

Queen Camel Parish Council

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

email: clerk@queencamelpc.org.uk Tel: 07726 245 101 www.queencamelpc.org.uk

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 18th October 2021 at 7:30pm

Public Question Time

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

Present: Councillors: Michael Baker, Kathy Grainger, Phil Jones, Rachael Malton and Bryan Norman.

Also present: County and District Councillor, Mike Lewis
Parish Clerk and RFO, Elaine Owen

10/00 Election of Chairperson for the meeting

It was RESOLVED that Mike Baker should chair the meeting.

10/01 Apologies for Absence

The following apologies were received: John Brendon due to Jury Service, Sue Gettings due to holiday, Brian Hewlett due to Covid and Dan Hewlett due to Covid isolation.

10/02 Declarations of Interests

Mike Baker, Kathy Grainger and Phil Jones declared an interest in item 10/19 as committee members of the Playing Field Committee and Kathy Grainger declared an interest in item 10/11 due to living in Gason Lane.

10/03 To RECEIVE County and District Councillor reports

County and District Councillor Mike Lewis gave a brief update about the unitary authority timetable and made contributions to other items on the Agenda as recorded below.

In response to a question Cllr Lewis said that SCC were aware of the sinkhole by the bridge. Hearing that parishioners were very concerned about the necessity for pedestrians and pushchairs to be steered into traffic to avoid the hole he offered to follow up with them.

10/04 Minutes of previous meetings to be confirmed as correct

a) It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 13th September 2021 as an accurate record of the meeting. https://queencamelpc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2021-09-13_Signed_Minutes.pdf

b) It was RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the parish council held on 30th September as an accurate record of the meeting https://queencamelpc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2021-09-30_signed_Minutes_Extra.pdf

10/05 Action Points from Previous Council Meeting (all other matters are on the Agenda) None.

10/06 Correspondence (not included elsewhere in the Agenda) None.

10/07 Policies and Procedures review (Background Paper)

A list of policies was provided with remarks about their status and a traffic light system (red, yellow, green) applied to provide a quick view of their status. Several of them are being worked on at present. Cllr Malton offered additional assistance.

10/08 Planning (Background paper)

- a) No Planning Applications requiring QCPC consultation have been validated since last meeting.
- b) No Planning Application decisions of note have occurred since the last meeting
- c) A Planning Applications for tree works, not requiring QCPC consultation, was **NOTED**.

10/09 The Old Surgery

District and County Councillor Lewis reported that the new Enforcement Officer at SSDC had conducted some background research on history of the property, but has not yet had the opportunity to visit the property.

10/10 Neighbourhood Plan

A spreadsheet of Projects extracted from the Neighbourhood Plan was circulated. It was noted that implementation plans for each project would need to be agreed by Council. In the absence of Cllr Brendon this item was **DEFERRED**.

10/11 Impact of A303 dualling works - Meeting between QCPC and SCC Highways

A meeting arranged with Highways England and County Highways was cancelled due to participant covid isolation and a new date is awaited from Galliford Try, the contractors.

10/12 Queen Camel Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)

a) Implementation of the Traffic Order

This is still working well. The clerk was requested to purchase a new salt bin (previously approved) as soon as details are provided. Salt is not needed.

b) Online questionnaire

The clerk reported that a Google Forms questionnaire had been started, but required input from people who live in the village. Feedback from parishioners was that it may be better as a paper questionnaire (or both online and paper). Cllr Malton offered to assist taking it forward.

10/13 Highways

a) Wales Bridge

Works were completed in September and councillors expressed their full satisfaction with the results.

b) Road Drains

Following a report from a parishioner Cllr Norman had created a report listing several places where there has been flooding from blocked roadside drains.

It was RESOLVED that a report be made to Somerset County Council by the clerk

10/14 Speedwatch / Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs)

Councillor Lewis mentioned that some parishes are sharing speed indicator devices. It was also noted that several parishioners/councillors have said they would volunteer to participate in a Speedwatch campaign if required.

