



Queen Camel Parish Council

Clerk: Elaine Owen, Innes House, Kingsdon, Somerton, Somerset, TA11 7LL

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday 17th June 2021 at 7:30pm

Public Question Time

There were 13 members of the public in attendance. Immediately prior to the meeting members of the public were provided with the opportunity to speak. Two members of the public chose to speak:

- An update was given about the playground equipment to say that maintenance and repair requirements identified in the last inspection report were all in hand and progressing well.
- Traffic. To ask if this issue would be covered in the meeting.

Present: Councillors Michael Baker, John Brendon, Kathy Grainger, Sue Gettings, Brian Hewlett, Phil Jones, Rachael Malton and Bryan Norman.

Also present:

County and District Councillor Mike Lewis
Parish Clerk and RFO Elaine Owen

06/01 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Dan Hewlett sent apologies due to need for self-isolation.

06/02 Declarations of Interests

Councillor Gettings declared a personal interest in the Playing Field and Councillor Jones declared a personal interest in planning application 06/15. Councillors Grainger and Hewlett declared an interest in item 06/11 B as residents of the roads mentioned.

06/03 To RECEIVE County and District Councillor reports

County and District Councillor Mike Lewis congratulated Queen Camel on the 'making' of the Neighbourhood Plan and drew attention to the ways that it can help protect the interests of the village.

Councillor Lewis also gave an update about the Somerset Unitary Authority consultation outcome run by Stronger Somerset. More details about the two options can be found at <https://www.strongersomerset.co.uk/> and <https://onesomerset.org.uk/>

Information about options for SCC owned land at the Queen Camel Playing Field was discussed under item 06/22.

06/04 Minutes of the previous meeting to be confirmed as correct

Council approved as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20th May 2021.

It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meetings held on Monday 20th May 2021, as an accurate record of the meetings.

For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

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

06/05 It was RESOLVED to make the following appointments for the year 2021/2022

a) Election of Vice Chairman

Councillor Brendon was **ELECTED** Vice Chairman of Queen Camel Parish Council.

b) Highways

Councillor Bryan Norman was **APPOINTED** as councillor responsible for Highways.

c) Neighbourhood Watch

Councillor Phil Jones was **APPOINTED** as councillor responsible for Neighbourhood Watch.

d) Environmental Officer

Rachael Malton was **APPOINTED** to be the Environmental Officer.

For each resolution votes were recorded as below. (Those appointed each time abstained)

For 7, Against 0, Abstained 1

06/06 Action Points from Previous Full Council Meeting (all other matters are on the Agenda)

QCPC were asked to write to SSDC, SCC and the MP regarding the discharge of sewerage into the River Cam by Wessex Water. This item had been deferred from the previous meeting. Councillor Malton will take this forward.

06/07 Up-date on Neighbourhood Watch (NW) Scheme

Council **RECEIVED** an update from Councillor Gettings. Recent thefts have included tools from vans and catalytic converters from cars.

There have been dog thefts in the area. It was advised to look out for suspicious activity, such as people taking photographs of dogs.

Welcome booklets are being compiled with useful details and numbers included. All organisations are being invited to add details about their organisation. 400 copies will be printed and distributed with *The Camels* magazine at a cost of £128. Initially it is planned to distribute one booklet to every household in the parish so that everyone has the useful details and contact numbers. An annual review will up-date the information if necessary. Copies will be printed as and when required.

It was RESOLVED to support this with a Donation from parish council funds.

For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

06/08 Flood Committee

Councillor Norman had supplied a list of equipment to councillors. The equipment container may need to be moved. After much discussion it was decided to leave the Flood equipment in its usual storage container.

06/09 Neighbourhood Plan

Councillor Gettings thanked the individuals who had been involved in the Neighbourhood Plan. With such a long gestation, over many years, it was not possible to name everybody, but she particularly wanted to thank people present who were involved, the planning consultant Jo Witherden, and Mike Lewis County and District Councillor for his support. The Neighbourhood Plan is a great resource for

Queen Camel generally, including a lot of information about its history as well as being a resource for the present day. <https://queencamelpc.org.uk/parish-plan/>

The parish council is committed to assessing the Plan on an annual basis to see how it is achieving its objectives.

It was RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Brendon to be lead councillor for the Neighbourhood Plan

For 7, Against 0, Abstained 1 (Councillor Brendon abstained)

06/10 Council Response to the Secretary of State (SoS) Development Consent Order (DCO) for A303

Councillor D Hewlett was not present to give an update. Councillor Norman will liaise with him.

It was RESOLVED to DEFER this item to the next meeting.

For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

06/11 Highway Works

a) Wales Bridge

Councillor Gettings reported that the latest information is that the planned works are scheduled to take place in September 2021.

b) Recent and anticipated traffic congestion Blackwell Road, Gason Lane and Traits Lane and also the High Street.

