

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CHEDZOY PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 15TH NOVEMBER 2021 AT 7.30 PM.

Present: - Cllrs. Brian Gale, Simon Howes (Chairman), 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. Marion Dethier and Nick Griffiths.

2. Minutes of the pr

-vious meeting of 18th October were taken as read, agreed and signed.

3. Matters arising from the minutes: -

a. Footpath activity incl. (blocked) footpath BW 8/6 near the KSD.

Following the last meeting, the Clerk has had a telephone conversation with the landowner who advised that he was self-isolating. He stated that he was concerned at the security of his land following the recent incidents involving the balaclava-clad badger cull protesters in the village, and he said he would consider clearing the footpath and agreeing to the installation of a stile at the entrance in a year or so, when the protests had died down.

Following the Clerk advising relevant parties of this conversation, an email has been received from the footpath officer in which he challenged any acceptance of the status quo and suggests the PC should make representation to SCC and the EA (again) who apparently compulsorily purchased the land in the 1970s to facilitate the widening of the KDS.

A discussion took place and all councillors' present felt that pressure should be maintained, with renewed efforts being made to rectify the situation. To this end the Clerk was asked to request the footpath officer for full background information on this long-standing issue, either in person at the next meeting, or in written report form and to allow appropriate action to be taken to return the footpath to normal use..

The matter will be placed on the agenda of the December meeting.

b. Climate Change project update.

The project is progressing well and on budget, with very good community engagement although more volunteers were always welcome. John Paige reported that he had placed an appeal for volunteers on the website for four further dates to progress the project, which seems to be going well.

The Clerk reported receiving the agreement of the neighbouring landowner, behind the church, to the temporary boundary fence that has been installed to mark the boundary of the Whittling Wood, until such time as it takes to obtain firm quotations for the permanent fence, probably when world wood prices settle down, when a qualified surveyor would be employed to formally mark the boundary. The Parish Council has agreed to cover the surveying costs.

c. Drainage matters.

There is a degree of frustration in the PC, at SCC Highway's prolonged difficulties in establishing whose responsibility it is to complete the cleansing of the concrete outfall ditch in pig Lane. No further information has been received from Lawrence Hackling on the matter and we can only assume that he is again endeavouring to obtain Wessex Water's agreement to progress things. The Clerk was asked to maintain pressure until a resolution is found.

On a more positive note, David Hall reminded the meeting that significant blockages to pipework and the drainage ditch near Temple Farm has been revealed by recent jetting reports, with SCC Highways agreeing to clear the obstructions in the outfall ditch on this occasion even though it is the responsibility of the landowner to maintain this ditch.

d. Speed Indicator Device (incl. a discussion on the receipt of the PC's share of the CIL levy of £2240.25 as a potential funding source).

The Chairman has been investigating this topic and he presented two illustrations he has obtained, of SIDs which illuminate when detecting speeding vehicles, with a "Slow down" indication where appropriate. The proposal is to purchase a sign and a total of three mounting brackets to allow multiple installation sites where deemed appropriate throughout the village. Costings (excl. of vat) are £2263 and £2613 (£350 more) for the model that records data for analytical purposes.

A comprehensive discussion took place, with all councillors present agreeing to utilise the CIL Meaningful Proportion received by the PC relating to the Glebe House development, towards the cost. It was also agreed that it would be useful to have a second rechargeable battery to facilitate continuous monitoring.

A motion to proceed on this basis was proposed by Pat Lennard and seconded by John Paige, as follows: -

"The PC agrees to delegate to the Chairman responsibility in the acquisition of a SID at a total cost (exclusive of vat) in the region of £2763".

It was agreed to fund the balance of the purchase cost, amounting to approximately £523, from reserves. John Paige agreed to work with the chairman to conclude the acquisition and installation of the device.

e. HM Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons – 2nd June 2022.

Procedural details concerning the registration of any Jubilee Beacons have been received and passed to The Chairman and John Paige. Due to time constraints at this meeting, the Chairman requested this item be placed on the agenda for the December meeting. All present agreed.

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

a. Unitary Authority preparations.

David reported on the recent meeting of the newly formed Implementation authority, consisting of nine local authority leaders from the five councils in Somerset, of which he represents one. The necessary structural change orders have now received Parliamentary approval. Things like the timing of elections and other administrative issues were discussed at the meeting.

The PC Chairman expressed the desire that the effect that unitisation will have on the day to day activities of parish councils will, in due course, be revealed.

b. Flooding issues in the county.

David reported that a film has been produced focussing on the EA flood preventative measures including those on the Sowy river. He said the film gives a pleasing insight into the Somerset county landscape.

c. Gravity site at Puriton.

This is progressing well. It is possible that a large manufacturer of electric vehicles could be attracted to the site.

d. Hinkley Point.

There are some mitigation issues concerning the uplift of workforce numbers although no issues relating to Chedzoy were reported.

e. Chedzoy Climate Change project.