Cllr Malton reported that she had contacted Marston Magna Parish Council to see if they are willing to lend their SID and she also has information about the cost of a new one. The clerk confirmed that there is no budget to purchase a SID in the present year.

10/15 Noticeboards

An update about refurbishment of Church Path noticeboard, for a new board by the shop and refurbishment and moving the shop board to the bus shelter was **DEFERRED**.

10/16 Environment and footpaths

Cllr Malton has constructed a budget for environmental works for the remainder of the year and will circulate to councillors.

a) Sewage Discharge into River Cam

Councillor Malton has written a letter to Wessex Water about sewage discharge into the river.

b) Footpath Maintenance

Councillor Malton, gave an update about footbridges, stiles and the volunteer working group. The hedge to the Health Centre requires attention and they will be contacted.

c) Ownership of grass verge outside church gates

The clerk has had difficulty accessing the SSDC website to request this area is added to their maintenance list. **AFTERNOTE:** The clerk has now logged this on the SSDC portal.

d) Litter / waste bins

County and District Councillor Lewis was able to supply the name of a new contact to Councillor Malton, in order to progress dog bins.

10/17 Flood Committee

Cllr Norman reported that Chapter 8 trained volunteers have expressed willingness to help if roads need closing in the event of flood.

The meeting was closed briefly to allow a parishioner from the Flood Committee to comment and to contribute to a discussion about signs for flooding. The committee will meet shortly and any requirements for extra spending will be reported promptly. Cllr Jones will review the condition of the signs on poles.

It was noted that the Flood Committee webpage is out of date on the parish council website and information to update it will be provided to the clerk.

10/18 SCC Land at Queen Camel Playing Field

The clerk has sent a reminder to SCC requesting an answer to previous emails and it was discussed how to progress this in the absence of any response.

10/19 Queen Camel Playing Field

a) Playing Field Management Committee (PMFC)

The PFC have provided detailed comments about the proposed Terms of Reference for the PMFC. These will be reviewed and a reply given as soon as practicable.

b) Motion in compliance with Charities Act 2011

Cllr Jones reported that the Playing Field Committee (PFC) had agreed 'in principle' that property could be transferred to the parish council if the Charity Commission agree. In order for that to happen the parish council must pass a motion to agree to accept any such property.

It was RESOLVED to consent to the transfer of property (if offered) from the Playing Field Committee to the parish council under the provisions of section 298 of the Charities Act 2011

10/20 Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr Jones reported that he was planning to get people together to refresh the scheme.

10/21 Communications

a) To RECEIVE any update about the village Welcome Packs None

b) To RECEIVE any update about parish council social media, website etc.

It was agreed that the Facebook page was working well and was offering extended opportunities to engage with the community.

Cllr Malton would like there to be more extensive information about councillors so that parishioners would know more about what the parish council does and how to engage with it. This would include photographs of Councillors being added to the website.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Malton should create a 'meet your councillor' virtual campaign

d) To RECEIVE any update about improving the sound system in the village hall.

It is understood that the village hall committee do not consider a new system is required at the present time and are reviewing the settings to improve the users experience.

10/22 The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2-5th June 2022

It was noted that the parish council will need to work with other village organisations so that any activity is complementary to their plans. This item was **DEFERRED**.

10/23 Annual Village (Parish) Meeting

Feedback received has been overwhelmingly positive with the range of speakers particularly appreciated. New links have been forged with the school that can be built on and the event highlighted the many good things that have been going on in the village. Councillors expressed their appreciation to Cllr Norman and Malton, to the organisers, village groups, caterers, the band and other participants for an enjoyable event.

10/24 Solar Farms

The clerk reported that NextPower have said that the Bindwell Lane solar farm is expected to come into operation in late spring/early summer 2022. That would mean the community payment of £15,000 is likely to be received in next financial year.

10/25 Community Benefit Fund (CBF) Panel

After some discussion it was agreed that the question of whether the Panel should review all applications for grants and donations, or just those relating to the Community Benefit Fund should be **DEFERRED** to give time for absent councillors to comment and for the Chairman of the Finance Committee to give guidance.