A meeting was held this day with Gary Warren from Somerset County Council Highways Department, representatives from the parish council and Mike Lewis, County and District Councillor. The following solution was proposed:

- A trial (under Experimental Traffic Regulations) to close roads at each entry from the A303 Friday am-Monday am, including Bank and Public Holidays with a review in 6 months.
- Elgin, (is one.network which is the registered trademark in the UK and Europe of roadworks information) It would feed into the Satnav companies to render the road closures, at each entry, at the agreed times.
- The Parish Council would be responsible organising volunteers to close the roads at the allotted times using "road closed" signs and barriers. A gap would be available for residents, emergency vehicles, collections and deliveries use etc. (Could also have a sign "Access to residents only.")
- To consider a warning sign on a pole on the A359 approaching Queen Camel.
- One person putting out road signs each time must be accredited with 'Chapter Eight' training. The Parish Council should seek out anyone in the village who is already accredited.
- Chapter Eight training might be combined with SID (Speed Indicator Device) training.

- The Parish Council would be responsible for costs incurred.

Training fees are estimated at £190 plus VAT per person for Chapter 8 training. Councillor Jones suggested that perhaps we could train a trainer for the village.

Signs already held by the parish for flood could be reused, but there would be some additional costs. There is already a storage facility for the signs.

Meeting closed for public comment

Residents from the affected areas spoke to say they were supportive and were willing to be volunteers.

Councillor Norman agreed to be trained and to co-ordinate the volunteers.

Residents asked when this might start. Councillor Gettings explained that if the parish council agreed to the proposal then it would take about 1 month for SCC to make the order.

Meeting opened

There was further discussion about the detail of the above the Council acknowledged the displacement effect that the traffic order would have. However, other roads are more suitable for two-way traffic. It was suggested that the impacts be closely monitored and mitigations proposed if problems arose.

It was RESOLVED that the parish council approved the proposal from SCC Highways to trial the Experimental Traffic Order described above
For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

c) Pinch points and traffic survey

A discussion took place about the pinch points. The meeting was briefly closed to take further comment from a parishioner. QCPC had already resolved (May, item18) to seek a professional review on traffic management for the High Street and Councillor Norman will write to SCC Highways department.

06/12 Footpaths and Environment

The QC Environment Warden (Councillor Grainger) **REPORTED** that some strimming consumables will be needed soon.

06/13 The Old Surgery

This building has been boarded up for many years.

The meeting was closed to take information from which it was learnt that correspondence with the owner has been ongoing to ask for the boards to be removed and the door made operational, but legal issues have intervened.

It was RESOLVED that the parish council should write to the case officer at SSDC to ask for a site meeting with them and the owner.
For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

06/14 Playing Field Management Committee (PFMC)

Councillor Brendon gave an update about the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the new Playing Field Management Committee. A new draft has been compiled and will be circulated for comment.

06/15 Planning Applications

a) 19/01830/OUT Land Part OS 1053 West Camel Road, Queen Camel

The Phosphate mitigation scheme (a wetland) was discussed. The solution is welcomed on grounds of environmental improvement, but Councillor Jones noted that the area is within the bird strike zone on a flightpath for Yeovilton airfield. Other planning applications in the bird strike zone usually mention this and consider whether there is any likelihood of increasing risk of bird strike.

It was also mentioned that the alternative solution would be to deal with the issue more centrally via sewage treatment works.

It was RESOLVED that the clerk should comment in SSDC Planning website that councillors are happy with the concept of a wetland, although an alternative solution would be to deal with the issue more centrally via a sewage treatment works.

For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

b) 21/01263/HOU: Carpenters, High Street, Queen Camel

This is a resubmission of an application that the parish council has previously endorsed.

It was RESOLVED that the clerk should comment in SSDC Planning website that the parish council endorsed the application

For 8, Against 0, Abstain 0

06/16 Notification of Planning Applications (background paper)

Council were made aware of applications about which it is not required to be consulted. One application has been withdrawn as it was Decided that the works fall under Permitted Development.

06/17 Previous Planning Applications (background paper)

The Planning Applications background paper has been updated to show the decision status of all applications that the parish council is monitoring.

06/18 Solar Farm Extension Impact on Community Benefit Fund

Downing, the owners of the Sutton Montis Road Solar Farm, offered an extension of the community benefit payment of £6658 for a further six years in compensation for a 15 year extension of the operational period of the solar farm.

Email correspondence has resulted in that amount being uplifted by RPI and we await information on how that will enhance the payments.

Downing confirm that hedge infilling has been commissioned for the Autumn planting season. They are introducing an environmental improvement strategy enhancing the grazing arrangement in place with bird and bat boxes, and log and rubble piles to provide habitat for invertebrates, reptiles and small mammals.

They are very interested in how their community donations are being used and that Queen Camel has recruited a Community Benefit Fund Panel to ensure that the wider community has a say in how the money is to be spent.

Downing express interest in positively engaging with Queen Camel over the long term and the Clerk will take this forward. The new Deed will be requested for approval by Council.

06/19 Correspondence (not included elsewhere in the Agenda)

a) Blackwell Road correspondence. Due to the recent bank holiday traffic chaos the parish council received many emails. A combined response was sent. The matter is covered by 06/11 (b) above.

Councillor Malton mentioned comments from social media that the parish council was unaware of.

