

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CHEDZOY PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 20th June 2022 AT 7.30 PM.

Present: Cllrs. Mary Clothier, Marion Dethier (Chair), Brian Gale and Russell Harmes.

Also present: Cllr. Andy Dingwall.

In attendance: The Clerk (Chris Fry) and three member of the public.

1. **Apologies:** Cllrs. Simon Howes, Karen Medland and Rodney Young. Cllrs. Anthony Betty (SDC) and Diogo Rodrigues (SCC)
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting of 16th May 2022 and the Annual Meeting of 16th May 2022** were taken as read, agreed and signed.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes:**

a. **Footpath Officer's report:** -

The Clerk read a report received from the Parish Footpaths Officer (also the County Council Rights of Way Liaison Officer), He has been clearing footpaths as far as possible and in May the path behind the Churchyard wall was cut back to enable walkers to use the new bench, also the leading from the Church clapper stile towards the playing field. He has also cleared the recently re-opened footpath at Parchey from its entrance to the first waterside field. Sadly someone has hung a number of bags, apparently containing dog waste, on tree branches near the entrance, and despite comments on Facebook and other reactions, they remain in place.

Whilst working on that path, Ian met a walker from Frome, confirming that it is not just locals that use the footpath network.

The path crossing the field behind the Church is regularly used, and is passable through the growing grain crop.

Wearing his County Council Rights of Way Officer's hat, Ian was asked to check footpaths BW 3/4 and BW 8/10 from the former Half Way pub on the Westonzoyland Road to opposite Temple Farm on Chedzoy Lane (a distance of 2.57 km), to establish if there were any fallen trees etc. which might prevent the contractor they pay to flail part of the footpaths from carrying out the necessary work.

Regretfully there was no response to the Clerk's recent appeal on the village Facebook page for some additional voluntary help to ease Ian's workload, particularly in the growing season.

b. **Climate Change Project update.**

The intense activity over the past year or so in setting up and installing the project is now, to an extent, subsiding, although maintenance of the project will be a permanent on-going requirement. Steph Bryan, the team leader and co-ordinator, has agreed to draw up a maintenance timetable, which Mary Clothier (one of the team of volunteers) advises will involve a significant amount of work which will need an on-going voluntary team to attend to.

The SCC Climate Team committee require regular financial reports to be submitted over the coming few years and Steph has kindly agreed to carry out the first of these

before handing the responsibility over to the Clerk for the future submissions.

The Clerk was asked to arrange for the boundary of the burial ground extension (currently incorporated as part of the Fair Share Scheme), to be professionally marked, and he will contact Ian Walker of Messrs Tamlyns of Bridgwater appropriately to arrange this. The Parish Council has already agreed to cover the cost involved.

c. Earthworks at King Sedgemoor Drain.

The Clerk reported that he has received an email since the last meeting from the project manager at the Environment Agency, giving complete details of the project which is scheduled to start in July and (weather permitting and apart from any other risks such as archaeological digs) run until November 2022, which to a large extent allays the understandable misgivings previously held by the Parish Council.

The only traffic using the roads through the village will be all wheeled drive transportation vehicles conveying the workforce to the site at the start of the working day and away when work finishes.

The banks of the KDS will be raised by between 10 – 30 cms. And any additional material needed will come from existing stretches of the KSD banks that are already higher than the required level ie. Excess material that is sourced close by. The project will involve no HGV traffic passing through the village, for example, material sourced from the right-hand bank that is required for the opposite bank will be taken over Parchey Bridge and down Moor Drove using a dumper. Most of the travelling will be on Moor Drove itself, except when briefly it will be necessary for the dumper to travel along approximately 400 metres of Ward Lane itself. The contractor will erect signs on Ward Lane, together with any other resources so that road users and residents alike are suitable forewarned.

d. SID relocation.

Following the restoration of the 30 mph repeater sign opposite Manor Farm, the SID has been relocated there. For the present Simon Howes has kindly taken on responsibility for the maintenance of the SID equipment, which will be moved between three sites on the approaches to the village.

e. Jubilee celebrations.

