

WEST & MIDDLE CHINNOCK PARISH COUNCIL

Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 7th April 2021 - Virtual Meeting

Cllr Bennett - Chair

Cllr Collins

Cllr White

8 Members of the General Public

Cllr Coleman – Vice Chair

Cllr Tinkley

Clerk: Kim Duller

Public Forum: i) Tractor traffic: Discussed later on the agenda ii) Increase in precept: Chair explained increase was agreed by all Councillors as part of taking into account feedback from residents over the past year. Reduction in funding for core services from central government, SCC and SSDC over past 5 years means PCs need to raise funds to cover cost of shortfall for cores services. This has been minuted on a regular basis. The rise in precept brings West & Middle Chinnock in line with other relative local village precepts based on number of residents and Band D calculation. The rise equated to £1.45 per month (Band D equivalent) for those who pay Council tax. The Chair acknowledged there had been mixed feedback with residents both in favour and against the rise. Minutes of the precept Business meeting were published in December and are available to view on the Community website. The Chair advised that the PC would take on board comments regarding communication seeking to improve in future years and undertake consultation with residents as part of community planning. Another resident who attended had requested information from the Parish Council and was happy with the response regarding the rise but supported improved information flows and dissemination and more regular updates of the community plan. ii) There was some confusion over a bench for the village hall, however all agreed this was in fact an outstanding bench for St Marys churchyard. iii) It was clarified that the Clerk had originally resigned last year, however as it was at a time when a number of Parish Councillors resigned, she agreed to stay on to support the recruitment of new Members; carry out inductions and see the Chair through to the next elections. iv) It was clarified that Greatfields land sale money is ring fenced for capital projects, Warman land building gain is ring fenced for the recreation ground development, which was the priority identified in the Community plan. This money cannot be used for any other on-going expenditure by the Parish Council.

21/789 **Apologies for absence:** Cllr Cawley due to COVID-19 and lack of access to technology. Cllr Dewsbury, unwell.

21/790 **Declarations of interest:** i) Cllr's Bennett, Coleman and Clerk, Recreation Ground Development Committee. ii) The Clerk, legal transfer of the Recreation ground. iii) Cllr White 21/795 d. i) Shiredown and 21/798 Risk b) assessment of trees, iv) Cllr Coleman, item 21/798 g. & i. Footpaths on Greatfields land and Greatfields update and 21/799 c. tractors

21/791 **To approve and sign as correct the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 03.03.21**
Resolved: That the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 03.03.21 as previously circulated were taken as read and being a correct record. To be signed after lockdown.

21/792 **Matters arising, not on agenda: None.**

21/793 **Somerset County Councillors report:** Report not received

21/794

SSDC Councillors report: Report received & circulated. Cllr Patrick request, please register to vote in local Police and Crime commissioner elections; reported £23 million support package from SSDC to make Octagon theatre cutting edge plus £10million from central government, Electric scooters introduced in Crewkerne; 100% support for people who can't pay council tax; request for residents to respond to government consultation on business case for Somerset, suggested support for Stronger Somerset bid to keep powers local rather than One Somerset unitary bid; comments passed to planning relating to 39 Ridgway.

21/795

Planning:

- a. **Applications since time of the agenda: 21/006639/HOU.** Planning Officer recommendation had been viewed by all Members. It was decided to object until revisions received and subsequent officer report published.
- b. **Determinations since time of the agenda: None**
- c. **Planning enforcement:** JN still waiting to hear back relating to Hollowell Hill.
- d. **Planning queries:**
 - i) **Shiredown:** Cllr White to write statement of historic significance and has been told by pre-planning team that there should not be an issue moving forward.
 - ii) **Smiths Hill Planning:** Still concerns pending relating to potential land slip, in particular given recent issues in Chinnock Hollow. PC as part of risk assessment to follow up concerns with Environment agency and Wessex water.

