

RUISHTON AND THORNFALCON PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st February 2017

CLLRS PRESENT: Lowe (Chairman), Anderdon, Bulgin, Bowey, Dickinson, Hancock, Marshall, McEvans & Powell

ALSO PRESENT: County Councillor Ross Henley, one member of the public and the Clerk, Heather Bryant

NOT PRESENT: Borough Councillor Kelly Durdan, Borough Councillor Dave Durdan. No apologies received.

PARISHIONERS QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from the public

17/2/1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from Cllrs Harper, Mullins, Murphy

17/2/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared

Cllrs Anderdon and McEvans arrived at 7.35pm

17/2/3 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4th JANUARY 2017

RESOLVED: the approval of the minutes as a true record.

17/2/4 PLANNING

Outstanding items:

Stoke Road Affordable Housing – attenuation tank

The Clerk reported that Chris Horon Enforcement Planner, who had all the history on this issue, has now left Taunton Deane Borough Council. He has been replaced by Jill Williams.

The Chairman reported that although the development is now transferred to the Housing Association. this issue would need to go back to the developers to provide proof that the smaller tank they have installed has got larger drainage pipes to cope with water during a deluge of rainfall. The Clerk will write to the new EO providing the history of this issue. The Clerk will also include the Listed Structures at the junction of Cheats Road and Lipe Lane in this letter as Chris Horon was keeping a file on the enforcement issues regarding this site.

17/2/5 COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORTS

County Councillor Ross Henley reported on the following:

- Taunton Deane Borough Council has increased their budget by 3.64% for 2017/18. There will be cuts in grants they give to Parish Councils and dog bin emptying.
- Somerset County Council is looking into CCTV security system for the Park and Ride site and are seeking quotes for a tidy up of the site although there is no budget for this financial year.
- He had nothing to report on the pavements around Newlands and Lawn Meadows.
- The junction painting at Lawn Meadows will has been refreshed
- He has had no reply to an email in regard to a traffic count near the school and Bushy Cross Lane.

The Chairman reported a concern from a resident in regard to the junction at Cheats Road and turning right into Ruishton Road. The junction is not very clear for unfamiliar motorists and they can turn right without checking if a vehicle was travelling along Bushy Cross Lane. This resident has had some near misses. It was agreed that a site visit with the County Highways would be useful.

17/2/6 FLOODING ISSUES

The Chairman and Cllr Marshall reported on the meeting on 19th January. (Cllr Marshall's notes refers)

In attendance: Representatives from Wessex Water, Somerset County Council, Environment Agency, Taunton Deane Borough Council, Internal Drainage Board and Ruishton & Thornfalcon. Flood Group.

Village Pump

- The red light on the pump no longer means that the pump is not working it now indicates that the pump is working at full capacity. Taunton Deane Borough Council will update the information plate on the village pump's cabinet

- The outflow valve is not working properly and consequently when the water level in the ditch that it discharges into reaches it water is being sucked back into the pump. There is an urgent need to replace with a non return valve. This is the responsibility of Taunton Deane Borough Council who has been asked to rectify urgently
- It was reported that someone is throwing dog waste bags into the gully grating nearest to Overlands on Cheats Road which causes problems for the village pump.

Mobile pump

- SCC and TDBC do not have mobile pumps available. Environment Agency pumps are deployed to deal with flooding from rivers not surface water.
- It was suggested that Community Resilience in Somerset Project (CRISP) may be able to provide funding for the parish to purchase a pump also monies may be available from the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA). The Clerk to contact CRISP and Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA)
- The Environment Agency will forward details and specification of mobile pump used in Ruishton and Bathpool.
- There will be a problem of where the mobile pump would be stored and ongoing maintenance.

Ring Bank

- Environment Agency had surveyed part of the Ring Bank in Dec. 2016. A report will be sent to the Clerk and to provide the latest ring bank crest heights.
- It was suggested that the Environment Agency provide the date they will be carrying out ring bank visual inspections so that the Flood Group can meet them.

Wessex Water drains and pump

- It was reported that WW Storm Pump at the end of Goosey Lane ran twice during Storm Angus; 20/11/16 from 01.47am to 6.09am, 21/11/16 10.21am through to 02.18am on 22/11/16. Wessex Water will provide pump's sump levels during this period to the Clerk.
- It was observed and a video record that there was surging in the centre of the village during this period.
- CCTV after Storm Angus has shown that there was debris that needed clearing from pipework near Dinhams Farmhouse. Wessex Water will programme in the jetting.
- Wessex Water have an Infiltration Reduction Plan in place for Ruishton which includes CCTV surveying to identify ground water ingress. This has identified 12 sewer sealing lengths (which includes 4 lengths that feed into the manholes in Cheats Road in the car sales area) The work will be carried out during the period between April-August 2017 but yet to be programmed.
- Wessex Water has Ruishton on a routine jetting programme and will advise of frequency and timing with possible improvements if required.

FLOOD COMMITTEE

The Chairman and Cllr Marshall spoke to the Chairman of the Flood Group after the meeting with the Authorities. The Flood Group will have to decide if they want to be a separate entity to the PC or the PC will oversee the Flood Group which will mean a Flood Committee of the Council, Risk Assessments and Training Schedules for those volunteers not trained by Operation Gannex, also appropriate insurance. The Clerk is waiting for a reply to her letter sent to the Chairman of the Flood Group.

In the meantime, the Clerk will contact CRISP and Communities Prepared for more information

Civil Contingency

Cllr Powell agreed to draft a proposal for a civil contingency volunteer system for the Council's consideration

17/2/7 CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSED NEW COUNCIL TAUNTON DEANE AND WEST SOMERSET

Cllrs Marshall & Bulgin reported on a recent meeting at Taunton Deane Borough Council in regard to this subject as follows:

- It will cost £6.8 million to set up a new council funded by New Homes Bonus, Housing Revenue Account and Reserves

- A single new District Council will save £3.1m a year however it is already saving £2.6m by sharing staff with West Somerset which is only £0.5m less.
- No details were given on how the savings will be made
- The proposal would mean fewer District Councillors who will cover larger areas
- The District Councillors would rely on internet connections to have the same information that is available to Officers and will be expected to take on more work to free up Officers time. The reality is that District Councillors would need to have the skills to use new technology and can readily receive good Broadband connections
- West Somerset is seriously financially strapped and will go broke in 3 years' time if nothing is done.
- The perception is, and confirmed by the Leader of Taunton Deane Borough Council, that they are committed go ahead even if there was an overwhelming lack of support for the proposal.

After a full discussion it was agreed that this Council does not support the proposal as there were no benefits for the residents of Taunton Deane Borough Council, in fact it will be detrimental as there will be fewer District Councillors. Cllrs were asked to email the Clerk with their observations after reading the associated documents and the Clerk will draft a response to the consultation which will also be copied to the Secretary of State.

17/2/8 HENLADE STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT SITE AND ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

Outstanding

To consider: The Parish Councils response to the consultation (The PC has an extension of time-awaits further information from SCC) There has been no further information forthcoming

The Clerk reported that this Council along with Stoke St Mary had been invited to a briefing on the informal consultation exercise to be held during March regarding the M5 J25 Employment Site on 27th February between 2pm – 4pm in advance of the public drop-in session on the 1st March which marks the beginning of the four-week consultation.

The Clerk will reply (and copy in Stoke St Mary) that this Council welcomes the advanced briefing but would question why it is only a four-week consultation period when usually consultations are six-weeks.

It was noted that Highways England will be carrying out an Ecology Survey on land in the vicinity of the A358. Cllr Marshall asked the Clerk to contact HE for the results as the information may be useful for the Neighbourhood Plan

It was reported that Highways England are holding an information event in Taunton Creative Innovation Centre in February. The Clerk will enquire from HE on why this Council was not informed.

17/2/9 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

Cllr Marshall reported

- The Contract of £3080 with the Community Council for Somerset has been signed. This is for the production of the questionnaire and the expenditure will come from the grant awarded from Awards for All
- Mike Rigby came to the last meeting to speak about Bishop's Lydeard Neighbourhood Plan experiences
- The questionnaire is scheduled to go out on 20th February with replies back by 10th March

117/2/10 DEFIBRILLATOR FOR THE VILLAGE

The Clerk confirmed that she submitted the survey to Taunton Deane Borough Council which closes on 6 February. She will contact Taunton Deane Borough Council after this date to enquire if they will be holding any workshops

17/2/11 HIGHWAYS MATTERS

Pavements around Newlands,
20mph Newlands

Traffic count including the speed for vehicles on the road near the School and Bushy Lane.
See C.C. Ross Henley' report

Humps along Ruishton Lane – Still outstanding

Any new Highway issues

The Chairman reported that a Speed Indicator Device (SID) will be installed on the A358 at the Bushy Cross sign for vehicles coming out of Taunton on 6.2.17

17/2/12 CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

South West Regional Conference, 16th March at Taunton RFC, cost £60 – the Clerk reported that she would like to attend and will ask her other two Councils to share the cost with this Council. This was agreed.

17/2/13 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Outstanding items:

First Aid Courses – deferred until the outcome of Defibrillator training

Park & Ride -security & facilities, vegetation overgrowth on site – See C.C. Ross Henley's report

The Chairman reported that he has a meeting with MP Rebecca Pow in regard to Parish Council capping.

17/2/14 VILLAGE MAINTENANCE

RESOLVED: to accept the quotation for cutting grass around the village hall bank of the car-park

17/2/15 EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT

RESOLVED: the adoption of the policy for 17/18 as presented

17/2/16 FINANCIAL MATTERS

FINANCIAL REPORTS AND CHEQUES FOR PAYMENT

RESOLVED: that this Council approves the schedule of cheques and the Financial Report subject to the requirements of our Risk Assessment Document.

17/2/17 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

17th May 2017. The Clerk will invite Sue Mountstevens (Crime Commissioner) and Kali Martin (County Highways)

17/2/18 MATTERS TO REPORT (for information only) OR FOR THE AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING

There were no matters to report. The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm

DATE OF THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING 1st MARCH 7.30pm IN RUISHTON VILLAGE HALL. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME. 7.30pm