



TATWORTH AND FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Tatworth & Forton Parish Council Held on 7th March 2024 at 7pm Main Hall Tatworth Memorial Hall

Present: Chairman Councillor R Down, Councillors: S Adams, C Brown, P Chapple, C Heal, L Matthey, K Patay, D Peake, E Peadon, and A Rust

There were 2 Members of the Public and no members of the press were present.

Parish Clerk N Tinley

The Members of the Public were invited to address the Council about any matters not already on the agenda but declined.

29/24 Apologies for Absence

Somerset Councillor J Baker – Family issues

Somerset Councillor C Payne – Unwell

Councillor P Rosser – Unwell

Councillor R Wardell – Holiday

30/24 Declarations of interest

Councillor Adams - 42/24 Payments. Will leave the room

Councillor Down - 36/24, 40/24 and 42/24. Will leave the room

Councillor Brown - 36/24, 40/24 and 42/24. Will leave the room

31/24 To approve and sign as a correct record Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 1st February 2024

Councillor Heal indicated that she did not get the Somerset Councillor Payne report. The Clerk said that despite reminders it was not forwarded to the office. The Minutes were amended to reflect that the report was not emailed to the Councillors and not placed on the website.

Proposed by Councillor A Rust, Seconded by Councillor D Peake. All in favour with one abstention – not at last meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1st February be signed as a correct record following the one amendment.

32/24 Chairman's Announcements

The remainder of the Chairman's allowance, £70, will be donated to Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance.

33/24 Community flood warden update and to give permission for Councillor Heal to arrange flood mitigation works with wardens and local residents

The training day was well received by the Flood Wardens. The work done by the Wardens to mitigate flooding will be reported to the Clerk to be kept on record.

The Community Facebook page for flooding was up and running.

The blocked drains in Tatworth and Forton have been reported to Highways.

Proposed by Councillor K Patay, Seconded by Councillor S Adams. All in favour.

RESOLVED: Councillor Heal has the Council's authority to organise work by the Flood Wardens and the general public to mitigate flood risks.

A leaflet drop will be arranged.

Councillor Rust mentioned flooding risks from Pop Lane and the local residents want to reduce those risks.

34/24 Report from Councillor Peake regarding the Planning Inspectorate review of the Crossman application

The Planning Inspector has not yet ruled on the Crossman and Mear's appeal against Somerset Council's decision to refuse the building of 95 homes.

Councillors Heal and Peake attended the Informal Hearing in Yeovil on 8th February along with 9 Chilson Common residents, Fletcher Robinson from the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Lindsey Bristow from Swiss Tulle, and Margaret Mercer.

Although the Hearing was mainly concentrated upon the grounds for Somerset Council's refusal, namely landscape and character, the Inspector did allow attendees to raise other issues including recent traffic accidents and to correct inaccuracies in the data presented.

The main new evidence since the original decision came from a Hydrological Report commissioned by Swiss Tulle which stressed the risks to Swiss Tulle's drinking water supply.

The Hearing lasted for 5 hours after which the Inspector made a site visit in the company of Crossman's agent, Somerset Council's Planning Officer and a local resident. This had to be cut short due to heavy rain, the boggy state of the ground and fading light levels, although it is understood that the Inspector returned on another day to see the site from other viewpoints.

No decision has been notified or posted on the Appeals website at this time.

35/24 Tatworth and Forton Parish Council (T&FPC) approves the sale of its share of the land north of Zembard Lane to Chard Town Council (CTC) for the sum of £12800. It will also receive its outstanding proportion of rent received by CTC from the playgroup represented by the sum of £455.70. T&FPC will receive 20% of the net proceeds from any future sale of the land or part thereof by CTC (excluding burial plots sold on an individual basis) less £12800 within

20 working days of said sale. CTC will pay the full cost of Solicitor fees for the transfer of title for the land

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor A Rust. All in favour with one abstention.

RESOLVED: Tatworth and Forton Parish Council approves of the sale of our 20% of the Zembard Lane area as per the terms of the agenda item.

