



## Queen Camel Parish Council

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### Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at the Memorial Hall, Queen Camel at 7:00pm

#### Public Question Time

There were 7 members of the public in attendance. Immediately prior to the meeting members of the public were provided with the opportunity to speak

No members of the public wished to speak

**Present:** Chairman Sue Gettings, together with Councillors Michael Baker, John Brendon, Kathy Grainger, Phil Jones, Brian Hewlett, Dan Hewlett, Rachael Malton and Bryan Norman

**Also present:** County and District Councillor Mike Lewis  
Chairman, Secretary and Members of the Playing Field Committee  
Parish Clerk and RFO Elaine Owen

#### 01/05 Apologies for Absence

none

#### 02/05 Declarations of Interests

Chairman Getting declared a personal interest with respect to the Playing Field Committee.

#### 03/05 Minutes of the previous meeting to be confirmed as correct

Council approved as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4th May 2021.

**It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meetings held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021, as an accurate record of the meetings.**  
**For 9, Against 0, Abstained 1**

<http://queencamelpc.org.uk/meetings/agendas-minutes-2021/>

#### 04/05 Playing Field Lease

The playing field is owned by Queen Camel Parish Council and leased to the Playing Field Committee. The lease has expired, but has been permitted to continue on an annual basis while the future of the management of the playing field is decided.

Councillors had been provided with a range of background papers including a copy of the lease, Charity Scheme, Rules, the most recent Annual Report from the Playing Field a condition report of the play equipment, maps and plans of the area, information about the potential availability of additional land and additional correspondence between the Playing Field Committee Working Party and the Queen Camel Parish Working Party.

Due to Covid restrictions the meeting needed to be paperless, and copies were not available to view (although they were available for projection should they be called for). Parishioners may request copies from the clerk.

**a. The Playing Field Working Party were invited to present a summary of their preferred option**

A presentation was given by Peter Naylor (Secretary) and Chris Bennett (Chairman), followed by Angus Davidson. The following was supplied by them for inclusion in the minutes.

Peter Naylor:

Firstly I would like to thank you for giving the PFC this opportunity to speak and answer any questions you may have. For those that do not know me, my name is Pete Naylor, I've lived in Queen Camel for over 40 years and have been an active member of the PFC for 35+ years. Ever since my daughters were old enough to toddle down to the old play area (which is now a car park).

The Playing Field Committee worked in harmony with the Parish Council over the past 66 years as demonstrated in our timeline document, to develop and maintain the facilities we all share in the village today. I believe this collaboration was beneficial to all parties, the residents, the Parish Council and the Playing Field Committee.

Chris Bennett:

I'm Chris Bennett and I have been a Trustee of the Playing Field charity since 1998, when my oldest child was 10 and youngest was 3 I currently I chair the Charity. While we do not wish to / or have time to, go over the many Background Papers in detail at this meeting, we should all appreciate that in a small village like Queen Camel, past events are important to people, they should be respected as should the PFC record as a stable management team over many years.

Peter Naylor:

The securing of grants to develop and enhance the facilities is dependant on being able to demonstrate 'security of tenure', either through the holding of the freehold or a long lease. We initially requested a renewal of the last lease in 2013 knowing that the current lease then expired at the end of 2014. The PFC believe that the benefits to the Parish that accrue from the PFC's charitable status can compliment the PC's strategic planning obligations through such documents as the neighbourhood plan and village needs surveys, would best satisfy the recreational needs of the parish.

Chris Bennett:

The idea that the land of the current Playing Field might be extended to the west, was first suggested by a member of the PFC. It is therefore hardly surprising that the PFC is fully supportive of this idea, however, we consider that no single organisation is capable of representing all interests, and that a new group of all interested village organisations should work jointly to plan the development. The plan must ultimately cover the uses of each area, new buildings and play facilities, and be fully costed for the development phases and the ongoing running. The best structure for the ongoing management can only be determined when such a plan is in place; (for instance, the PFC might act as groundsman for grassed areas of the site, with the CLT managing the Roman Mosaic).

Hence, I ask that you give some serious consideration to our request for a renewal of the lease on the playing field.



Angus Davidson:

I have been involved with the Playing Field since the early 1980s when I took over as Chairman from Pat Brendon (John's father) when he resigned. So there is no doubt as to my long term commitment to the PFC. We have been working under various leases since 1959 but we are now looking for a longer lease to enable us to apply for grants. We have been unable to come to terms with the PC and the negotiations have resulted in an endless game of Ping Pong. For the sake of the village this has got to stop.

The PC has offered the alternative of the PFC becoming a subcommittee of the PC which they feel would be more satisfactory. The PFC are not too happy with this as we feel we would lose control. I can see the benefits of having a larger body behind us particularly when it concerns the large capital expenditure required when the development of the additional 4 acres is undertaken, and also when it concerns dealing with SCC about transferring their land to the PC.

So my request is for a new lease, but if the PC is unable to grant this, it is not the end of the world. I feel sure a subcommittee structure can be worked out which gives the management committee sufficient autonomy to carry out all normal maintenance but will benefit from the PC support. If we work together with the PC, I would be quite comfortable with such an arrangement. All I care about is to ensure the ongoing success of the field which is the most valuable asset the village can offer its residents. I look forward to working positively with the PC in whatever way we can agree.

#### **Question and Answer session**

The parish council was invited to put questions to the Playing Field Committee. The main points raised were as follows

Councillor Brendon felt that the objects of charity were unclear about whether they allowed for development of the site. Chris Bennett answered that the charity Scheme uses the word 'provision' that has covered past development, for example, the pavilion.

