

The Charltons Parish Council

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Minutes of Parish Council Meeting

held on Tuesday 17th September 2024

commencing at 7.30pm in The Reading Room, Charlton Mackrell

Councillors Present:

Tamzin Elliott (Chairman)

Dennis Elliott

Adam Ware

Bob Adams (Vice Chairman)

Mike Parsons

Kim Williams

In Attendance: Somerset Councillors Tim Kerley and Stephen Page and the Clerk.

❖ In Memoriam for Mrs Christine Wellstead and Miss Anne Petitpierre

The Chairman called for a minute's silence for Christine who sadly passed away on 3rd August 2024 and Anne who also sadly recently passed away. Christine and Anne had both served for a considerable period of time on the Parish Council (PC). Christine retired as Chairman of the Council in May 2017 and Anne in May 2019.

❖ **Public Question and Comments:** None present.

❖ Reports from Somerset Council:

Cllr Stephen Page reported as follows:

1. "Somerset Council (SC) restructuring is nearly complete and should result in significant long-term savings but sadly this has involved a circa 20% reduction in staff numbers.
2. The budget issues for 2023-24 is now looking much better but 2024-25 will be a challenging year due to increased costs in adult social care and children's services.
3. I have been appointed to the SC Area South Planning Committee and as Vice Chairman of the Avalon & Polden Local Community Network (LCN).

Cllr Tim Kerley reported as follows:

4. As Vice-chairman of the Levels and Moors LCN Cllr Kerley wished to encourage parish councils to become more involved and to share practices and resources.
5. SC Planning department was currently in a state of flux, having recently lost four principal planning officers. There was also a backlog of planning applications. Time would be needed to train new planning officers. Progress was being made regarding the phosphates issue, however, it was a tricky legal procedure, which also involved the three agencies who oversaw the phosphate mitigation process.

Following a full question and answer session with the PC, Cllrs Kerley and Page left the meeting at 8.00pm.

24/66. Apologies for absence:

To receive any apologies for absence.

RESOLVED: Apologies received from Cllrs Susie Crang and Alan Crawley.

24/67. Declarations of Interests:

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any Pecuniary or Other interests they may have under the Localism Act 2011 and NALC Model Code of Conduct adopted May 2022. (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

RESOLVED: None declared.

24/68. Minutes:

To approve the Minutes of the PC meeting held on Wednesday 16th July 2024.

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

24/69. Planning.

a. **To consider the following planning applications (PA):** None received.

b. **Somerset Council (SC) Decisions:**

i. **PA 23/02868/FUL** - Over cladding of the existing community hall structure, small extension to the North and East elevations and internal rearrangements of the building spaces to better provide for the community's needs at Charltons Memorial Community Hall, Top Road, Charlton Adam, TA11 7BE – **APPROVED**.

24/70. Parish Council Accounts:

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

To receive the full council accounts and bank reconciliation.

RESOLVED: The Clerk previously circulated the PC Accounts which were received and approved and bank balances at 5th September 2024 of Nat West Current Account £7,782.15 and Nat West Business Reserve Account £47,477.20, which were reconciled, approved and signed.

b. **Accounts for payment:**

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

i. ElanCity – solar panel & fixing kit	£577.12
ii. SALC affiliation fee Apr 24 to Mar 25	£329.44
iii. PKF Littlejohn External Auditor Fee	£252.00
iv. RBLI – Unknown Women in War Statue	£200.00
v. Tor Signs – extension post for SID	£98.00
vi. WesternWeb Ltd. renewal of web space	£96.00
vii. Clerk's Allowances & Expenses Jun to Sep 24	£60.25
viii. Overt Locke Ltd – padlock & stone cleaner	£35.35
ix. Royal British Legion poppy shop – wreath	£21.50

RESOLVED: Items of expenditure approved unanimously.

c. **Grant Policy** – to consider the updated Charltons PC Grant Policy.

RESOLVED: The Clerk previously circulated the revised Grant Policy for review, which was adopted.

d. **Internal Auditor** – To appoint an auditor for FY 24/25.

RESOLVED: Quote received from Parish and Towns Audit Services for £165. The Clerk would send out for two more quotes.

24/71. Signage:

To approve proof from ParSigns for signage to Reading Room to be installed on village green.

RESOLVED: In the absence of Cllr Crang this item was deferred to the next meeting.

24/72. Development on Land South of Fox and Hounds Pub:

To discuss Detailed Construction Environment Management Plan prepared by Pulsar for Grove (Charlton Adam) Ltd. and the possible implications for residents.

RESOLVED: Councillors discussed the documents concerning Transport and Materials and agreed that overall it was a strong plan and would submit the PC's comments with recommendations to SC Planning.

24/73. Community Flood Action Group and Emergency Planning:

Update.

RESOLVED: Cllr Parsons produced and circulated maps of water flows in the parish. As the theme for the next LCN meeting scheduled for 18th September was flooding; the Chairman and Cllr Parsons agreed to attend online. Cllr Parsons also agreed to check his availability for the next workshop on Emergency Planning/Flooding, which would be held in South Cadbury on 4th October 2024.

24/74. Items for Report and Future Business.

a. Enhanced Highway Maintenance (EHM). A new pilot launch and volunteer training scheme. Cllr Kerley confirmed earlier in the meeting that more detail would need to be provided on this scheme, which was not yet in its final form.

b. Local Community Network (LCN) meeting, 18th September 2024, 7.00pm Westonzoyland Village Hall – theme flooding. The Chairman and Cllr Parsons agreed to attend online.

c. Millenium Plinths Refurbishment. Councillors wished to thank all those who helped to clean and refurbish the Millenium stone plinths. The plinths in West Charlton would be cleaned in the spring.

d. Refurbishment of The Charltons War Memorial. Cllr Adams reported that the next stage of refurbishment would be to remove the old rotten tree stumps, level the path/steps and return the garden surrounding the Memorial. Initial surveys revealed the presence of several Stag Beetles in the rotten tree stumps. Stag Beetles are a protected species, therefore, ecological advice was sought on the feasibility of moving the beetles to a new location and the PC was advised that it would be appropriate at this time of year to move the beetles and their tree stump homes to a new site in the garden. This has now been accomplished and the Stag Beetles have a new home along with the tree stumps on the land to the rear of the memorial.

Over the next two to three weeks the rest of the work on the garden would be undertaken with the aim of completing it by the middle of October. The stage after this will be to repoint the outside walls and relay the capping stones on the walls. This will be accomplished during the summer next year when lime mortar pointing can be carried out.

e. Cllr Blackledge Retirement and PC Vacancy. Councillors and the Clerk wished to record their thanks to Nick Blackledge, who recently retired from the PC, for all his hard work and commitment during his fourteen years serving on the Parish Council and especially for his seven years as Chairman. The Clerk agreed to advertise the vacancy.

Next meeting: to be held on Tuesday 15th October 2024, 7.30pm in The Reading Room, Hillway, Charlton Mackrell.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed:

Dated: