

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHEDZOY PARISH COUNCIL HELD BY TELEPHONE
CONFERENCE CALL ON MONDAY 20th JULY 2020 AT 7.30 PM.**

Present: - Cllrs. Marion Dethier, Brian Gale, Pat Lennard, John Paige and Rodney Young.

Also present: - Cllrs. David Hall (SCC) and Liz Perry (SDC).

In attendance: - the Clerk (Chris Fry).

1. **Apologies:** - Cllrs. Simon Howes (Chairman) and Anthony Betty (SDC).

In the absence of the Chairman, Cllr. Marion Dethier presided over the meeting.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting** of 15th June 2020 were taken as read, agreed and signed.

3. **Matters arising from the minutes:** -

- a. **Coronavirus report (Local).**

John Paige reported on the local support system which has been in operation since the start of the pandemic.

He said demand for assistance was now tailing off, with him personally handling three clients at present. He feels people are feeling more confident to do their own shopping and prescription collections. John added that more of the social gatherings had taken place in the village hall field and that one more is planned.

- b. **Grass verge in Manor Road.**

A concerned villager has very kindly undertaken voluntary work here, having raked over the area and planted grass seed which has now germinated. He carried out the first cut this very morning to get rid of the annual weeds.

- c. **Bus shelter tree problem.**

This was raised at the last meeting and concerns berries from the yew tree overhanging the shelter dropping off and being trodden on by school children and subsequently causing a mess wherever they went.

Rodney Young has managed to solve the problem. The periodic statutory safety pruning for Western Power Distribution of the yew tree to keep its branches clear of the power line at the site happens to be taking place soon, and Rodney has had a meeting with Gareth Mansfield of Hi-Line (the contactors involved in the work), who has agreed to carry out a general pruning of the yew tree in addition to what is required simply to fulfil the safety angle. This to be done at no cost to the Parish Council.

4. **County Councillor's report:** - David Hall reported as follows: -

- a. **Unitary Authority proposal for Somerset.**

The outline proposal has been presented to the SCC cabinet (and agreed) and will shortly be presented to a full SCC council meeting, and thereafter to the Secretary of State.

The views of the various county district councils will be taken into account.

The Clerk said that the view of Duncan McGinty, Leader of Sedgemoor District Council was opposed to the move. Liz Perry said she would send a copy of Duncan's statement on the matter to the Clerk.

b. Somerset Waste Partnership.

The recycling collections were now back on track and the county recycling centres now fully reopened. This has been achieved at the same time as the main contractor has changed.

c. Libraries.

Phased reopening is occurring, albeit on an “order and collect” basis initially.

d. Registration of Births and Marriages.

The understandable back log caused by the pandemic should be cleared by September.

e. Highways.

Aided by lighter than usual traffic during the lock down, the top dressing of the county highways has been completed.

f. Hinkley Point.

Pleasingly, no new covid cases have been reported among the work force. Social distancing is in place, as far as possible and the work force is building up, benefitting from the good weather.

g. Grant Aid.

The County Council has a fund of money to promote EE 4G services.

5. District Councillor’s report: - Liz Perry reported as follows: -

a. Unitary Authority.

Liz reminded the meeting that the view of the SDC Leader was opposed to the proposals.

b. SDC grant aid to promote healthy living projects.

Liz said there were funds available with grants from £500 upwards. She said the criteria for applicants was under review and she would keep us advised.

c. “Zoom” meeting of the full SDC council.

The first zoom meeting of the full SDC councillors is to be held at the end of July.

d. Planning committee meetings.

These are already being held via “zoom” on a fortnightly basis.

6. Planning.

a. One new application: -

Application No: - 18/20/00005/LR.

Applicant: - Mr & Mrs Crocker.

Location: - 5 West End Court, Chedzoy Lane, Chedzoy, Bridgwater TA7 8QS.

Proposal: - Erection of a two storey extension to the rear (north) elevation and erection of a single storey extension to the front (south) elevation.

The Clerk outlined the position here, saying West End Court was effectively a separate hamlet from the village of Chedzoy and situated half way down Chedzoy Lane. Other similar proposals to extend dwellings there have been supported by the parish council in the past. He pointed out that neighbouring residents will have been consulted. He noted that there were no letters of opposition on the SDC planning portal as at today, and that both English Heritage and the Highways had no objections.

It was noted that flood Proofing/Resilient Techniques are included in the design.

Following a discussion, the Vice-Chair verbally consulted each councillor present, with the vote being unanimously in support of the proposal.

The Clerk was asked to convey the following comments to the SDC Planning department: -

“The Parish Council of Chedzoy supports this application and has no other comment to make”.

b. Solar Park update: -

In his absence, Cllr. Anthony Betty sent in an email saying that Enso are waiting for plans to be finalised before circulating each house in Chedzoy with any details.

The matter is at the very earliest stage.

7. Correspondence.

a. Grass cuttings placed on local drainage ditches.

Marion Dethier had requested this matter be discussed at this meeting, as it had been reported to her that garden clippings and grass cuttings were being dumped in drainage ditches at various locations throughout the village. The Clerk said in his view this is really a type of “fly tipping” and resulted in surface water not being able to drain away the periods of heavy rain.

Pat Lennard reminded the meeting that blocked ditches at the bottom of gardens in Higher Road (the ditches are in Manor Road), has been discussed a number of years ago. SCC Highways had told the Clerk that there was little point in them carrying out improvements to the road surface until the ditches are cleared, which the Clerk understands is the personal responsibility of the householders, whether they be owner occupiers or tenants.

In an attempt to gain some clarification (at least) the Clerk was asked to refer the problem to “Homes in Sedgemoor”, with the matter to be discussed again at the September meeting of the parish council.

b. Statutory safety pruning (at the bus shelter) for Western Power Distribution.

The Clerk reported that he had given approval on behalf of the parish council to the contractors who will be carrying out this work in the near future.

(See item 3(c) above.

c. Clerks’ and Councillors’ magazine.

The latest of this regular publication has been received.

8. Matters arising from the correspondence.

None.

9. Finance: -

Balances after all outstanding items have cleared: -

Lloyds Bank current account: - £5702.75.

“ “ deposit “ : - **£2.48.**

Cambridge Council EA account: - £12372.04.

The Clerk reminded the meeting that the second half of the 2020/2021 Precept, amounting to £4250, would be received later in the year.

Four cheques to issue: -

No 694 £305.14 payee CN Fry (July and August net salary).
695 £73.04 " " (expenses).
696 £119.79 " SALC (affiliation fee 2020/2021).
697 £50.00 " Sedgemoor CAB (annual donation).

Clerk's request for a salary review to take effect from 1st April 2021 will need to be considered when the Precept setting exercise takes place later in the year.

His proposal is as follows: -

Bearing in mind it is now five years since his salary was last reviewed, and taking into account the greatly increased workload there has been during that time, together with the fact that it is recognised that for a council of Chedzoy's size the appropriate paid hours should be in the region of 20 per month (he is paid just four hours per week), he proposes the following increase should be considered: -

An uplift to five hours per week at the increased rate of £12.50 per hour, with expenses to remain as at present.

5 hours @ £12.50 = £62.50 per week, or £3250 per year (currently £2288 per year).

10. Any other business and date of next meeting.

Any other business.

Pat Lennard expresses the hope that this might be the last virtual meeting and Rodney Young said that there is some hope that this could indeed be the case.

The Clerk said he was away on holiday for three weeks from 7th August and that he would arrange for any planning proposal to be sent to the Chairman in his absence.

Date of next meeting Monday 21st September 2020 at 7.30 (venue to be advised in due course)

There being no other business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.06 pm.