21/796

Finance:

- a. **Resolved:** To pay Clerks salary £1018.53
- b. **Resolved:** To Pay HMRC PAYE £254.40
- c. **Resolved:** To approve Qtr 4 accounts, approved by internal auditor Neil Cochran. Accounts were prepared a month earlier than usual due to move to on-line banking, however still some confirmation of receipts to come through for payments which will be finalised at the year-end accounting.
- d. **To update Parish Asset Register:** Agreed to leave as it stands however for Clerk to seek advice from SALC/NALC on calculating asset value vs. insurance value. Clerk computer to be added to asset register. Well drain cover to be listed on register when completed. Cllr Bennett to donate cost of production. Phone box also to be listed. Queried also waste bins. **Action: Clerk to seek advice.**
- e. **To update Parish Risk Assessment: Resolved** not to make any changes as risk assessment calculated in 2019 based on new Members to Parish Council, current situation similar with two new Members and one vacancy.
- f. **To Present 21/22 Budget:** Agreed to re-present with commentary in May 2021.
- g. **To Ratify Delegated Power payments March 21:**
 - i) Wood for broken fence Recreation Ground, Cllr Tinkley £10.50
 - ii) Annual Water Bill Allotments £178.00
- h. **To pay any routine or previously agreed invoices:**
 - i) **Somerset Landscapes x 2 March grass cutting and maintenance, invoice SLL31210:** Rec, Allotments, youth shelter, well, bus shelter £271.80 inc vat. **Proposed Cllr Coleman, seconded Cllr White.**

21/797

Allotments Update:

- a. **Allotment Tenants (Including leavers, applicants) and advertising:** Plots advertised with 7 expressions of interest with 2 half plots allocated, one applicant dropped out, 2 still deciding and another 2 definitely wanting plots.
- b. **Proposal Plot 20:** Plot 20 is being held back for the time being in consideration of it being an easily accessible plot for future use. The PC is meeting (TBA) with a disability advisor to consult regarding access advice for the whole of the site.
- c. **Communication Received from Tenants in March:** Summary Presented

- d. **Maximum Size of Allotments:** Identified 2 tenants impacted by 40 pole maximum. They have been contacted in writing. Deadline April 2022 with the PC engaging with both tenants to come to an amicable solution. Will be progressed after site inspection.
- e. **Allotment Inspection Update:** Saturday 10th April 2021
- f. **Tenant Applications for Structures:** No applications this month.
- g. **Hedge at top of Allotments:** Cut back brambles by Somerset Landscapes, will review growth as it comes through.

21/798

Matters arising from the March 2021 meeting:

- a. **Recreation Ground adjacent field, written permission for steps:** Ongoing discussion, considered a liability issue with farmer with use by general public. It was suggested a way forward could be for the sports clubs to consider putting a set of steps which would meet/conform to “safety regulations” and cover for any liability under their own insurance for use by sports clubs only. The idea of a gate was also suggested, but it was felt this may encourage visitors to go through the gate for access unless kept padlocked. Clear signage was also discussed and the potential of a “high” fence as seen in other sports fields. Concern was raised that village opinion may be sensitive with regard to moving the steps; all agreed it was a difficult liability issue, in the modern world. **Action: Clerk to speak to tenant to establish Landowner, Gibbs Estate views regarding steps or potential of a gate. Neil Cochran to speak to football club and cricket club to determine whether their insurance will cover liability.**
- b. **Smokey Hole & Smiths Hills Trees overhang, land owners responsibility for Risk Assessment:** Received written confirmation correspondence from Guy Coleman and Richard Holloway. Outstanding from John Marks. **Action: Cllr White agreed to follow up.**
- c. **Triscombe, Higher Street:** Take off agenda due to change of tenant.
- d. **Locality Officer:** Cllr Collins has an update and he will contact the Clerk after the meeting. **C/F to May meeting.**
- e. **Broken Road Markers at bottom of Poop Hill:** Clerk had previously circulated information on various options to purchase, which were discussed. Posts need concreting in on the verge as well as markers on the fence. Cllrs Tinkley and White, with the support from John Grainger, resident volunteered to carry out the work subject to a second inspection. **Resolved: Markers to be replaced, both on verge and fence. Budget agreed £150.00. If cost is higher, need to pass by full Council at next meeting. Proposed Cllr Bennett seconded Cllr White. All in favour.**
- f. **Riverbank Collapse, Scott’s Way:** Cllr Bennett has tried to contact landowner Mr Lock and will continue to chase. The situation could become worse if more heavy rain, therefore needs monitoring. **Action: Cllr Bennett to contact Mr Lock during April 21.**
- g. **Footpaths:** Cllr Coleman has kindly agreed to take over the footpath portfolio. Latest updates on Parish work plan as follows: Request to put gates rather than stiles for easier access for walkers on local paths. Update from Guy Coleman following meeting with George Montague footpaths lead SCC. GM has agreed to supply and fit a new gate on Y28/20 stile id 4506 off of East Lane; he also wants the stiles changed to gates on Y28/1, stile id 4500 & 4501 Y28/2 Issue 59871 & Y28/5 stile id’s 5013 & 5014. Stile Id 5033 on footpath Y28/4 which Wynn-Williams raised at the PCC meeting is on action list. Concerns raised regarding walkers straying off designated footpaths, close to the footpaths around Little Silver, which are being addressed with fencing.
- h. **Fly Tipping:** At least 40 Oil containers, with oil inside dumped on Broadstone Land farm, cleared by the farmer, took a day to clear and then paid for disposal. Land to be fenced and gated. SSDC Cllr Patrick offered to support with removal if fly tipping happened again at Broadstone farm.