The Chairman requested the agenda items 36/24 and 41/24 be swapped.

41/24 Clerks Report

- 1) Peter Fosh is holding a First Aid Course on Monday 11th March and has 2 vacancies if anyone is interested.
- 2) Coombses Pond. Work has started and the 2 large trees across the footpath and Forton Brook have been removed. The contractors will be back with a boat during the first week in April.
- 3) The Amenities Committee has resolved after several dog related incidents to restrict dog walking at Jubilee Field main field to be on lead only. The field above the allotments will be a lead-free area with the owners still being responsible for the behaviour of their dogs.

Notices and Social Media posts will follow soon.

This will be a voluntary code to start with; however, we have an option to apply to Somerset Council for legislation to enforce this decision.

We want Jubilee Field to be available to everyone rather than just dog walkers.

We will get some adverse comments – a Councillor indicated there may be protests.

- 4) The Finance Committee has for some time been concerned with the rate of interest on our NatWest savings accounts, 1.45%. The committee has resolved to open 2 Instant Savings Accounts with the Charity Bank at 3.22% and then move £30,000 to a 12 months fixed rate, 4.5%. The funds from the main NatWest Savings have arrived into the current account and we are sending 2 cheques for £10,000 each (minimum balance), one for the main account, the other for the Burial account. Once opened we can transfer the rest.

37/24 To approve Tom Stuckey, partner of Westcott's Accountants as our internal auditor

Proposed by Councillor D Peake, Seconded by Councillor K Patay. 9 in favour, 1 abstention.

RESOLVED: Tatworth and Forton Parish Council has appointed Tom Stuckey of Westcott's Accountants as our internal auditor.

38/24 To approve Earmarked reserves for new financial year as recommended by finance committee

The Clerk went through the proposed earmarked reserves.

Proposed by Councillor D Peake, Seconded by Councillor K Patay. All in favour.

RESOLVED: The following earmarked reserves have been approved by the Council.

Earmarked Reserves

Election Expenses	£1,000.00	
Jubilee Field	£2,500.00	In case drainage needs sorting out
Coombses Pond	£3,000.00	In case a larger project needs funds
Coombses Pond Tree Work	£5,600.00	From 23-24 Budget, work finishing early April
Parish/District Plan	£5,000.00	Funds available if full Council wishes to proceed
Projects/Repairs	£5,000.00	In case of need
Somerset Devolution of services	£10,000.00	
Community Infrastructure Levy	£3,456.00	2 Parish seats
Tatworth Cemetery Reserve	£36,388.00	Running of Cemetery and future expansion

General Reserve

Balancing item,	£33,577.00
At least 6 months of precept	
£32k	
	£105,521.00

39/24 Comments from Financial report Issued

No queries for the Clerk.

Councillors Down and Brown left the room.

40/24 To approve the use of St Johns church rooms for the Finance committee meetings

The Parish Council already use Forton Community Hall for the Amenities meeting and this will allow the Council to support another venue.

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor C Heal. 7 in favour, 1 against.

RESOLVED: The Council approves that the Finance Committee can use St John's Church rooms. The Clerk is to make contact.

36/24 St Johns Church are applying to close the Churchyard and for the Parish Council to take over responsibility for Maintenance.

Councillor Patay was concerned at the costs of maintenance as we have just agreed our budget – could we have had more notice.

Dr Susan Cox from the public explained that this is only the first step and it could take 12 months. She also explained that there is not the room for any new burials and closure of the Churchyard should have happened many years ago.

It does not stop ashes being scattered. The Council's responsibility is the Churchyard, not the Church. There are no plans to close the Church.

1) Do we have objection to the closure

Proposed by Councillor D Peake, Seconded by Councillor A Rust, All in favour.

RESOLVED: The Council does not have any objection to the application to close the Churchyard.

