



TATWORTH AND FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Tatworth & Forton Parish Council Held on 6th June 2024 at 7pm Main Hall Tatworth Memorial Hall

Present: Chairman Councillor R Down, Councillors: C Brown, P Chapple, C Heal, K Patay, D Peake, E Peadon, P Rosser and R Wardell

No Members of the Public and no members of the press were present.

Parish Clerk N Tinley

There were no Somerset Councillors present.

A minute's silence was observed to remember those who lost their lives on D Day 80 years ago today.

Councillor Chapple stated it was regrettable that the Somerset Councillors did not attend as he would like to have asked if either of their respective national parties have a plan to resolve the imminent collapse of local authorities as we know them.

74/24 Apologies for Absence

Somerset Councillor J Baker – holiday
Councillor L Matthey - holiday
Councillor S Adams – medical appointment

75/24 Declarations of interest

None

76/24 To approve and sign as a correct record Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd May 2024

Proposed by Councillor K Patay, Seconded by Councillor R Wardell. 8 in favour, 1 abstention – not at last meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd May 2024 be signed as a correct record.

77/24 Chairman's Announcements

A thank you to the Playing Fields Committee for holding the Steam Rally at the weekend.

78/24 Election to Committees (Chair and Vice Chair are ex-officio to all Committees) Quorum for committees is 4

Councillor C Brown - Finance, Personnel and Cemetery Committee

Councillor S Adams - Planning and Amenities

Proposed by Councillor K Patay, Seconded by Councillor P Chapple. All in favour with Councillor C Brown abstaining.

79/24 Parish Council Vacancy - update by Clerk

The public notice for the vacancy was placed on 10th May and has expired without anyone coming forward.

It will be advertised for co-option on 7th June and Councillors will decide at the 11th July meeting. The advertisement will be on the website, Facebook and on notice boards.

80/24 Policing within the Parish - Councillor Down

The Parish has received a general welcome letter from the new Police & Crimes Commissioner.

We have no support from Chard PCSO – there are 8 in Chard who are all on the same shift and only 4 cars.

The Councillors wish the Clerk to respond to this letter including the local manager at Chard.

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

RESOLVED: The Clerk will compose a letter to the new Police & Crimes Commissioner.

81/24 Neighbourhood Plan - way forward

Councillor P Chapple has been in contact with a support person in respect of the Neighbourhood Plan and has determined that the process involves getting community support with a referendum of at least 30% of the community in agreement. There is a time period of 3 years. However, the Somerset and National Plans will override it. It is uncertain if it is a benefit considering time and funds.

The Councillors contributed: it may give us a sense of direction; there will be consistency of decisions referring to an agreed framework; it would cover environmental issues, wildlife protection and flooding; it may lead to more of the public getting involved.

Proposed by Councillor E Peadon, Seconded by Councillor C Brown. All in favour.

RESOLVED: That Councillor P Chapple attend the course and report back.

82/24 Remembrance Day Service – Councillor Down

- 1) To approve the Council taking over the organisation of the service at the War Memorial until a new rector is in place.

With St. John's losing its vicar there is a danger that this event will not take place.

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

RESOLVED: That Council will offer to take over the organisation of the Remembrance Day service and arrange a working party.

- 2) To approve a small budget if 82/24 1) is passed

Proposed by Councillor E Peadon, Seconded by Councillor K Patay. All in favour.

RESOLVED: A budget of £200 has been agreed.

83/24 A358 Footpath to Chard

- 1) To approve B E Powell & Sons quotation to maintain the footpath.

Councillor R Down felt that Highways will not maintain the footpath to Chard and it will become a health and safety issue. We have one quote obtained from our maintenance contractor.

Councillor D Peake felt that we need to determine if Highways are going to do the job and that it is our policy to obtain 3 quotations.

A compromise proposal was agreed and proposed by Councillor Down, Seconded by Councillor Patay. All in favour.

RESOLVED: The Clerk is to contact Highways to see if the work will be completed in the next 10 days. During this period we should try to obtain further quotes. The Clerk has delegated power to proceed to a maximum of £450 if Somerset Council does not carry out the maintenance.

- 2) To approve his request "So would the Council be prepared to bear any costs relating to any accidents that could potentially occur from us whilst carrying out this particular contract?" or agree to cover the insurance excess should anything happen during this contract.