- i. **Greatfields, Replacement Gate and Rights of Way:** No update.
- j. **FWAG:** Clerk still waiting for a response. **C/F to May meeting.**
- k. **Corona Virus: Feedback: Chair**
 - i) Local response: No further information apart from next stage of lifting of lockdown starting from 12th April 21.
 - ii) Direct legislative impact on Parish Council: Guidance as per previous lockdown.
 - iii) Recreation ground: Guidance as per previous lockdown. No further signs needed at the Rec unless there are further changes.
 - iv) Concerns at local level: None during March.

21/799

Reports & Correspondence:

- a. **Parish Work Plan:** Previously circulated. Will be posted on PC website each month.
- b. **Willow Tree at Recreation Ground – Risk Assessment:** 3 contractors contacted to provide quote for short and long-term assessment and to quote for any remedial work necessary. One response so far. Closing date 16th April 2021. Still not currently dangerous, but needs a decision by end of April before major leaf growth. Willow at Rec Bridge is also likely to require additional works, especially as the main branch extends over the car park.
- c. **Clerk Report on Correspondence received during March 21.** All covered in previous Member reports except for i) Query for ring fenced budget for speed. ii) Query on precept iii) Query on Tractors through Middle Chinnock. Cllr Coleman updated Members explaining that Broadstone will be looking to put in connecting tracks, however as the land had only recently been purchased, massive investment had gone in to converting the Land to organic which would benefit the community. Investment has also taken place for hedges and ditches. A plan will be implemented to reduce tractor traffic, however the closure of Chinnock Hollow has also impacted on the ability to do a full circle and access land during closure is expected for several months. The tanker run has been reduced to every other day and most deliveries by articulated Lorries are either weekly or monthly. The Chair thanked Cllr Coleman for the update and the amount of work that had been done to mitigate the concerns which had been raised. Zoe Grainger, resident thanked Broadstone for speaking to tractor drivers who are driving thoughtfully and respectfully through the villages and there is a big difference since the previous meeting. Cllr White also seconded what Zoe had said and agreed drivers have been much more considerate. Cllr Coleman encouraged residents to call Broadstone if they had any concerns and that they will continue to invest with and work as closely with the community as they possibly can.
- d. **GDPR:** The Clerk confirmed a GDPR issue during late March 2021. Having spoken to COI, the Clerk confirmed it was not a reportable incident and the plan in place had addressed all issues of security and the matter was closed.
- e. **Highways and Ditches Standing Item:** Pot holes becoming a major issue, however these are being gradually marked up and mended. Pots holes between rec and Middle Chinnock have become serious and have been reported. Culverts are blocked which have been reported on a number of occasions, since before September 20, however are the cause of the pot holes. **Action: Clerk to review with Highways.**
- f. **Solar Project:** Cllr White is waiting for contact from Chiselborough PC, who is leading the project.