1. Hinkley Connection Jubilee hamper.

This was the subject of a free draw of all the households in the village, a process that produced a very grateful winning family.

Rodney Young has kindly sent a photograph of the presentation of the hamper, together with a write-up to the Hinkley Connections Community Relations Team, as they had requested.

2. SDC £200 Jubilee grant.

The Clerk outlined the passage of events here. SDC kindly offered a grant of up to £200 to each parish in Sedgemoor towards the cost of Jubilee celebrations. The process was handled valiantly by an apprentice at SDC who arranged the completion of a six page agreement before liaising with the Finance department for the funds to be remitted. This was achieved just three days before the Jubilee

weekend. The Clerk forwarded this to the Village Hall committee promptly using his own funds via the BACS system. He will be reimbursed in due course.

3. Jubilee Beacon equipment.

A discussion took place surrounding the eventual siting of the Jubilee Beacon at the bus shelter garden. The Clerk was asked to make certain enquiries and place the subject on the agenda of the July meeting when final arrangements can be agreed.

4. Jubilee mugs.

The Village Hall committee Treasurer (present at the meeting), confirmed that a free Jubilee mug was presented to all households both in the village and a little further outside to include the whole of Chedzoy Lane and down to Parchey Bridge and all of Fowlers Plot. A total of 205 mugs were distributed with the remaining 47 being sold off at £3 each. The eventual net cost to the committee was £709.88.

4. County Councillor's report: -

Andy Dingwall reported as follows: -

a. Local Government reorganisation (LRG).

A combined workforce of 1100 from the District Councils as well as the County Council are working hard to ensure the new Unitary Somerset Council will successfully begin its life on 1st April 2023 (just 41 weeks away). There are 2000 combined assets of the councils in total.

b. Extraordinary full Council meeting.

An extraordinary full council meeting was held last week, triggered by the opposition parties, to discuss salary bandings, bearing in mind it is necessary to appoint a new CEO following the departure of the current one.

c. Primary School admissions.

93.4% of parents achieved their first choice of primary school for their children and 98% were offered a school in their top three choices.

d. Sedgemoor Local Plan.

In response to a question from a member of the public, Andy advised that the current Sedgemoor Local Plan (in which Chedzoy is classed as a Tier 4 settlement), will be rolled over when the new Unitary Council comes into being.

e. SDC Bridgwater House offices.

In answer to another question, Andy said that it is his understanding that the current SDC Bridgwater House offices will be retained when Sedgemoor ceases to exist.

5. District Councillors' report: -

Although Anthony Betty was unable through injury to attend the meeting, he sent the Clerk the following update that was not picked up until after the meeting.

a. Proposed Solar Park.

Anthony has again asked for an update on the locally sited proposed solar park (for which plans have not yet been submitted), and he thinks the delay could mean the company responsible are waiting to compare the viability of the proposed solar park at North Petherton.

b. Northgate Yard development.

This is progressing well and the project remains on target for completion in the autumn of 2022.

c. Sedgemoor grant aid still available.

Various grants are still available from SDC for either groups or individuals to apply for, for various purposes. It appears unclear if these will continue to be available when the new Unitary Authority comes into being, now could be a good time to apply

For more details go to:-

<https://www.sedgemoor.gov.uk/article/1479/applying-for-Grants-funding-2022-23>

6. Planning: - No new applications.

**Application reference 18/21/00005.
Land behind Quantock View.**

Following the request made at the last meeting, Marion Dethier briefly outlined the need, as she sees it, for Parish Councillors to be aware of any conditions placed on planning applications at the time of decisions made by SDC and posted on the planning portal.

There are ten such conditions attached to the "Granted Permission" status of the above application.

7. Correspondence: - none.

8. Matter arising from the correspondence: - None.

9. Finance:

Balances after due allowance of all outstanding items: -

Lloyds Bank current account	£ 11,121.72 (PC)	£9895.87 (FS)	£1,225.85).
“ “ deposit	“ £ 2.48.		
Cambridge BS	“ £ 12,401.82 (earmarked funds).		

