

The Charltons Parish Council

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Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 19th March 2024
at 7.30pm in The Reading Room, Charlton Mackrell

Councillors Present:

Tamzin Elliott (Chairman)

Nick Blackledge

Dennis Elliott

Kim Williams

Bob Adams (Vice-Chairman)

Susie Crang

Mike Parsons

In Attendance: Somerset Councillor Richard Wilkins, portfolio holder for Transport and Digital, Somerset Councillor Tim Kerley, the Clerk and two members of the public.

Public Session.

No comments.

Reports from Somerset Councillors.

Cllr Kerley reported as follows:

Budget. Somerset Council (SC) has been granted a £77 million loan in principle by the Government as it aims to tackle its financial crisis. The money has been made available through "capitalisation directions", which gives the council permission to use capital funds, generated by selling assets and using reserves to top up spending on services. This would mean that the council is likely to make it through the year without issuing a section 114 notice, however, next year is an unknown.

Agratas, a new business within the Tata Group has confirmed its plans to build a gigafactory producing EV batteries at the Gravity Smart Campus site in Puriton, near Bridgwater. A £4 billion investment, the Agratas factory will create up to 4,000 jobs and many more as part of the supply chain. Once fully operational, the factory is set to be Britain's biggest battery factory, and one of the largest in Europe. JLR (formerly known as Jaguar Land Rover) will partner with the Indian battery company Agratas to source batteries for its next generation models. This would also attract other businesses to the area.

Cllr Wilkins introduced himself to the meeting and explained that he was present to discuss the excess signage in The Charltons and to answer any questions. Highways had recently driven through the parish and reported that there suddenly seems to be a plethora of non-standard brown signs directing to various places around the villages and this is something that they try and avoid wherever possible. As they are not authorised signs mounted on Highways existing posts and do not comply with the Department for Transport (DfT) style of sign they need to be removed. There followed a useful and productive, although frank and open discussion.

Action: It was agreed that the DfT produces clear regulations and guidance to ensure that traffic authorities use traffic signs and road markings correctly. Signage would be on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting in order to provide the 'Group' who sourced and erected the signs with the opportunity to work with the PC to agree a solution that meets DfT guidance and regulations. If an agreeable solution was reached, the PC would submit the proposal to Highways for approval to ensure that any signs were produced in accordance with the regulations. Cllr Wilkins advised that SC was only funding essential infrastructure, however, funding can be discussed if an agreement was reached with the PC. As a gesture of goodwill it was agreed that the traffic mirror

and sign on private property could remain in situ, however, the signs erected on highways and BT property would need to be taken down whilst discussing the way forward.

(Cllrs Kerley and Wilkins left the meeting at 7.50pm)

24/16. Apologies for Absence and to consider the reasons given.

Council to receive apologies for absence and, if appropriate, to resolve to approve the reasons given.

RESOLVED: Cllrs Alan Crawley and Adam Ware gave their apologies, which were received and approved.

24/17. Declarations of Interest.

Members to declare any interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Local Authority (NALC Model Code of Conduct) adopted May 2022.

(NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

RESOLVED: None declared.

24/18. Minutes.

To approve the Minutes of the PC meeting held on Tuesday 14th February 2024.

RESOLVED: The minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

24/19. Planning.

a. To consider the following planning applications (PA):

i. **PA 24/00272/LBD.** Proposed roof works to an existing outbuilding at Charlton House, Ilchester Road, Charlton Mackrell, TA11 6AD.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed unanimously to recommend **APPROVAL**.

ii. **PA 24/00307/FUL.** Erection of new dwelling on land at Cooks Cary Farm, Ilchester Road, Charlton Mackrell.

RESOLVED: Councillors considered that the application would be an improvement to the site as it is currently and agreed unanimously to recommend **APPROVAL**.

b. Somerset Council (SC) Decisions:

i. **PA 22/03342/FUL.** Change of use of agricultural land to commercial for the erection of two detached industrial units, formation of a new access with parking and turning space and creation of an attenuation pond on land Os 4300, Cary Fitzpaine, BA22 8JB – **APPROVED**.

24/20. Finance.

a. Balance of the Council's Bank Account and Bank Reconciliation.

To report on the Council's Bank Account.

RESOLVED: The Clerk previously circulated the PC Accounts which were received and approved

b. Accounts for payment.

To review and approve a schedule of items of expenditure (incl. VAT):

i. Malcolm Reeves – Grounds Maintenance	£700.00
ii. Reading Room Routine Maintenance Grant	£300.00
iii. Safelincs – Paediatric replacement defibrillator pads x 2	£210.17
iv. Grant – Somerton Library	£200.00
v. Somerset Council – Bus Bay Timings – Sign & Post	£164.39
vi. Clerk's Allowances & Expenses	£34.50
vii. The Old Post House Defibrillator Hosting	£20.00

RESOLVED: Items of expenditure approved unanimously.

c. Cary Fitzpaine Defibrillator.

Request for PC to pay electrician costs for installation.

RESOLVED: Councillors agreed in principle to pay the installation costs estimated at £220 plus VAT, which will be on the agenda for approval once the formal quote is received.

d. Rights of Way Repairs.

Request from Keinton Mandeville (KM) to contribute towards authorised repair costs of £2,530 (ex VAT) to footpath and stile at kissing gate located at Newcombe Farm that straddles both parishes.

Cllr Adams reported that he had visited the site and confirmed that only the very ends of the sleeper bridge were effectively in The Charltons parish.

RESOLVED: The Clerk agreed to reply to KM Clerk that if the PC had been consulted before the works were carried out, a contribution relative to the work in The Charltons could have been included in the budget, however, there were no funds available in the next FY and the PC did not wish to set a precedent.

24/21. Community Flood Action Group (CFAG) and Emergency Planning.

Update on the formation of a CFAG.

Cllr Adams reported that he had successful meetings with a few residents from both Charlton Adam and Mackrell who are interested in being involved with the CFAG. The aim of the Group would be to support residents before, during and after a flood and to raise awareness of flooding issues in the Parish with the appropriate authorities. He had also recently contacted the owner of Primrose Hill Park to invite them to nominate a resident to be involved with the AG.

A small steering group had formed to investigate and liaise with the Somerset Rivers Authority and Environment Agency, who would be invited to the AG meetings and to help develop the proposal. There then followed a discussion on blocked ditches.

RESOLVED: The Clerk agreed to ask Kingweston Estates to dig out the ditch along Kingweston Road from Sandpits Lane to Georgian Cottage.

Cllr Adams reported that the ditch in George Street had been cleared, however, SC Highways confirmed that the ditch in front of the eight new houses opposite the Fox and Hounds was in the ownership and responsibility of the new development.

24./22. Items for Report and Future Business.

- a. The change of date from 15th to 16th May for the Annual Parish, Annual Parish Council and ordinary Parish Council meetings was **APPROVED**.
- b. Quotation for grounds maintenance works the War Memorial would be available for the next meeting.
- c. Cllr Williams agreed to attend the Levels and Moors Highways sub group LCN meeting – Thursday 21st March 2024: 10.00am to 12.00pm, Langport Town Council bldg.
- d. The Chairman agreed to attend remotely the Levels and Moors LCN meeting - Monday 25th March 2024: 6:30pm, Westonzoyland Village Hall.

Next meeting: to be held on Tuesday 16th April 2024, 7.30PM in The Reading Room, Hillway, Charlton Mackrell.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Signed:

Dated: