

Combe Hay Parish Council

BATHAVON WEST WARD, BATH & NORTH-EAST SOMERSET

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
held at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 13 August 2015 in Combe Hay Parish Church

Actions – marked **A** at right – are on the Clerk and on any Councillor whose initials also appear

Present: Councillors J. Long (Chairman), M. Austwick, C. Harrison, P. Mills, S. Saker, D. Samson, J. Young

In attendance: R. Campbell (Clerk), one member of the public

Public Participation

The Chairman welcomed all present and opened public participation. Comments, which do not form part of the minutes are shown in *italic*.

- *Lynda Le Ray explained plans to put telegraph poles and stones along the verge in front of her stables in Swan Lane to prevent further erosion of the verge by traffic. She reported on a visit by District Councillor Veale and wondered whether the Parish council had lost an opportunity in not applying for a village-wide 20mph limit in 2014. She hoped one would soon be possible, particularly in Swan Lane.*

The Chairman thanked the Mrs Le Ray and closed public participation.

15.13 **Apologies**

All Parish Councillors were present. District Councillor D. Veale had sent his apologies.

15.14 **Declarations**

Councillor Saker declared a pecuniary interest in relation to agenda item 15.17(a) Anchor Farm, as owner.

15.15 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 14 May 2015 were agreed to be a true record. They were signed by the Chairman

The minutes of the meeting of 24 June 2015 were agreed to be a true record. They were signed by the Chairman

15.16 **Clerk's report**

- Fingerpost painting (minute 15.05). The Clerk had thanked Sara Dixon at B& NES and received the following reply. "The volunteers had a lovely day and were very proud of the final results."
- Other actions from June minutes appear in the agenda

15.17 **Planning**

(a) Applications Councillors considered the following applications:

15/02830/FUL Rectory Lodge, Old Bath Road, Combe Hay, Bath BA2 7EG

Proposal: Erection of two bedroom single storey side extension and single storey extension to bedroom 3 and hall. Single storey infill side extension to link

reception to existing garage. (Revised proposal).

The Chairman noted that the application was identical to an earlier application which the Parish Council had supported but which had been withdrawn. The current application was to go before the Development Management Committee on 26 August.

Councillors considered the nature of the site, noted the amount of land banked up to the N. and that the garage would remain.

RESOLVED (proposed Cllr Harrison, 2nd Cllr Samson, unanimous) to **support** the application

15/02933/FUL Anchor Farm, Anchor Lane, Combe Hay, Bath, BA2 7EE

Proposal: Erection of single storey side and front extensions following demolition of existing Utility and WC.

Councillors viewed the plans and requested information from Cllr Saker. After giving it she withdrew from the meeting.

Councillors noted that the property was in the Green Belt and Cotswold AONB; it was outside the development limit and not in the Conservation Area. It was below road level and could not be seen from the other side of the valley. There would be no effect on the amenity of neighbours. They considered the design satisfactory and materials in sympathy with existing. There was a marginal increase in footprint. There were to be no drainage issues, no change in parking arrangements and no traffic implications. They discussed the proposed zinc roof.

RESOLVED (proposed Cllr Long, 2nd Cllr Samson, unanimous) to **support** the application.

Comments: reference to be made to Living Homes and to the fact that a rotting structure was to be replaced & improved with only a small footprint increment.

Cllr Saker rejoined the meeting

(b) Planning decision B & NES had advised the following

15/00793/FUL Tynings Bridge, Old Bath Road, Combe Hay

Proposal: Engineering works for provision of long-term support to bridge structure. Decision: **Permit**

15.18 **Roads and Bridges**

(a) Updates

- Highways Inspector Nick Sperring had been asked to repair potholes in Swan Lane.
- Mr Sperring had said that the water running across Anchor Lane by Brook House was due to a blocked pipe; the matter was in hand.
Councillors stressed the need for the work to be finished before winter.

(b) Speed limit for Swan Lane Cllrs discussed opportunities for applying for a 20mph limit. Cllr Long said that the PC would take the matter up again when the time came.

15.19 **Rights of Way** No report

15.20 **Cemetery**

a) Tree works Councillors received a quotation with two options for works to the ash tree, submitted by Scott Watson of Wildwood. The first option was to remove major dead branches, the second to remove the entire tree. Mr Watson

had given as his opinion that *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* (ash dieback) is present in its teleomorphic (reproductive) stage and that other ash trees nearby were affected. He considered that the cemetery tree will continue to die back even when the offending branches have been removed.

It was agreed to obtain a quotation from Sam Brown and another tree surgeon and consider the matter again in October.

(b) Wall repair It was agreed to ask Philip Harrison to requote for repairs to the cemetery wall, given that more work might now be needed, and to provide a timetable.

(c) Charges Councillors reviewed the existing cemetery charges and agreed that they should remain:

- £50 for a single-width grave plot
- £100 for a double-width grave plot
- £30 for an ashes plot
- £40 for a headstone, etc. for a grave
- £40 for a headstone, etc. for interred ashes

15.21 **Waste and Cleansing**

The grass was being cut. Confirmation of the contract was being sought.

15.22 **Statutory matters**

(a) Standing orders Cllr Mills and the Clerk had reviewed and adapted where necessary the NALC model document, which had been circulated to members **RESOLVED** (proposed Cllr Mills, 2nd Cllr Austwick, unanimous) to adopt.