Five cheques to issue (two FS cheques issued between meetings).

No 792 £937.80 payee SW Bryan (herbs, compost and trees) FS.

No 793 £626.40 “ “ (signs and T-shirts) FS.

No 774 £216.40 “ CN Fry (June net salary).

No 795 £ 200.00 payee CN Fry (reimbursement SDC Jubilee grant).

No 796 £ 81.79 “ CN Fry (expenses).

a. Internal Auditor's report.

The Clerk outlined the internal auditor's report in which it is confirmed that there are no problems with the audit, and goes on to recommend that the Clerk approaches the Parish Council about an increase in paid hours to cover the significant additional workload carried out in connection with the Fair Share project.

The Clerk said that he considers a conversation on this subject to only now be starting, and he will draw up and submit a written request to the Parish Council in due course. Mary Clothier suggested the Clerk should take into account the on-going nature of the project, including the requirement for periodic financial reports to be submitted to the SCC Climate Change grant committee.

b. New Lloyds Bank mandate.

With the need for the new Chair to be included in the signatory list at Lloyds Bank, the necessary mandate was completed.

10. Any other business and date of next meeting (Monday 18th July 2022).

Any other business:

a. Amenity Grants 2022/2023.

The Clerk confirmed the receipt of an application from St Mary's Churchyard for a significant increase in support for the coming year.

The Playing Field committee and the Village Hall committee were reminded of the need to submit their applications by the July meeting.

b. Allotment field landlord's valuation inspection.

We are advised that Knight Frank LLP will be carrying out a valuation exercise and access will be needed in the near future.

c. Northgate Yard newsletter.

The June 2022 newsletter has been received.

d. Allotment field entrance.

An allotment holder who has regularly strimmed and cut the entrance lane to the allotment field has suggested that he needs some help in covering the cost, particularly bearing in mind the current hike in fuel prices.

Following a discussion which covered various aspects the Clerk was asked to have an appropriate talk with the allotment holder and report back to the July meeting.

e. Playing field grass cutting.

Mary Clothier (also a member of the Playing field committee), asked about the regularity in which the grass is cut and she was advised that it is carried out as and when necessary, and it is open to the committee to request the contractor cut it more frequently, if needed.

f. Parish Councillor training.

The Clerk was asked to arrange for some training for the three new councillors.

g. Broadband.

In response to a question from a member of the public, it seems that most villagers get their broadband from Truespeed, who are currently offering competitive contracts.

h. Chedzoy Lane cycle path extension.

A proposal to extend the cycle lane over the motorway bridge on the way into Bridgwater on the south side at the end of Chedzoy Lane via the A39 is being launched by a cycling member of the public, and it was presented with a request for the support of the Parish Council.

At the junction of Chedzoy Lane with the A39, rising at that point over the motorway bridge, requires a potentially dangerous manoeuvre by cyclists joining fast vehicular traffic on the main road. Furthermore, there is often a need for cyclists to stop on the steep gradient before the apex of the incline at the junction, which involves another dangerous manoeuvre.

In April 2021 a cyclist was killed in a collision with a speeding car at this site.

SCC works programme is based on collision and traffic data which prioritises road safety and congestion issues. This proposal therefore clearly fits this criteria.

The proposal aims to get the existing grass verge running from the entrance of the cycleway running around the corner into Chedzoy Lane to be tarmacked, thereby providing a safer entry route to the cycleway.

There is a consultation exercise currently underway on the recently published local government ten year cycling and walking plan, namely "the Bridgwater Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan", but Parish Councils are not included in the consultee list.

Following a comprehensive discussion a motion to support the improvement scheme was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Mary Clothier with all in agreement, and the Clerk was asked to draw up and send a letter of support to: -

County-roads-sedgemoor@somerset.gov.uk and
TrafficManagement@somerset.gov.uk

The date of the next meeting – 18th July 2022.

There being no other business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.44 pm.

