



QUEEN CAMEL PARISH MINUTES of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held at The Memorial Hall on Friday 17th May 2019 at 7.00pm

In attendance: approximately 100 electors, residents and friends of Queen Camel

Doors opened at 6pm giving residents an opportunity to chat over a drink, to talk to elected and other representatives, and to look at the displays mounted by various parish organisations.

Formal business – Annual Parish Meeting

1. **Welcome and introduction:** The meeting was opened at 7pm by Simon Thornewill (ST), Chairman of the Queen Camel Council (QCPC), who welcomed all present and explained the twin purposes of the meeting:
 - To review and celebrate what had been achieved in Queen Camel over the previous twelve months.
 - To encourage communication between residents and organisations over their plans and aspirations for the future.
2. **Parish Council priorities:** ST set out QCPC's three major priorities over the coming year:
 - i. **The Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan):** after years of labour and much consultation with residents and others QCPC's *Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group* had drafted a blueprint for future development in the Parish. This had been reviewed by the Parish Council and statutory consultees and would shortly be put before residents in a six-week statutory public consultation. ST stressed the Plan's vital role in protecting Queen Camel from excessive and disproportionate development of the kind seen in a neighbouring parish. He urged all residents to respond to the public consultation as it was the best opportunity they would have to set out how they saw Queen Camel's future.
 - ii. **The A303 Sparkford-Ilchester dualling scheme:** QCPC would continue to do all it could to mitigate any adverse impacts the scheme might have on Queen Camel, especially during the construction phase. ST praised all the work put in by Bryan Norman and John Brendon, not least in representing the interests of Queen Camel residents at the public Examination (planning enquiry) into the proposed scheme.
 - iii. **The Playing Field:** QCPC was determined to help the Playing Field Committee enhance our magnificent playing field and develop its facilities.
3. **Parish Council finances:** John Brendon (JB) reported that in 2018-19 QCPC received c.£24.5k., including a Community Benefit payment of £6.6k. for Sutton Road solar farm, and paid out a total of c.£13.5k. in grants and donations to parish organisations. The figures for 2019-20 would be similar and JB thanked Simon Stapely for all his work on the accounts. QCPC was only able to pay out so much in grants by drawing on its own reserves, so parish organisations were advised to do more fund-raising themselves so as to secure their own long-term viability without depleting parish funds. JB congratulated the Parochial Church Council and the Community Land Trust for their success in obtaining very large grants from outside funding bodies.
4. **Member of Parliament:** David Warburton MP said it was a relief to escape from Westminster and its talk of Brexit and the party leadership. He explained that he was doing all he could to support QCPC in pressing Highways England to modify their proposals for the A303. He also encouraged residents to contact his office about broadband or other problems where he might be able to help.
5. **District and County Councillor:** Mike Lewis too confirmed his support for the Parish Councils of Queen Camel, West Camel and Sparkford in trying to secure changes in the A303 proposals, especially the retention of the existing A303 for local traffic alongside the new dual carriageway. He apologised for the difficulty faced by many (including himself) who tried to communicate with the District Council by telephone or via the new website. He was happy to report that the County Council's projected deficit had been eliminated but the cost of Adult and Children's Social Care remained a major challenge.

The formal meeting concluded at 7.23pm, the bar reopened and there was a ten-minute break.

Informal business – Annual Village Meeting

In a series of brief reports from parish bodies and organisations associated the following points were made:

- 1. Countess Gytha School:** The School currently has c.150 children on roll but the numbers go up and down, especially as families of armed services personnel move between RNAS Yeovilton and other bases. Outside the classroom there are a large number of popular activities.
- 2. Queen Camel Medical Centre:** The Medical Centre continues to thrive and recently received the accolade of the best GP surgery in Somerset.
- 3. Queen Camel Football Club:** The enjoyed another highly successful season, winning promotion to the 1st Division of Yeovil and District League as 2nd Division Champions (22-matches unbeaten).
- 4. Neighbourhood Watch (NHW):** NHW Representatives are asked to inform Sue Cole (the NHW Co-ordinator) when anyone new to the village moves onto their patch so that she can organise a Welcome Pack for them. New NHW signs will be put up around the village shortly.
- 5. Parochial Church Council (PCC):** The PCC is most grateful to residents and funders for their generous contributions which funded the Church roof repair, which is almost finished. There have been other improvements including rewiring and new smoke alarm and burglar alarm systems. A new Rector has not yet been appointed but retired clergy have helped maintain the established programme of Services. The PCC also runs *Bumps, Tots and Toddlers, The Camel Club* and weekly assemblies at Countess Gytha School. If *Camel Carers* could be of benefit to you or anyone you know please get in touch with Morwenna Ford, and please support the *Church Path Fayre* on 8th June.
- 6. Tennis Club:** The Club has around 100 members, with 5 teams in the summer and winter Leagues, and it runs weekly training sessions for Juniors and Adults. It has recently acquired land next to the tennis courts and is working on plans for the future.
- 7. Memorial Hall:** The Hall is well used, with both regular and one-off bookings. It has recently spent c.£31k. on repairs, maintenance and upgrading to the fabric and equipment and future plans include improving the external appearance of the Hall, especially side around the entrance.
- 8. Cricket Club:** The Club has around 45 playing members including 25 Juniors, both boys and girls. It runs regular training sessions for Under 8s, U10s, U12s and U14s, and they also play matches where numbers permit. The Club is very grateful to the Parish Council for the gift of a motor roller to keep the cricket square in top condition, and to the England and Wales Cricket Board for a £1k. grant which was used to refurbish the pavilion kitchen. The Club is looking for a good home for its old motor roller and its unusual number plate. Residents and visitors are most welcome to the Club Open and Family Day on 7th June, 4pm-7pm.
- 9. Community Land Trust:** In early May the Trust bought the former site and buildings of Countess Gytha School, and thanks to the support of local residents and, especially, a large grant *Bright Ideas* grant from *Power to Change* it didn't cost the Parish a penny. The Club has received professional and business advice and has joined a national network of 700 similar community enterprises.
- 10. Bowls Club:** The Club is thriving and is keen to encourage new members of every age.
- 11. Flood Committee:** The Committee liaises between national agencies and the local community, offering information, advice and support via our volunteer Flood Wardens and the Flood Page on the village website.
- 12. Horticultural Society:** The Society has around 60 members. The busy annual programme includes a Bring and Buy sale, garden visits, Annual Show, visiting speakers and Christmas Quiz.

A resident asked if our MP could do anything about Cleaveside House (the Old Medical Centre) which has been boarded up for the last 15 years. Unfortunately David Warburton had already left but District Councillor Mike Lewis said that the District Council has a new Planning Enforcement Officer who might be able to get something done about it. There was no time for further questions.

The meeting finished at 8.15pm but many residents stayed on for half an hour to socialise, examine the displays in the Hall and Marples Room, and talk to the representatives of village organisations.

Patrick Pender-Cudlip, Parish Clerk

18th May, 2019

Signed.....



Date.....

17/09/21