It was RESOLVED that Councillor Malton should monitor the social media for Queen Camel and signpost users to parish council information
For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

b) Playing Field Annual Inspection Report Councillor Gettings

This matter was covered by the parishioner comment at the start of the meeting.

c) Parishioner Complaint

An email was received from Mr C S Bennett on 27th April 2021 under the QCPC Complaints Procedure relating to the short period of time available for parishioners to apply for co-option to the Council. A reply was sent on 7th May explaining that options for the timetable were limited by compliance with legally binding dates and Covid-19 restrictions. No further reply has been received.

06/20 Annual Village (Parish) Meeting 17th September 2021

Councillors Malton and Norman reported that the budget for the event is lower than previous years due to involving local businesses and potential for income from sales. Councillors favour an interactive event with displays allowing for people to space out over a period of hours, although the event will start with invited speakers.

It was RESOLVED to agree the budget of £200
For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0.

06/21 Community Benefit Fund (CBF)

There were 7 applicants for the 5 positions of community members on the Panel. The full list were announced and councillors then voted. The result of the first ballot created 4 clear winners with the last place tied. A second ballot gave a close result, but did produce a clear winner. The first meeting will take place in early July.

The Chairman congratulated the successful candidates and thanked everyone who had applied.

The five parishioners APPOINTED were:
Jane Crozier, Angus Davidson, Liz Jardine, Robert Pierson and Terri Plummer

06/22 SCC Land at Queen Camel Playing Field

The land parcel at the north of the playing field that belongs to SCC was discussed, including the possibility of either a straightforward licence or a land swap to secure permanent ownership of the most useful parcel of land for future development of the field. A third option is to 'do nothing' on the basis that the land is already available for use by Queen Camel, albeit without formal licence. Finding a solution is complicated by the fact that the area was previously a school playing field and subject to special conditions on its use until 2026.

The parish council did not feel they had enough information to make a final decision as both legal costs and licence conditions are not available. Further details will be sought.

However, it was decided that Councillor Lewis would seek a site visit with a representative from SCC to discuss the possibility of a land swap. The Clerk would write to SCC requesting further information regarding the proposed Licence and costs involved.

06/23 Financial Reports for year ending 31/03/2021

On 7th June the Finance and Risk Committee resolved to recommend the following reports which were tabled for approval by Council

- a) Bank reconciliation as at 31/03/2021
- b) End of Year Payments and Receipts Summary
- c) Reserves statement
- d) VAT position

It was RESOLVED to accept the end of year reports and for the Chairman to sign those that required signature.

For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

06/24 Audit 2021/2022

Councillor Brendon presented the main findings from the internal audit report. This was generally favourable with no major issues identified. A few minor issues were identified, some of which were due to operating under Covid restrictions. Others have been corrected since they were pointed out, or are in the process of being dealt with.

On 7th June the Finance and Risk Committee had resolved to recommend the internal audit reports for approval by Council.

It was RESOLVED to accept the internal audit report

For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

06/25 External Audit Certificate of Exemption

The Finance and Risk Committee (F07/06a) resolved that Queen Camel meets the criteria for exemption from External Audit for 2020-2021 due to the total gross income and expenditure both being under £25,000.

It was RESOLVED that the External Audit Exemption Certificate should be signed

For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

06/26 Approval of the Annual Governance Returns

- a) Approval of Section 1 Annual Governance Statement

The Finance and Risk Committee (F07/06b) resolved that Queen Camel should approve and sign the Annual Governance Statement for 2020-2021. The 8 conditions were read out and agreed by Council.

It was RESOLVED that the Annual Governance Return should be signed
For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

b) Approval of Section 2 Accounting Statements 2020/21

The Finance and Risk Committee (F07/06c) had examined the figures and resolved that Queen Camel should approve and sign the Accounting Statements.

It was RESOLVED that Section 2 Accounting Statements 2020/21 should be signed

For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

c) Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Governance and Accountability Return

Council were asked to NOTE that the period of public rights will be announced on Monday 21st June, will commence on 22nd June and end on 2nd August.

06/27 To Authorise Accounts for Payment

a) Bank signatories are being changed so no payments have been made this month. A list of payments due was read out for information. Taking on board that the internal auditor had noted a pattern of late payments in 2020-2021 it has been agreed that Queen Camel will revert to the Finance Regulations already in place to permit payments under £500 (that are already in the budget) to be paid between council meetings with a report made at next meeting.

It was noted that all the payments listed satisfied both conditions apart from a payment to Parish Online (mapping service) for £45 plus VAT that was not in the budget.

b) The Chairman then requested that councillors recognise that the clerk has incurred extra hours of work during and after handover to bring things back on track and to manage the audit. A record has been kept and Council was asked to authorise the principle of overtime at standard rate for additional hours as agreed by the Chairman.

Council RESOLVED to authorise the above payment for Parish Online and overtime for the clerk

For 8, Against 0, Abstained 0

Meeting closed at 10.00 pm

Dates of next public meetings:

- Finance and Risk Committee, Monday 5th July 2021
- Parish Council meeting, Thursday 15th July 2021

Elaine Owen
Parish Clerk

Signed..........

Date 13/09/21