Councillor Jones introduced himself and explained that he has a degree in sports science so is very keen on sport for the community. He expressed concern about a 'them and us' attitude, as good working relationships are essential for success to happen. He asked what was meant by 'lose control of the field'

Chris Bennett explained that the playing field committee had decision making independence since inception. Under the Parish Council proposal the Playing Field Committee would become a subcommittee of the parish council. The chairman would be a councillor and, amongst other things, the Playing Field Committee would not have autonomy to manage its finances.

A longer discussion followed over the advantages and disadvantages of managing the field on a new lease or as a committee of the parish council.

In answer to a question on reclaiming VAT for new development it was answered that it would be possible to do this in either structure.

Councillor Hewlett commented that the new development would require considerable expertise of a different nature altogether to running the playing field.

In response Chris Bennett suggested that new organisation representing all parish interests including Bowls and Tennis clubs would be needed to take the new development forward.

Mike Lewis, District and County Councillor supplied information about the offer of a licence from SCC to Queen Camel parish council for land at the playing field. Taking a decision on this offer was not on the Agenda so discussion was **DEFERRED** to the parish council meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June, at which it was noted a decision will need to be made.

**b. The Queen Camel Parish Council Working party were invited to present their findings and proposals**

Councillor Brendon reiterated that we all want the same outcomes. The question is, “what is the best structure to continue to both manage the field, and acquire and develop the two land parcels that are potentially on offer”.

The proposal to bring the Playing Field Committee under the control of the parish council is not a criticism of the way it is presently managed.

Matters, such as raising finance for new projects is perceived as more secure by funding bodies under a parish council structure, and there are other advantages to having a less complex structure when negotiating leases and land transfers.

The parish council suggests two separate groups are needed to move forward:

1. A Management Committee for the existing playing field
2. A working group to create a development plan with short, medium and long term goals

It is true that the Management Committee would need councillor representation and chairman, but it would also be essential that representatives of the existing field users would also join the committee, so they would continue to have every opportunity to be part of the planning and management of the field.

Terms of Reference (TOR) to cover both day to day maintenance and future use of the field for clubs and public use has been drafted and will be circulated once councillors have reviewed them.

The parish council playing field working group concluded that it is in the best interests of Queen Camel residents for the lease not to be renewed, and for a new Playing Field Management Committee to be set up by the parish council.

**Question and Answer session**

The Playing Field Committee was invited to put questions to the parish council. The main points raised were as follows:

Chris Bennett reiterated that the Playing Field Committee do want to work with the parish council and agree that a wider village group will need to be consulted for new development. Indeed more parish councillors could join the existing committee.

Further discussion included how lease break clauses operate and discussion over a new pavilion.

The Playing Field Committee confirmed that they had not held a vote of their members on the issue of whether it was preferred to remain independent, or for the field to be run by a parish council committee. The reason was that there was not felt to be enough detail to put to the committee on the matter.

The discussion was drawn to a close with the Chair asking for proposal.



**It was RESOLVED that the Parish Council gives notice to Playing Field charity that the lease for the field is ending 31st December 2021, and sets up a committee of the parish council to carry out the same activities that the Playing Field Committee performed.**

**For 8, Against 0, Abstained 1**

**05/05 Planning Applications**

Councillor Jones referred councillors to the background paper. Two are for tree works and one (21/01550/PDE: 20 South View West, Camel Road, Queen Camel) does not require comment is not required as it is for a decision about whether Permitted Development will apply.

**06/05 Notification of Planning Applications**

There were no new Planning Applications about which the Council has received Notification, but is not required to be consulted since the last meeting.

**07/05 Previous Planning Applications**

Councillors were referred to the background paper, which provides a full update of activity.

**08/05 To authorise Accounts for Payment (May)**

**a. The following expenses have been incurred**

|   | Item   | Date              | VAT? | Amount  |
|---|--|-------------------|------|---------|
| 1 | Replacement for unsafe laptop cable clerk computer | 01/05/2021        | No   | £14.16  |
| 2 | Replacement laptop bag for clerk computer          | 01/5/2021         | Yes  | £19.31  |
| 3 | Vale Secretarial (Stephen Hill locum clerk hours)  | 06/5/2021         | No   | £700.00 |
| 4 | Morrison plants                                    | 10/05/2021        | Yes  | £37.00  |
| 5 | Renewal of Parish Council Insurance                | Due by 31/05/2021 | No   | £465.14 |

**It was RESOLVED that all payments above be made.**

**For 9, Against 0, Abstained 0**

**b The following expenditure was authorised:**

Item 6 Purchase of SSL certificate £35.00.(This adds the 's' to 'http' and will remove security warnings when visitors land on the Queen Camel website. It is an annual cost)

Item 7 Dropbox business plan £199.00

This is the cheapest business plan and required because the parish records will not fit into the free plan. At present most records are not backed up due to lack of cloud space. Dropbox will also improve efficiency with Councillors able to access records directly.

**Council RESOLVED to authorise the above expenditure:**

**For 9, Against 0, Abstained 0**

**Dates of next public meetings:**

- 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 7.30pm Finance and Risk Committee, Marples Room, Memorial Hall. All items to be considered for inclusion on the agenda must be received by the clerk by 9.00am on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021.
- 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 7.30pm Parish Council Meeting in the Main Hall, Memorial Hall. All items to be considered for inclusion on the agenda must be received by the clerk by 9.00am on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Meeting closed at 8.30

**Elaine Owen  
Parish Clerk**

Signed..... *S. Jettings* .....  
Date ..... *20/05/2021* .....

*Audio recording deleted  
Elaine Owen 21/5/2021*