

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 15th September 2020 at 730pm remotely via Zoom.

Present (remotely): Cllrs. Paul Baker (Chairman), Ann Lipscombe, Will Hawkins and Aviva Morris

In attendance: Jacqui Strong (clerk), Cllr David Huxtable, Cllr Anthony Betty and 10 members of the public

Request made to send a get-well message to Will Hawkins and hope for a speedy recovery on behalf of the Parish Council – *Clerk to action*

Conservation:

Simon Phelps has lived in the village for 5 years and worked in the conservation sector for 10 years and works with landowners and farmers. Would be interested to know what the PC are doing regarding conservation on their land, but also for the village to consider the wider area and their own gardens. Would like to provide some advice to the PC on areas they are responsible for. Outlined that the playing field is leased from SDC and that there is also the public footpaths officer who may be interested. Paul will put Simon in touch with necessary members of the community and maintain communication with Clerk.

Cllr Huxtable suggested provided details of the Green Grant bidding opportunities both for green space, electric vehicle charging points or photovoltaic cells. Encouraged to make an application and anything of merit could be developed with support. This raised the question about the planting of trees and what was happening with this idea – *clerk to action*

Public Discussion:

Alison Marsh attended the meeting to follow on from communication with the Parish/District and County Council regarding flooding onto property from the highway. There are no gullies along the highway between Middlezoy and Westonzoyland. She appreciates and is happy to deal with any water the collects on her property but is concerned by the run-off from Highways. Cllr Huxtable has been dealing with this had a site visit and has been communicating with highways officer Lawrence Hackling. SCC have agreed to clear the grips of debris and examine the possible drainage pipe. Sympathy with the property owner was expressed but has been an ongoing problem since taking on the site. Question asked if a practical solution could be offered i.e.: tarmac ramp diverting the water back onto the highway, would this be permissible. Cllr Huxtable advised that County Council would not object if a practical solution were put forward. Parish offered gratitude for taking over the site and sympathy with the problems but in both cases, there were limitations to the extent of help that could be offered. Email and documents have been sent with the PC cc'd into this with attachments.

Question raised about affordable homes in the village and the perceived preference of the parish council for land still waiting to go through probate. Concern expressed that probate could have been applied for at the end of 2018/early 2019 but as of today there was still nothing listed. Conversations with the family had indicated that it was the solicitor that was delaying the situation, but this was queried by members of the parish at the meeting as probate usually takes between 6-8 weeks unless there is a dispute. Should the PC be asking if the land is still going to be available? If not, should the PC be considering other options.

Response: Whilst it is a favourable site, there have been offers of other sites which pose problems due to being too far out of the village (Thorn Grove Farm) there is another site of interest which has been viewed but awaiting some communication with the district council planning department to provide an indication of its suitability.

There is a petition circulating which refers, to 28 homes on Back Lane the original site. This would have been sold to a developer who would make 10 homes available as affordable homes for free with 18 other houses sold on the open market. To clarify it later transpired that this was not the only option available and could consider working with a housing association delivering the actual homes needed.

Contact is ongoing with the housing provider but due to the last Housing Needs Assessment being carried out 3 years ago (as of August 2020) there would be a requirement to undertake a new assessment which would be circulated both in paper form and on line for response by the Parish to determine an accurate picture of today's requirements. Awaiting response from SDC to enable this to happen. It was supported that if an alternative site could be considered then this should be the next stage along with the need's assessment.

117/20/MPC Apologies

Cllr Will Hawkins apologised that due to signal may not be able to attend the full meeting left at 20:08. Apologies received from Cllr Perry.

118/20/MPC Declaration of Interest in items on the agenda & dispensations granted

None

119/20/MPC Councillor vacancy

Florence Roulson was welcomed onto the Parish Council and announced that there were still 2 vacancies available the declaration needs to be signed in the presence of the Clerk and register of interests completed at the earliest convenience.

120/20/MPC Report received from the Chairman

Brief overview that the Skate Park is currently cordoned off awaiting quotes for repairs to the ramp or resurfacing. This is a speciality field and the company that created the equipment are not insured to work off site. Play area is due to be completed but awaiting contractor to make contact.

121/20/MPC Report received from County Councillor David Huxtable

As above information from discussion but left meeting at 20:08pm

122/20/MPC Report received from District Councillor

Planning enforcement regarding fencing on Nethermoor Road is still on going with no recent communication, issue is the height and visibility splay at the junction, Cllr Betty will make enquiries. Currently district and county council are putting forward their business cases for a unified authority. SCC proposing One Somerset and SDC proposing Stronger Somerset with 2 districts East and West Somerset. SDC would form with Taunton and West Somerset. More information available on the Parish Council website. This would result in one Councillor covering the area rather than the current 3 from district and county.

