

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CHEDZOY PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 20TH JUNE 2023 AT 7.30 PM.

Present: - Cllrs. Graham Bentley, Mary Clothier, Marion Dethier (Chair), and Rodney Young.

Also present: - Cllr. Diogo Rodrigues (SC).

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

1. **Apologies:** - Cllrs. Russell Harmes, Karen Medland and Simon Howes.
2. **Minutes of the last regular meeting of 28th May 2023** and the annual meetings were taken as read, agreed and signed.
3. **Matters arising from the minutes.**

a. Footpath Officer's activity.

There is no formal report this month.

The Clerk will have an appropriate word with the landowner about leaving a wider margin, when next cultivating Northfield, where the footpath passes the temporary mobile home behind Rose Cottage in Ward Lane.

b. CCCP project update.

The Clerk was asked to speak to the landowner of Northfield (and make an appropriate note in the minutes) to thank him for allowing the trees to be installed on his land leading to the ponds also for his consideration in leaving a wide margin beside the trees when last cultivating the field.

Mary Clothier reported on another working session held recently. She said assistance was given by a few volunteers (who she thanked). She went on to say that the on-going maintenance requirement was formidable and that she felt that future expectations re the level of it would need to be managed. The possibility of utilising the balance of CCCP funds (£1320.84) to engage paid help was discussed but it was thought this would make a fairly insignificant long-term difference. Mary feels that keeping on top of the maintenance issue would prove very challenging.

A member of the public, who had been an agronomist at one time, said that controlled and limited use of pesticides to control the perennial weed problem might help, but it was generally felt that this would be at variance with the basic principles of the project.

c. Chedzoy Village Design Statement – update.

The Chair said it would clearly take a number of years to complete a village design statement, and a village plan might be a quicker avenue to explore. With rumours circulating in the village about the possible sale of the former pub to the developers who already own the field behind the Manor pub leading up to the church, Marion said she would call a meeting of the design statement sub-committee (The Chair, Graham Bentley, Russell Harmes and Simon Howes) soon. Diogo Rodrigues said he would make some enquiries about the Manor pub ownership situation and keep the Clerk advised.

d. Levels and Moors LCN meeting report.

The first meeting of the LCN grouping which includes Chedzoy took place on the evening before this meeting and Rodney Young kindly attended. He reported as follows: -

The Chair and Vice-Chair were duly elected (Richard Wilkins and Anthony Betty respectively). Problems common to several parishes were discussed in a work shop. Eight Link Officers (Somerset Council employees) were being appointed. Some attended the meeting via "zoom", but these would be unable to vote.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 2023 and six meeting per year were envisaged.

e. Drainage problems in general.

The blocked drain outside West End Court in Chedzoy Lane has still not been cleared, and the Chair said there were recurring drainage issues in Frys Lane.

Diogo Rodrigues suggested the public can report highways issues on the Somerset Council highways website (an alternative to "fix my street"), with an acknowledgement being issued giving estimate of when the reported problem might be attended to.

f. Speed watch update.

The Clerk read an email from Katherine Tyson, Highways Senior Traffic Engineer, saying that she had requested the restoration of speed limit signage in Chedzoy Lane (necessary before the Police can set up their data capture operation – a step in the Speed watch set-up procedure) by the Highways area office back in April, and that she would chase this up. She did say that the contractors have a huge volume of safety defects (mainly potholes) that they are responding to on a daily basis, which may account for the delay.

Karen Medland has emailed the councillors and Clerk to confirm that the Police are indeed now supporting the Speed watch team formation.

A discussion took place on the height at which the Police data capture equipment should be installed, and it was noted that this would appear to be fairly low to the ground in some other local neighbourhoods.

g. Playing Field grass cutting arrangements.

Following the retirement of the contractor who previously carried out the grass cutting, the playing field committee are endeavouring to put a new comprehensive plan in place, involving two contractors – one to cut the main field (at £50 per cut) – and another being engaged for strimming and maintenance duties in other areas of the field including around the play equipment. No invoices have yet been received but when they are they will be passed to the Clerk.

Mary Clothier is taking over as Chair of the playing field committee in September 2023.

h. Tour of the allotment field.

This has been arranged for Wednesday 12th July at 6.45 pm.

The Clerk was asked to invite all allotment holders along for the tour.

i. Somerset Council Chair's Awards for Service to the Community.

The possibility of nominating someone for these awards was discussed. It was decided to leave it for this year.

j. Footpath in churchyard.

The PCC treasurer (present at the meeting) confirmed that the PCC has a plan for dealing with the issue of grass encroachment on the footpaths within the churchyard.

4. County Councillors' report – Diogo Rodrigues reported as follows: -

- a. National bus fare scheme.** The £2 maximum single bus fare has been extended until October 2023 and would continue at £2,50 until October 2024.

Diogo has put forward a motion to introduce a young persons discounted bus ticket scheme, which has been accepted (for those aged 16 – 25 years).

- b. Highways.** Somerset Council has been awarded an additional £5.4 million to deal with the pothole problem.

- c. Finance – 2023 year-end position.** The shortfall as at 31st March 2023 has yet to be announced, but is anticipated to be approximately £20 million, which will need to be covered from reserves.

- d. Cross Rifles roundabout.** The up-grading work here has been postponed.

- e. The "Celebration mile".** This is the scheme to make Eastover one way and it has been delayed.

5. Planning - No new applications –

6. Correspondence.

- a. Somerset Council – Waste briefing for partners – June 2023.**

This has been received.

7. Matters arising from the correspondence: - none.

8. Finance.

Balances after due allowance for any outstanding items: -

Lloyds bank current account: - £16224.56 (PC £14903.72 CCCP £1320.84)

“ “ deposit “ : -£2.48.

Cambridge BS EA account: -£10322.17 (earmarked funds).

Two cheques to issue: -

No 837 £285.00 payee CN Fry (June net salary).

No 838 £120.00 “ “ (expenses)

The Clerk handed out the three amenity grant applications to all councillors present and said he would send them to the absent members. He reminded the meeting of the level of grants

awarded for 2022/2023, which were: -

Churchyard £877, Playing Field £270 (in addition to the grass cutting and insurance costs) and Village Hall £250. A decision on grants for 2023/2024 will be taken at the July meeting.

9. Any other business.

a. Grass verge cutting.

Rodney Young advised that Bridgwater Without PC were engaging contractors to cut its grass verges deeper than that carried out by the local authority. He asked if Chedzoy PC wished to follow suit.

Following a discussion, it was decided that this could not be financially justified.

The Clerk was asked to establish how often and at what times of year verges are cut at present.

b. Sat Nav settings.

Graham Bentley said Sat Navs advised that Front Street finished at "Eastcotte" (Tuckers Lane) and from there Ruggs Drove started, even though Front Street continues down to Fishers Farm.

c. Coronation craft session expenses.

Mary Clothier apologised for not yet having claimed the cost of materials for this very well attended event during the King's Coronation weekend. The amount is approximately £45 and she will let the Clerk have the receipts so an appropriate cheque can be issued at the next meeting.

Date of next meeting Monday 17th July 2023.

There being no other business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.47 pm.

