



TATWORTH AND FORTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Tatworth & Forton Parish Council Held on 3rd October 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 and R Wardell

There were 5 Members of the Public present and no Press.

Parish Clerk N Tinley

Somerset Councillor J Baker.

The members of the public were invited to address the Council about any matters not already on the agenda. One asked a question to Somerset Councillor Baker which will be addressed separately via email.

Councillor Baker read from his report which will be forwarded to the Councillors and placed on the website.

There were no questions. Councillor Baker stressed that he is happy to take questions via email.

Councillor Chapple requested that Councillor Baker remain at the meeting for item 146/24. Councillor Baker agreed; however, advised that he needed to leave to attend another meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Chapple, Seconded by Councillor Heal. All in favour.

RESOLVED: That item 146/24 be moved up the agenda to allow County Councillor Baker to contribute.

AGENDA

138/24 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Quinn – Started new job this week and had to work tonight.

Councillor Brown – Husband only just arrived back from university to look after the children.

139/24 Declarations of interest

Councillor Down - 148/24 Grants. 151/24 Payments

Councillor Wardell - 148/24 Grants

140/24 To approve and sign as a correct record Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 5th September 2024

Proposed by Councillor Patay, Seconded by Councillor Wardell. All in favour.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 5th September 2024 be signed as a correct record.

141/24 Chairman's Announcements

Councillor Down asked the Clerk if a response had been received from Somerset Councillor Payne in respect of his lack of attendance. The Clerk confirmed he had not replied to the initial email; he was sent the agenda requesting attendance and was not here at tonight's meeting.

Councillor Down expressed his disappointment. It is not a satisfactory situation as he was elected to represent this area.

County Councillor Baker was asked for guidance but felt he could not comment in respect of a fellow County Councillor.

It was suggested that the Clerk write to Somerset Conservatives and County Hall.

146/24 Road closures and effect on local buses, determine what action can be taken. Councillor Chapple

Councillor Chapple introduced this item stating that frequent road closures, particularly in Waterlake Road and Forton, are having an effect on residents who depend on the bus service as no information is being posted on bus stops in advance.

Ideally when a road closure is authorised by Somerset Council the bus company and Parish Council should be notified. This is not happening so what can be done?

County Councillor Baker responded by explaining his experiences in Chard. When he organises events that require road closures he notifies the bus company himself rather than trust the authorities to do it. However, the notification quite often isn't passed to local bus drivers. He receives the County notifications of road closures. The Clerk indicated that he has not had any notifications for months, including the recent Waterlake Road and Forton closures.

Councillor Chapple said that the lack of notice on individual bus stops is a particular concern for elderly residents waiting for a bus that will not arrive.

Somerset Councillor Baker said that there seems to be no urgency to resolve this matter and he does not have an answer. He agreed to forward any road closure notifications for our Parish on to the Clerk. The Clerk can use social media to keep residents up to date. Councillor Baker will forward details of his contact at First Bus and it will be raised with our MP.

This matter can be an item on the newsletter.

Councillor Baker left the meeting to attend another

142/24 The Amenities Committee has received complaints from a number of residents in respect to the change of dog walking rules at Jubilee Field. It wishes to explain to the Full Council the reasons behind this. The Full Council gave its backing to the Amenities Committee 2nd May 2024 item 68/24. The decision cannot be voted on due to the 6-month rule. However, if 2 Councillors write to the Clerk by 24 October requesting a vote, it will be added to the next agenda. Councillor Patay.

Councillor Patay introduced the item by confirming it was the Amenities Committee's aim to allow all residents to use the field without the disturbance of loose dogs. There are ever increasing reports around the country of dog attacks. We have provided a field for dogs to be let off the lead and this is a compromise that will suit the whole community.

The meeting was closed to allow the public to speak

There were views from both sides of the argument. A comment was made that the gate at the top of the allotment field was often left open. The Clerk will investigate.

The meeting was reopened to allow Councillors to comment

143/24 Neighbourhood Plan

A report from Councillors Chapple and Heal on the recent NALC Neighbourhood Plan course

Reports were read by Councillors Heal and Chapple who took the NALC training programme. Copies will be forwarded to Councillors.

Councillor Chapple acknowledged that Neighbourhood Plans were expensive and often there is a need to engage a consultant.

It was stressed that we have a guest to speak to the community on 24th October. This meeting will need to be publicised on social media and possibly handouts. If the public do not attend it will indicate a lack of support for the process.

144/24 Perry Street Club

A report from Councillor Rosser from the committee meeting we were invited to attend. Determine next steps if any needed by the Council

Further to the Council's offer to assist Perry Street Club we were invited to attend Tuesday's committee meeting. With Councillor Matthey being on holiday, Councillor Rosser was asked to attend.

Councillor Rosser read a report which will be forwarded to the Councillors.

Councillors Rosser and Matthey will continue talking to the committee and offering support.

145/24 To approve the invitation of our new MP to a future Full Council meeting, date determined by his availability.