David wished to congratulate all concerned with this very topical and successful project and again suggested that SCC may wish to use the project for media and promotional purposes.

Cllr Hall left the meeting at this point.

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

a. Gravity site at Puriton.

Liz said that SDC were holding an informal consultation – a Local Development Order (LDO) – which runs until 8th December, with local events being held.

b. COP – 26.

SDC are collaborating with Burnham and Weston Energy and the university of Exeter with the aim of running a free online event on the outcome of COP 26 and its impacts locally, and the opportunities we can implement now to accelerate our progress towards the local 2030 carbon neutral ambition. She said she was attending this on Wednesday 24th November 2021 from 10 – 12 pm and she will keep us informed.

c. SDC sports funding.

Liz confirmed that grant funding is still available to individuals and groups engaged in sporting activities. For further details go to: -

www.rob.semple@sedgemoor.gov.uk

6. Planning.

Application number: - 18/21/00008.

Applicant: - Mrs Foot.

Location: - (Annex at) Fry's Farm, Front Street, Chedzoy, Bridgwater TA7 8RE.

Proposal: - Retrospective application for the erection of a conservatory to the side (SW) elevation and formation of a balcony to the rear (NW) elevation and installation of roof lights to the front (NE) elevation.

The Chairman opened a discussion by outlining the reason for and overview of the application. Following approval (reference 18/17/00006) for the conversion of a then existing garage into an annex for the applicant, works were started within the three year time frame, and recently completed. Unfortunately, as the project progressed, the applicant was ill advised that planning permission would not be required for some modifications and additions to the proposal, hence the need for this retrospective application.

The parish councillors discussed the application and noted that there appeared to be no formal objections raised by residents although it was not known if the applicant and/or SDC had placed planning notices regarding the application. The Clerk confirmed that it is not the responsibility of the parish council to place planning notices. Following the discussion the Clerk was asked to submit the following comments to SDC planners: -

“The Parish Council of Chedzoy does not object to this application number 18/21/00008 on the basis that there have been no objections raised by residents. We are assuming that correct planning notices have been placed by the relevant party and that the planning authority is content that residents have been made aware of the proposed plans.”

7. Correspondence – none.

8. Matters arising from the correspondence – none.

9. Finance.

Balances after allowing for all outstanding items to clear: -

Current account: - £14,052.56 (PC £11,494.54 FS £2,558.02).

Deposit account: - £2.48.

Cambridge account: - £12,389.43 (earmarked funds).

Seven cheques issued: -

No 755 £515.00 payee RK Countryside and Garden Services (Front Street work) **FS.**

No 756 £1000.00 “ SW Bryan (Trees, compost, wild wood tree pack) **FS.**

No 757 £718.50 “ “ (“ “ “) **FS.**

No 758 £1000.00 “ “ (Management fee – first half) **FS.**

No 759 £216.20 “ CN Fry (November net salary).

No 760 £68.43 “ “ (expenses).

No 761 £ 495.00 “ “ (due to P Clapp – playing field grass cutting).

The Meaningful Proportion of the CIL levy due from the Glebe House development, amounting to £2240.25, has been received and is proposed to be used to fund a speed indicator device (see above).

Precept setting exercise 2022/2023.

Reserves at the start of the year stood at £5580.

After due allowance for the bus shelter tree pruning (due in January 2022), of £815 (inclusive of vat), and bearing in mind there has been no requirement for expenditure on the bus shelter garden of £360 or Clarion printing costs of £200 this year, together with the Clerk's expenses running well below expectations, estimated reserves at the current year end could be approximately £6500.

The Clerk presented a line by line explanation of anticipated expenditure for 2022/2023, projected to be in the region of £8000.

The Clerk reported that the external auditors regularly raised queries as to the level of PC reserves and the need to keep them down, there appeared to be some limited scope to reduce the precept for 2022/2023 below that raised for the current year.

The Chairman began the discussion by pointing out the many possible future financial demands that the PC could face, eg: -

Unitary Authority changes, the development of a Parish Plan, Platinum Jubilee celebrations and beacon, SID, local flooding and Church funding issues.

He proposed that it would seem prudent to retain reserves at their present anticipated levels. Following this general discussion, all councillors agreed with this and it was proposed by Brian Gale and seconded by Rodney Young that a precept of £8000 plus the current RPI increase (£200 at 2.5 %) be set for 2022/2023. It was also agreed that the precept be linked to RPI in the future.

The Clerk was asked to apply for a Precept of £8200 for the year 2022/2023.

All in Favour.

10. Any other business and date of next meeting (20th December 2021).

Any other business.

a. Clerk's and council's direct publication.

The current issue has been received.

b. Somerset Waste Partnership Christmas and New Year arrangements.

The Christmas and New Year collection details have been received and John Paige will be kindly put these on the website.

There being no other business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.04 pm.