The Council will expect a contractor to use its third-party liability cover and cover any excess should there be a claim.

84/24 To approve the quotation of £662 to cover the build of a computer for the office and technical support setting up and moving from old computer

This item was deferred until the Clerk tries to obtain 3 quotations.

85/24 Clerks Report

- The Newsletters have been delivered to the distributors.

- A new bench has been fitted in School Lane, the other will be fitted any day.
- The Youth Club is a concern with dwindling numbers. There were only 5 last week. It may not be economical for Active Learning & Skills to operate. The Clerk has looked at the contract and there is a 4 month break clause on both sides. He has posted on Facebook and the website in the hope of getting more children. It was suggested that the Clerk contact the football clubs.

86/24 Finance - to note Annual Internal Audit Report for 2023/24

The Clerk went through the Annual Internal Audit report from Westcott Accountants, noting that the Parish passed each section but one. The one section we failed on was found by the external auditor last year in respect to the incorrect date on the form "Make provision for exercise of public rights" as reported to the Council in Minute 133/23. The clerk placed the "right to inspect" date the same as the "date of announcement", it should have been the day afterwards. A reminder that the Council re-look at the risk assessments, standing orders and financial regulations before the year end. It was also mentioned that it is good practice that the asset register should be on the website, especially with regard to land owned by the Council.

The internal auditor complimented the Clerk on the continued improvement of the quality of the Parish Council records and the admin processes of the Council.

87/24 Finance - to approve the Annual Governance Statement

The Clerk went through each section of the Annual Governance Statement and confirmed that each section was "Yes" except as explained in Minute 86/24.

Proposed by Councillor D Peake, Seconded by Councillor R Wardell. All in favour.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Governance Statement be approved and it was signed by Councillor R Down as Chairman of the meeting.

88/24 Finance - to approve the Annual Accounting Statement

Proposed by Councillor E Peadon, Seconded by Councillor R Down. 7 in favour, 1 abstention and 1 against (had not seen the figures in advance).

RESOLVED: That the Annual Accounting Statement be approved and it was signed by Councillor R Down as Chairman of today's meeting.

89/24 To Note that the Council has lost its General Power of Competence until the Clerk comes fully qualified

This item was noted by the Councillors.

90/24 Invoices for Payment:

Country Lawns & Trees Ltd (Trees Coombses Pond)	£420.00 Inc VAT
Glasdon UK Ltd (2 public benches)	£1404.00 Inc VAT
Crotons Fencing & Groundworks (Chip hedge waste)	£1020.00 Inc VAT
SW Property Maintenance (Final Bus Shelter Inv)	£2790.00 Inc VAT
Rhys Hopkins Consultancy (Computer Issues)	£60.00 No VAT

Rhys Hopkins Consultancy (New Comp if 89/24 approved)	£662.00 No VAT
Westcotts Accountants (Internal Audit)	£560.40 Inc VAT
SALC (Staff Social Media Training)	£70.00 No VAT

Burial Account

B E Powell (April invoices incorrectly added up)	£30.00 inc VAT
B E Powell (Lavender Hedge)	£1387.20 Inc VAT
Ministerstone Ltd (Replace broken seat)	£150.00 Inc VAT

Staff Salaries £1396.77

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

RESOLVED: Except for the invoice for the new computer that was not passed in Minute 89/24 the remaining payments have been approved.

They have been set up on Internet banking and signed by Councillor R Wardell. Councillor D Peake will log on and authorise payment. Payment date will be 11th June.

91/24 Matters which the Councillors wish to report

Councillor P Chapple: Concerned about the state of Kents Road. The road was marked for work some weeks ago.

Councillor E Peadon: Wanted confirmation that the work to repair the bus shelters had been finished to the specifications. The Clerk confirmed.

Councillor K Patay: At the top of Forton there is a property with a very unsafe boundary wall and residents are concerned about safety. There is not a lot that the Council can do, however the Clerk will compose a letter.

Councillor C Heal: Has been approached by a resident about what is happening at Coombs Pond. The Clerk confirmed the website has been updated. Permission was granted for Councillor Heal to represent the Parish Council at a meeting with the Flood Risk Modeller and other members of SCC.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 11th July 2024

Meeting Close 20.30