2) Do we accept responsibility for the maintenance costs

No formal discussion is needed until the Church head office approves the application. There is a legal responsibility for a Council to take over the maintenance, either the Parish or Somerset Council.

This item to be brought back to the Council at a future meeting.

Councillor Adams left the meeting.

42/24 Invoices for Payment:

Wright Tree Surgery & Landscaping (Solar Panel lane)	£100.00 No VAT
Tatworth Mem Hall (Room Hire, Office & Youth Club Jan-Feb)	£588.00 No VAT
MACs Printing (Newsletter Printing)	£202.00 No VAT
St Johns Church (Newsletter Delivery)	£150.00 No VAT
St Johns Church (Room for flood warden training)	£25.00 No VAT
Forton Community Assoc (Room for Meetings)	£100.00 No VAT
Microshade (Hosting Citrix & Rialtas)	£708.66 Inc VAT
Vision ICT (5 annual email hosting)	£108.00 Inc VAT
Richard Down Contractor (SID and Rememb Silhouettes)	£372 Inc VAT
Richard Down Contractor (Hedge cutting Jubilee Field)	£486 Inc VAT
Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance (Chairmans Allowance)	£70.00 No VAT
SW Property Maintenance (50% Bus Shelter Repair)	£2790.00 Inc VAT

Burial Account

Appleby & Childs (Refund twice paid memorial fee)	£140.00 No VAT
Richard Down Contractor (Hedge cutting Cemetery)	£168.00 Inc VAT

Paid by Clerk

Moneysoft (Payrole 12 months)	£98.40 Inc VAT
Amazon (Laminating Pouches)	£8.49 Inc VAT
ASDA (Food & Milk Flood warden training)	£7.60 No VAT
Flood mitigation and Resilience Sheds	

Poolwarehouse (2 Phosphate Kits)	£44.00
Aspli Safety (Water depth Gauge)	£180.45
Amazon (2 first aid kits and 7 Chest lights)	£205.07
Concept Products (7 Hi Vis Jackets & Trousers)	£280.62

(Pre VAT £591.78 less grant £454, budget £137.78) £710.14 Inc VAT

Clerk Mileage expenses Mar 23-Feb 24 (Checked by Personnel Chair) £160.65

Staff Salaries £1431.45

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor D Peake. All in favour.

RESOLVED: The payments as listed are approved for payment.

With the exception of Forton Community Association these payments have been set up on internet banking and signed by Councillor Adams. Councillor Peake will log on and authorise payment. Payment date set for Tuesday 12th March 2024.

The Forton Community Association bill has been paid by cheque signed by Councillors Peadon and Peake.

Councillors Down, Brown and Adams returned to the meeting.

43/24 Matters which the Councillors wish to report

Councillor Chapple: LCN sub-committee meeting did not take place this week and there were no Minutes from the last meeting.

Councillor Rust: School Lane has been closed this week and residents' electricity cut off. Was the Council informed? The Clerk confirmed not.

There is a large pot hole; please report on Somerset Highways website.

Councillor Peadon: The vehicle taped off outside Crossways House was leaking fuel. This has now been cleared away.

Councillor Matthey: There is an LCN meeting at Corfe on 13th March. Councillors can go in person or online.

Councillor Patay: Has reported Blacklands Lane to Highways; they will investigate.

The Japanese Knotweed in The Drift is too early to determine if it will return. Will keep an eye on it.

Councillor Heal: Perry Street car park is being locked restricting access to the resilience shed. The Clerk is to contact.

44/24 To resolve to exclude members of the press and public – to agree that agenda item 45/24 be dealt with after the public (including the press) have been excluded as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

Proposed by Councillor K Patay, Seconded by Councillor D Peake. All in favour.

RESOLVED: The meeting will be confidential.

The Members of the Public left the meeting.

45/24 Land in the Parish and determine way forward. – Councillor Down

The Councillors discussed the issues of land in the Parish, the Clerk will write to the landowner to determine the facts.

DATE NEXT MEETING: 4th April 2024

Meeting closed 8:20pm