123/20/MPC No report received from the Police or emergency services

Signed

124/20/MPC Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) update

It was noted that District currently consulting with Parishes about current and new PSPO areas, this closed on 13th September, but Clerk has made an enquiry about the Playing Field due to concerns about dogs being exercised in the area. A PSPO needs to be renewed every 3 years but one of the biggest challenges would be enforcing, looking at No Dogs on the Playing Field, currently there is 1 dog warden for the entire Sedgemoor district.

125/20/MPC Play Equipment update – repairs and maintenance

It was noted that the original date provided for play equipment repairs was the 11th September 2020 due to the delivery of the replacement parts. To date no contact has been made with regards the parts arriving, Clerk has chased and will continue to do so. Skateboard Ramp quotes being looked at for replacement of surface and in the short term a temporary repair to fix the metal sheeting. The area has been cordoned off with signage asking people not to use either the skatepark or the play park. Volunteers will be needed to clean the equipment prior to opening.

126/20/MPC Taxi Licence Policy Consultation

Noted by the members but no comments expressed.

127/20/MPC National Joint Council Salary Award

The members noted the NJC Salary Award as circulated and **resolved** to approve the pay increase for the Clerk and backdate payment to April 2020.

128/20/MPC CiLCA qualified Clerk

It was noted that Middlezoy Parish Council now have a qualified clerk. Congratulations expressed to the Clerk.

129/20/MPC Planning White Paper (as circulated)

Biggest proposal to changes to Planning legislation since World War II. The document is available on the website to view and any comments to be given to the clerk to respond to the consultation. Initial thoughts regarding CIL payments were raised. Council to forward comments to Clerk. Members of the public can also make comments via the link on the Government website.

130/20/MPC Playground Inspection Training

It was noted that the training by the Playing Fields Association is now likely to be postponed until Spring 2021, it was **resolved** to wait until the Spring and encourage as many people as possible to attend to cover the regular inspections in the future. Clerk observed the independent inspection and has a better awareness of what is required in the short term.

131/20/MPC Payments noted under delegated power:

Cricket Club Grass Cutting	£300.00
Mileage Claim and reimbursement (Fencing Hire)	£239.88

132/20/MPC April – September 2020 NJC back pay

It was **resolved** to approve the payment of the Clerks back pay for the last 6 months in line with the NJC pay award.

Signed

133/20/MPC Approve Standing Order

It was **resolved** to update the Payroll Standing Order in line with the NJC Salary Award. This still falls within the allocated budget for 2020/21.

134/20/MPC CIL Response

It was noted that SDC had been updated about the CIL receipts and payments.

135/20/MPC Planning items for update all noted:

34/20/00008 – response to approve outline planning for the proposal of 2 dwellings and associated parking – 12 Main Road TA7 OPD

34/20/00006 - permission granted for 3 detached dwellings with parking at Windmill Retreat.

Query raised about the holiday homes being sold – does this comply with what was agreed? Cllr Betty/Perry to make enquiries.

136/20/MPC Affordable Housing

Covered in Parishioners questions – will carry forward until next meeting and make further enquiries regarding needs assessment.

137/20/MPC Website update

Clerk has undertaken tutorial to upload documents on the website. Clerk would also like to note thanks to Alan Quinn for putting an accessibility widget onto the website. Privacy Policy and Accessibility statement to be drawn up before the next meeting for approval.

138/20/MPC Highways and Public Rights of Way

Langport Road – Drainage raised during question time

Noted temporary road closure 28th September 2020 by Wessex Water – Main Road

139/20/MPC Anti-social behaviour

Information available on the website for reporting any anti-social behaviour but reminded to keep a log of any incidents and to liaise with the district council. Hotline: 0800 298 2009

140/20/MPC Village Hall

Committee has recently changed with 2 members stepping down. The revenue is very limited and committee having to consider alternative methods of generating income. Noted the information given by Cllr Huxtable about the Green Grants.

141/20/MPC Correspondence

Correspondence noted and links to the website for further information on Stronger Somerset and One Somerset provided.

142/20/MPC Date of Next meeting Tuesday 20th October 2020 19:30

143/20/MPC Meeting closed at 21:05pm