This decision may impact on the meeting dates for the Panel would be informed of any changes as soon as possible.

10/26 Grants and Donations

The clerk reported that the Cricket Club grant has been paid, completing all Grant payments from precept this financial year. Organisations have not yet been encouraged to apply for grants for next year as it would be helpful to resolve 10/25 and for the revised application forms and guidance to be used.

10/27 Grant Applications

Queen Camel Parish Council's application to the *Opening up Safely and Reconnecting Communities Fund* was successful and £1500 will be received that will be ring-fenced to re-open, re-invigorate and promote safe social interaction in the Community Lounge. The project includes purchase of 3 collapsible wheelchairs.

10/28 Defibrillators

There has been an ambition for defibrillator access in the village for some time with both the Village Hall Committee and the Playing Field Committee expressing interest. London Hearts can supply them at £1195 each, to include an external heated unlocked cabinet online training and child pads. The offer is on a first come, first served basis.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Malton should call a meeting of representatives from the Village Hall and PFC to look at how defibrillators may best be funded.

10/29 Financial Reports

The recent minutes of the Finance and Risk Committee are available here <https://queencamelpc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2021-10-04-DRAFT-minutes-Finance-Committee-October.pdf>

a) Bank Reconciliation for Quarter 2

It was noted there was one figure for which background proof had not been supplied
AFTERNOTE: This was supplied by email from the SCRIBE system.

An amendment to the Financial Regulations will make it possible for the Chairman of the Finance and Risk Committee to sign the reconciliations, but at present bank signatories are not permitted to do so.

It was RESOLVED that Cllr Norman would sign the Bank Statement and Reconciliation report.

b) Terms of Reference (Background paper)

The Finance and Risk Committee have revised their Terms of Reference

It was RESOLVED to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Finance and Risk Committee.

c) Bank Debit Card (Background paper)

The cost of a debit card is £50 set up fee and £3 per card per month. A paper setting out the advantages of this facility had been written by the clerk/RFO and circulated.

It was RESOLVED that the clerk/RFO should apply for a debit card

d) Nat West Savings Account

It was explained that it would be prudent to place earmarked reserves in a separate account and for monies to be transferred to Unity Trust Bank when required. (The dormant Nat West savings account will need new bank mandates to be signed.)

It was RESOLVED that the Nat West account should be brought back into use for earmarked reserves.

e) Appointment of Internal Auditor (Background paper)

The clerk/RFO recommends a company called *Do the Numbers* who specialise in parish council internal audits to be appointed. They are slightly cheaper (£240) than the previous auditor (£250) who is not able to carry out the audit again.

It was RESOLVED that Do the Numbers should be appointed as internal auditor for Queen Camel Parish Council for the year 2021-2022

f) The clerk/RFO had not had time to submit the VAT return.

10/30 Accounts for payment

The payments itemised in the minutes of the Finance and Risk Committee held on 4th October 2021(link above) were **NOTED**

10/31 Clerk Hours

The clerk had been required to work overtime due to an exceptional number of meetings in September and a claim for 20.5 hours has been submitted. Clerk hours have now been raised from 8 to 10 per week from 1 October and no additional overtime is expected this month.

It was RESOLVED to agree a payment of 20.5 hours overtime for the clerk.

10/32 Election date options 2022 or 2023


The parish council election date is highly likely to be moved from 2023 to 2022. Confirmation is expected shortly.

Dates of next meetings

Meetings start at 7.30 and are held in the Marples Room, Memorial Hall, Queen Camel.

- Finance and Risk Committee will meet on Monday 1st November 2021. All items to be considered for the agenda must be received by the Clerk by 9.00am on Wed 20th October.
- The Community Benefit Panel will meet on Wednesday 10th November 2021 (to be confirmed)
- The Parish Council will meet on Monday 15th November. All items to be considered for the Agenda must be received by Wednesday 3rd November.

Elaine Owen
Parish Clerk

Signed  (Chairman)

Date 15/11/2021