



# TATWORTH AND FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Tatworth & Forton Parish Council Held on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 7pm Main Hall Tatworth Memorial Hall

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

There was 1 Member of the Public and no members of the press were present.

Parish Clerk N Tinley

Somerset Councillor Connor Payne

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

### **Report from Councillor C Payne**

The Somerset Council budget has been passed using reserves/borrowing/cuts in services. However, the 2025/26 forecast is equally dire.

The business plan developed when the District Councils were closed has not been followed. We are heading for painful cuts in services. Losing quality staff to better paid positions is not helping.

The backlogs in Planning and Highways will not improve.

On a positive note – it looks like an alternative provider has been found for Sunnymead Care Home in Chard, hopefully avoiding closure.

A Chard Park Run is getting closer.

### **46/24 Apologies for Absence**

Somerset Councillor Baker – meeting at Chard Town Council  
Councillor Brown – Holiday

### **47/24 Declarations of interest**

None

### **48/24 To approve and sign as a correct record Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Proposed by Councillor D Peake, Seconded by Councillor L Matthey. All in favour with 1 abstention – not at meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024 be signed as a correct record.

#### **49/24 Chairman's Announcements**

The Reverend Phillips at St John's Church will be leaving at the end of August. The process to find a replacement takes 9 months.

#### **50/24 Report from Councillor Peake regarding the Planning Inspectorate decision of the Crossman application**

The Inspectorate decided to grant permission for the Crossmans development. It was appreciated that there will be moderate harm to the area but this did not outweigh the need for housing. The residents are unlikely to take legal action but will continue the fight.

Somerset Council will talk to Crossmans to get the best development. Does the Parish Council want to be involved? Councillor Peake will prepare a letter for the Clerk to send to Crossmans.

#### **51/24 To approve revised Asset register now that the sale of our 20% of land at Zembard Lane has been completed**

Proposed by Councillor C Heal, Seconded by Councillor S Adams. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The revised Asset register is approved by the Council.

It was suggested that the unused Samsung tablets be donated to the school. The Clerk will investigate.

#### **52/24 Devolution of Services- Highways 2025-26 – Councillor Peake**

There is a recent report from Somerset Council outlining in a broad sense plans for 2025 onwards. There are no detailed proposals.

Do we deal with Highways as an individual council or with others?

We must try to determine from the community what are their priorities. An item will be placed in the next newsletter.

It was suggested that not everyone is aware of the reporting process for Somerset Council. The Clerk will put this on the website and on Facebook.

#### **53/24 Community Litter picking, agree the way forward**

Councillor Chapple's suggestion of volunteers taking responsibility of an area of the Parish did not receive a positive response from the community. The Clerk's suggestion of a Sunday morning/afternoon community litter pick did not receive positive support from the Councillors based on previous experience of lack of community support.

Councillors have been asked to consider the future of litter picking and the Clerk will look into the costs of a commercial street cleaner for litter and weeds.

#### **54/24 Chard Museum - Councillor Peake**

The Museum wants to improve its links with the villages/parishes as it is not just a Chard-based organisation. It is independent and is not supported by the Council. It obtains its funding from donations or grants.

It was suggested the Clerk invites them to the Annual Parish Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> May.

#### **55/24 To approve contractor to chip wood left at Jubilee field when hedge was laid**

The situation has changed since the hedge laying contractor has pulled out of the offer to remove most of the wood for the River Axe project. The quote of £520 was for just over 50% of the wood that needs clearing.

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor R Down. 9 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk has a budget of £1,200 to clear the wood, to include the cost of additional help required. This will be taken from the projects/repairs earmarked reserve.

#### **56/24 Clerks Report**

The Council has had a reply from Perry Street Club dismissing rumours of the sale of land.

Both NatWest savings accounts have now been closed and the funds are in the process of being transferred to the new Charity Bank Savings accounts. The Clerk will also transfer £10,000 of the Zembard Lane funds to the Burial Account at Charity Bank.

#### **57/24 Invoices for Payment:**

B E Powell & Son (Ground Maintenance Q4)	£1853.70 Inc VAT
--	------------------

Burial Account

B E Powell & Son (Cemetery Maintenance Q4)	£3269.70 inc VAT
--	------------------

Staff Salaries £1396.77 Quarterly PAYE £987.92

Proposed by Councillor E Peadon, Seconded by Councillor R Down. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The payments as listed are approved for payment.

They have been set up on Internet banking and signed by Councillor Rosser. Councillor Peake will log on and authorise payment. Payment date will be 9<sup>th</sup> April.

## **58/24 Matters which the Councillors wish to report**

- Councillor Chapple:           Checking that the increased precept was due to the devolution of services by Somerset Council. The Clerk confirmed this was not the case; the Council decided to balance its books rather than using further savings.
- Councillor Peadon:           The car left in the cemetery car park has been reported to the Police.
- 29 Crossways' hedge is causing a road safety issue. The Clerk is to investigate and write to the owner.
- Councillor Matthey:           Will put together a display board of photographs of our work in the Parish for the Annual Parish Meeting.
- To consider a noticeboard that you are entering/welcome to Tatworth and Forton Parish. This item will be added to the agenda for the amenities meeting.
- Councillor Heal:               A Council workman was verbally abused by a resident whilst filling in potholes. The Clerk is to create a Facebook post.
- Councillor Down:              There is possible subsidence at Common Arch – he will report to Highways.

**DATE NEXT MEETING: 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024**

Meeting closed 8:20pm