- g. Drains Standing Item:** Cllr White reported outstanding drain issues via website. Concerned that there is no feedback, however Clerk confirmed regular contact with SCC, however funding is an issue and B roads are still being classed as priority. The Chair summed up the discussion by explaining the on-going issues with drains is having a knock on effect and long term impact on the state and safety of roads and potential flood risk. The local drains are now on a 3 year schedule of cleaning and therefore the Parish Council has had to take a decision to put funding aside for maintenance as part of the 2021/22 increase in precept and taking responsibility at local level since funding was dramatically cut. Top of Poop Hill drains still blocked however resistance by SCC to prioritise unblocking the drain as mud is regularly carried on to the Road from the field/gate entrance to the north of Poop Hill. Also reported, drain at Little Silver.
- h. Recreation Ground:**
- i) **Recreation Ground Gate:** Reported it had been bent, however after inspection deemed to be useable.
 - ii) **Recreation Ground Purchase:** Received update from Battens solicitors. Chair still concerned regarding SSDC legal fees after the initial agreement was a peppercorn transfer. **Clerk/Chair to discuss with SSDC Cllr Patrick.**
- i. Recreation Ground Development:** The committee had met again. Although everyone had presented their own ideas and there was synergy, still some areas of disagreement. The Committee agreed to propose to contract a landscape/open space consultant with expert knowledge to take on board Committee views and give independent advice, draft schemes/plans/ideas and run a public consultation, taking on board views and presenting alternative plans. Iain White has led this side of the project and 3 contractors have been consulted from a list of recommended experts and quotes are being gathered. Information from previous consultations would be also fed to the consultants, including from the Community plan consultation and various organisations. Cllr Patrick gave his support and was pleased with the progress and encouraged applications to SSDC for future funding. **Members were open to consider up to £3000.00 to be released from the Warman Recreation Ground ring fenced fund as part of the development for an independent design proposal, subject to agreement.**
- j. Purchase of new bin at Recreation Ground:** A number of designs and costs had previously been circulated. Members favoured the sympathetic countryside style. John Grainger, resident offered to take on board Members ideas and design a bin which would be significantly cheaper than purchasing one. **Resolved: John Grainger, resident agreed to design and build a bin after sending proposals and quote to the PC for ratification with a budget up to £300.00. Clerk to check with SSDC if they would offer recycling options before final design agreed. Proposed by Cllr Bennett seconded Cllr Coleman. All in favour.**
- k. Resignation of Cllr Dewsbury:** Cllr Dewsbury was not able to attend the meeting. Her resignation was accepted by the Chair, who thanked Cllr Dewsbury for her service, hard work and enthusiasm when she was on the Parish Council.
- l. Councillor Vacancy:** Clerk to implement procedure for Casual Vacancy. One resident put their name forward.
- m. Police & Crime Commissioner Elections 6th May 2021:** Previously circulated to Members.
- n. Phosphate update SSDC:** Previously circulated, motion co-written by SSDC Cllr Patrick, highlighting amount of raw sewage being pumped in to rivers, including storm overflow in East Chinnock which sends hundreds of hours of sewage into Chinnock Brook through West & Middle Chinnock. **The Chair thanked Cllr Patrick for his support on highlighting the matter.**

- o. Recycle More Service SSDC:** Information previously circulated. Members have been offered the chance of training. Being rolled out across South Somerset after a successful start in Mendip. Somerset has one of the highest recycling rates in the country. More information to follow. Roll out in June 21.

21/800

Matters for the 5th May 2021 Agenda

- a.** Any Agenda items to be forwarded to the Clerk before 29th April 2021

Meeting closed 10.03pm

Next Meeting/s

Annual Parish Meeting Wednesday 5th May 2021 7.00pm, Remote Meeting

Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 5th May 2021 7.30pm, Remote Meeting