

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CHEDZOY PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 15th APRIL 2024 AT 7.30 PM.

Present: - Cllrs. Graham Bentley, Marion Dethier (Chair), Russell Harnes, Mark Holder and Rodney Young.

Also present: - Cllr. Andy Dingwall (SC).

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

1. **Apologies:** - Cllrs. Mary Clothier and Simon Howes..
2. **Minutes of the last meeting of 18th March and the planning meeting of 25th March 2024** were taken as read, agreed and signed.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes.**
4. **Polden Environmental Network – report.**

The Chair and Mark Holder attended this inaugural seminar at Cossington Village Hall on 21st March. Almost all of the Polden villages were represented and a climate adaption plan document was distributed. It was felt that in the current financial climate there is a need for a certain degree of self-reliance, with small actions adopted by a large number of residents making an effective difference to improve climate change e.g. keeping drains clear, using garden water butts and raising electrical sockets.

The aims of the PEN are to seek to promote positive activities for the climate whilst connecting with spaces and encouraging everyone to protect nature. Jack Bedford – Somerset Wildlife Trusts Climate Adaption Officer and Dixie Darch – SC Lead Member for the Environment and Climate Change were present.

Ways of utilising natural resources to reduce the threat of flooding were discussed.

Further meetings are planned.

5. Localised flooding issues.

a. Ward Lane.

Several residents of Ward Lane were present whose properties lie close to the flooded area. Their feelings at what seems to be a lack of remedial action on the flood issue were understandably strong. It was felt the water table level, being below that of the flood, is not a factor. There are three storm water drains which are totally blocked and now covered in mud and sludge.

As has been well documented, the flood has been permanent since October 2023, perhaps rising and falling a little but never completely dissipating. In recent years the occasional localised flooding at the site has gradually increased and the intermittent visit by the high powered jetter has had no effect whatsoever.

Residents were concerned during the winter months when the water turned to black ice and residents were sliding across the road when exiting their driveways. It was an extremely dangerous situation and cannot be allowed to happen again.

Passing traffic causes the flood water to spray along the adjacent boundary wall of the property

closest to the area of deepest flooding and even on to the house behind the wall. This is causing more and more damage to the wall and a thick layer of green fungi develop covering almost the entire wall. Walkers cannot get through the flood (unless they are wearing wellingtons), and many are now regularly trespassing through the garden. When the homeowner tried to block access with a trailer, pedestrians are climbing over the wall to bypass the flood.

Following a heated discussion the Clerk was asked to source "Flood" signs to warn approaching traffic to slow down. Also appropriately worded posts are to be placed on both Chedzoy and Stawell's Facebook pages advising drivers to slow down.

Lawrence Hackling of SC Highways has raised an order for the high powered jetter to visit, but there will be an inevitable delay as the jetter is in great demand.

Andy Dingwall (SC) kindly offered to take the matter up with a view to arranging a site meeting with affected residents and Cllr Williams, Transport Lead at SC, as a matter of urgency.

b. Flood defence improvement works to the KSD

The Clerk reported that he had arranged for a senior Somerset Rivers Authority officer to attend the May parish council meeting to give a talk on the improvements that are about to begin on general flood defence mitigation measures on areas including the KSD.

6. Footpath issues. – no report this month.

7. PC website and communications.

Mark Holder reported the design of the logo had been chosen by the councillors. He has submitted photos from around the village, including some taken from the church tower to Aubergine (the company engaged to set up the new PC website). The first version of the site, first branding and the necessary transfer of statutory data from the current website will follow shortly.

Accessibility standards will be decided upon and documents for posting will need to be in "PDF" or "Word" format. The allocation to councillors of new ". gov.uk" email addresses will be arranged in due course.

8. Roads and highways safety issues.

The Clerk was asked to follow up on progress on the road signage issue in Chedzoy Lane which is holding up the training of Speed-watch volunteers.

9. County Councilor's report – Andy Dingwall reported as follows: -

a. Road safety in Somerset in 2023.

There were 30 deaths on Somerset's A, B and C roads in 2023, caused by a number of things including drink and drug driving, speed as well as mobile phone use whilst driving.

b. Gravity site at Puriton.

The project has been signed off and construction work is beginning. Solar panel batteries as well as those for cars will be manufactured at the site. Andy advised a new railway station is planned as well as a new motorway junction to access the site.

c. Former Bridgwater hospital site.

Agreement to transform the site into a training centre for health and social care staff has

been reached, using a £190.7 million grant from the “Levelling up” fund.

d. “Purple chairs” scheme.

This scheme which is located at Bridgwater library aims to provide support for vulnerable people.

10. Planning.

a. No new applications

b. Progress reports on 2024 cases.

Reference numbers 18/23/00011 and 00012 - Banfield Barn - “under consideration”.

“ “ 18/24/00004 – Fowlers Plot Farm – “under consideration”.

11. Correspondence.

a. Feed your family – not the bin.

Already raised at a previous meeting.

b. Knife Angel – visit of the statue to Taunton.

This stunning National Monument Against Violence and Aggression artwork, constructed almost exclusively of knives, is currently on display in Taunton until 30th April 2024.

If you have any queries or questions contact the Culture Project Delivery Lead : -

Chloe.warden@somerset.gov.uk

c. King Charles III portrait.

This has been received and is being stored at the village hall ahead of the next village hall committee meeting.

12. Matters arising from the correspondence – none.

13. Finance.

Balances after due allowance for outstanding items: -

Lloyds bank current account: - £8995.27 (PC £7799.43 CCCP £1195.84).

“ “ deposit “ : - £2.48.

Cambridge BS account: - £10520.31.

Six cheques to sign: -

No 871 £305.80 payee CN Fry (April net salary).

No 872 £45.75 “ “ (expenses).

No 873 £114.00	“	HCI Data Ltd (existing domain renewal).
No 874 £120.00	“	DM Payroll Ltd (payroll 2024/2025).
No 875 £718.80	“	Aubergine 262 Ltd. (new website set up fee).
No 876 £70.00	“	CPFA (last grass cut of 2023).

Financial year end formalities: -

a. Income and Expenditure Account.

The Clerk presented a line-by-line explanation and invited questions.

b. Annual Governance Statement (ARAR form).

Adoption was proposed by Rodney Young, seconded by Graham Bentley with all in favour.

c. Annual Accounting Statements.

Adoption was proposed by Russell Harmes, seconded by Mark Holder with all in favour..

The Chair and Clerk signed the Annual Governance Statement.

The Chair signed the Accounting Statements (already signed by the Responsible Financial Officer – the Clerk).

These accounts are as yet unaudited.

The internal audit will now take place, followed by the external one.

14. Any other business.

a. Possible architectural artifact.

Rodney Young reported that a parishioner advised him that an architectural artifact of some kind had in the past been discovered on land at Parchey.

Date of next meeting Monday 20th May 2024 (including the annual meeting).

There being no other business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.10 pm.