(b) Financial regulations

Cllr Mills and the Clerk had also reviewed and adapted where necessary the NALC model document, which had been circulated to members.

RESOLVED (proposed Cllr Mills, 2nd Cllr Harrison, unanimous) to adopt.

(c) Risk assessment Cllr Mills and the Clerk had updated the parish council's Risk Assessment Schedule, which had been circulated.

Cllr Austwick asked whether safe keeping of a deed confirming the Parish Council's ownership of the Lower Lane car park was included. The Clerk had not found a deed among the papers he had taken over. Cllr Austwick will consult the Land Registry.

RESOLVED (proposed Cllr Mills, 2nd Cllr Saker, unanimous, to add to the list

(i) a document establishing the parish council's ownership of the Lower Lane Car Park and a record of arrangements for the car park's use.

(ii) a list of parish council assets.

(d) Transparency The Clerk reported that parish councils with an annual turnover under £25K are now required to list on a website all items of expenditure over £100, their end of year accounts, annual governance statement and internal audit report. Grants will be available towards the cost of setting up a website for those parishes which do not have one.

It was agreed to consult Deborah White at ALCA and to apply for a grant, before the next meeting if necessary.

(e) Data protection

It was agreed that Combe Hay Parish Council should register with the

Information Commissioner.

15.23 Policies

The following draft policies had been circulated to members:

- Sickness absence
- Health and Safety
- Equal Opportunities
- Expenses
- Grievance and Discipline (procedure).

Cllr Mills had reviewed the policies and was content.

RESOLVED (proposed Cllr Mills, 2nd Cllr Austwick, unanimous) to adopt the five policies.

15.24 Clerk

A contract of employment, amended as per minute 15.03 d, was to hand.

RESOLVED (proposed Cllr Mills, 2nd Cllr Young, unanimous) to pass the contract to the Chairman for final checking and signature. The contract was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk at the end of the meeting.

15.25 Finance

(a) Financial statement To be circulated

(b) Banking arrangements A letter was signed authorizing the Clerk to deal with Nationwide about a possible extant account.

(c) External auditor's report

Cllr Mills reported that the external auditor's report had been received and that it and the conclusion of audit notice had been displayed on the notice board. He commented on the auditor's statements as follows:

Matters reported

- *Risk assessment not updated since 2012*
The late Clerk and Cllr Mills had gone through the risk assessment.
Cllr Mills considered this criticism unjustified.
The Risk Assessment has now been completely recast – see 15.22(c) above

Other matters not affecting the auditor's opinion

- *Financial regulations not reviewed in 2014-15*
Now done – see 15.22(b)above
- *Completion of Audit Notice 2013-14 not displayed*
There was nothing the Parish Council could do about this.
The notice for 2014-15 had been displayed, as noted above
- *Internal financial controls not documented*
Current practice and the new Financial Regulations address this but there remained some doubt about the auditor's requirement
- *Recommendation to restate prior year numbers on fixed assets not followed*
The PC did review the report and decided to leave the numbers as they were.

- *Treatment of old cheques*

They have been written back this year. Cllr Mills thought this preferable to making prior year adjustment to the 2014-15 numbers in next year's return.

It was formally recorded that the Clerk is now the Responsible Financial Officer.

(d) Payments

RESOLVED (proposed Cllr Mills, 2nd Cllr Austwick, unanimous) to approve the following payments:

| | | |
|------------|--|--------|
| Chq 100741 | J. Young, electors' meeting food | £18.78 |
| 100742 | HMRC | 75.00 |
| 100743 | R. Campbell, Clerk's salary part June and July | 363.75 |
| 100744 | P. Mills, postage expenses | 14.09 |
| 100745 | Grant Thornton, audit 2014/15 | 120.00 |
| 100746 | R. Campbell, Clerk's salary August (postdated) | 295.51 |

15.26 **Parish Plan**

No information.

15.27 **Training**

Cllr Young will join the training session to be held by ALCA on 13 October in Wellow Village Hall

15.28 **Broadband**

Cllrs Long and Austwick had attended a meeting with Truespeed Broadband and registered interest. Truespeed are due to go live in Priston with a fibre broadband package at £45 per month from September. The alternative, BT, which keeps copper wire from the cabinet to the property, would only happen if there was the enthusiasm to drive it forward, Cllr Austwick said, describing just such a case at Claverton.

To be an October agenda item.

15.29 **Correspondence and reports**

(a) Correspondence Councillors noted correspondence received since the June meeting, including:

- information on Fly the Flag for the Commonwealth 2016
- information on the Sulis Down website about progress towards a masterplan for the development of around 300 homes
- A request from B & NES for information on welcome packs for new residents

No actions were identified.

(b) Reports

- It had been suggested to Cllr Long that every second tree in The Avenue should be removed to avoid overcrowding. It was noted that this would mean the elimination of some species. The B & NES tree officer to be consulted before the matter is considered further.
- Cllr Austwick will arrange painting of on third of The Avenue railings in early September if possible, otherwise next year.

15.30 Meetings and events

(a) The following event were noted:

23 September 2015 ALCA B&NES Area Group Saltford Village Hall

27/28 October 2015NALC Annual Conference 2015 Jury's Inn, Birmingham(b)

(b) The next Parish Council meeting would be on Thursday 8 October at 7pm in Combe Hay Church.

The Chairman thanked those attending and closed the meeting at 9.35pm