councillors to focus on what was most likely to succeed, namely measures to mitigate the local impact of the chosen scheme during the construction phase and thereafter. Following some discussion it was

RESOLVED 6-0-0 that after Councillors had discussed the scheme with Newgate Communications (representing Highways England) the Clerk should set out the Council's response to the Planning Inspectorate's Statutory Consultation, and if this required further consideration by the Council an extraordinary meeting should be called.

BN suggested that the Council should also write to Highways England. It was agreed that this could be discussed at the January meeting.

[Clerk's note: Item 9.3.3 was discussed at this point but for ease of reference these minutes follow the Agenda order].

2. **Signage:** The Highways Department (Highways) of Somerset County Council (SCC) is considering erecting signs warning that Blackwell Road and Wales Road are very narrow, only single lane in places, and therefore frequently blocked. Local landowners might also consider putting up warning signs of their own in fields close to the road. PPC will ask HE to consider erecting warning signs on the A303 at the approaches to the A359 and Traits Lane junctions.
3. **Engineering:** Highways are hoping to install a dropped kerb at the bottom of Hill View but the process requires them to draw up and submit a formal risk assessment and may take some time. PPC will ask Highways to check the road drains in Church Path and by the triangle and will enquire when the culvert under the Old School site and roadway next to the bridge is due for its next scheduled inspection.

[Clerk's note: At this point JPC left the meeting]

05 [1217] Planning Applications - none

06 [1217] Report on the Playing Field - deferred until the January meeting

07 [1217] Other reports and motions - none

08 [1217] Clerk's report - none

09 [1217] Finance:

1. **RESOLVED 5-0-0 to make the following payment:**

£375.86	P.Pender-Cudlip	November salary
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2. **RESOLVED 5-0-0 to agree the 2017/18 accounts, first two quarters.**

3. **2018/19 budget:**

1. **RESOLVED 4-0-1 to approve the following Parish Group allocations:**

Environment Group: £200

Flood Committee: £500

2. **RESOLVED 6-0-0 to allocate in principle up to £6.5k from the Community Benefit Fund for the purchase of a mechanical roller to be given to the Playing Field Committee for use on the cricket square.**

3. Councillors reviewed the draft consolidated budget and proposed precept as drafted by the Responsible Financial Officer and were minded to adopt them formally at the January meeting, subject to further information on any possible future Neighbourhood Planning expenses.

4. **Online banking:** Progress has been delayed by inconsistencies between records held in or accessed by different Natwest branches but the process continues.

5. **Financial regulations:** review deferred until the January meeting.
6. **Jubilee account:** those responsible for having set up the account will consider its future early next year and report to the Council in February 2018.

10 [1217] Incoming correspondence: After a brief discussion it was **RESOLVED 5-0-0 that the Clerk would enroll Queen Camel in the South Somerset District Council Christmas Tree recycling scheme if it appears practicable.**

Councillors noted the following: a schedule of surgeries to be held by David Warburton MP, an emailed update from the A303 Steering Group, Groundwork UK's Conclusion of Grant Notice, and expressions of thanks from Sparkford Copse Trust and Queen Camel Guides.

11 [1217] Advance Notices: Meeting with Newgate Communications (representing HE) - 12th December; Planning Inspectorate Consultation response deadline - 28th December.

12 [1217] Agenda items for next meeting: Council Committees; the order of items on the Agenda; reports on the Playing Field; Green Lane; the possible transfer of SCC land; rubbish bins; fingerposts; Parish Environment & Footpath Warden's report; Flood Committee Minutes (23/11); Consolidated budget; review of Financial regulations.

13 [1217] Matters arising post-Agenda - none

14 [1217] Next meeting - 7.30pm on Monday 8th January, 2018 in The Marples Room

The meeting concluded at 9.10pm

Signed:

John Brendon

Chairman

Date: [8th January, 2018]