The Clerk read a letter addressed to the Council from MP, Adam Dance. The Council was informed that he is planning a constituency surgery in the Parish in late October.

Proposed by Councillor Peadon, Seconded by Councillor Adams. All in favour with one against.

RESOLVED: The Clerk will invite Adam Dance MP to a future Council meeting with areas of discussion to include road closures and bus services, his thoughts on Neighbourhood Plans, and planning matters.

147/24 Annual governance and accountability return 2023-24, external auditors report

The external audit has been completed and the report and certificate have been received.

We had one failure.

Last year the external Auditor questioned the accuracy of our Fixed Asset Register and required us to review that list. This we did, and the new value was quoted for 31st March 2024 in the Accounting Statement. The previous year's figure was quoted for 31st March 2023.

Apparently, they wanted us to reassess last year's list and put that revised figure down on this year's March 2023 figure. This was not made clear to us. It was spotted by a senior member of staff whilst double checking the work of our Auditor. Whilst talking to the Auditor the Clerk felt he was embarrassed by this situation.

The Auditor is happy with the current asset list so the issue will not reoccur.

The external Auditor's report and certificate is on the notice board and website.

Councillor Down expressed the Council's appreciation to the Clerk for getting it through the audit process.

Councillors Down and Wardell left the meeting

Councillor Patay took over the chair

148/24 To approve the Grants as recommended by the Finance Committee

Councillor Peake introduced the grants recommended by the Finance Committee and proposed its acceptance to the Full Council. Seconded by Councillor Matthey. 7 for, 1 against.

RESOLVED: The Full Council has approved the Grants list.

Councillors Down and Wardell returned to the meeting

149/24 Questions from Financial report Issued by RFO

There was one question. Is the Finance Committee concerned with any over-expenditure? The Committee is not.

150/24 Clerks Report

- 1) The Council requested that its concerns in respect of Crossmans' sale of the Dyke Hill development be placed in the local newspapers. Councillors Chapple and Peake wrote the article and the Clerk forwarded it. The Clerk was very surprised when reading Chard and Ilminster News that he had been quoted. At no time did the Clerk speak to the paper, or say the words attributed to him.
- 2) Late in August Councillor Heal requested that the Clerk contact Somerset Council regarding the overgrowth around the brook on Waterlake Road. An email was sent on 3rd September and followed up on 1st October. A reply came back from the contact to explain that she had forwarded the original email to flooding@somerset.gov.uk. This has now been chased.
- 3) The Clerk had an email from resident who wants a skateboard park in Tatworth and suggested the tennis courts. The Clerk enquired where are the tennis courts and who owns them? The Playing Field Association was suggested. The Clerk will reply and suggest that Ollie contact the association.
- 4) There are concerns regarding the Youth Club – only 3 attended for the second week. It is not financially viable. Active Learning & Skills will do a large promotion for this Monday and the Clerk will ask the Memorial Hall if Fridays are available.
- 5) The Police report has been received and will be passed to Councillors.
- 6) The office will be closed from 9th - 25th October for the Clerk's holiday. Jackie will call into the office a couple of times a week to check emails and answer machine messages.

Councillor Down left the meeting

Councillor Patay took the chair

151/24 Invoices for Payment:

Macs Print (Newsletter)	£217.00 No VAT
St Johns Church (Delivery Newsletter)	£150.00 No VAT
Business Supplies Group (Stationary, Paper and Ink)	£221.09 Inc VAT
Country Lawns & Trees (Coombses pond footpath Specification)	£576.00 Inc VAT
Amethyst Horticulture (Daffodil Bulbs)	£144.00 Inc VAT
BE Powell (Ground Maintenance Q2)	£2985.00 Inc VAT
BE Powell (Coombses pond undergrowth clearance)	£576.00 Inc VAT
C R Ellis Partnership (Cut & remove long grass Jubilee Field)	£582.00 Inc VAT
St John Church (Room Hire Finance/Youth Club)	£50.00 No VAT
PKF Littlejohn (External Audit)	£504.00 Inc VAT

Paid by Clerk	
British Legion (5 Poppy Wreaths)	£99.95 Inc VAT

Burial Account

B E Powell (Cemetery Q2)

£2721.00 Inc VAT

Staff Salaries £1396.77 HMRC PAYE £971.36

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

RESOLVED: The payments as listed have been approved for payment.

These payments have been set up on Internet banking and signed by Councillor Rosser. Councillor Peake will log on and authorise payment. Payment date will be 8th October.

Councillor Down proposed that standing orders be suspended to allow for the meeting to be completed. Seconded Councillor Peake.

Resolved: The standing orders have been suspended.

152/24 Matters which Councillors wish to report

Councillor Peadon. The no entrance sign at the bottom of Orchard has disappeared and traffic is going both ways. Clerk to investigate.

Councillor Matthey. Open reach has put cables across the corner of Coombes Pond without permission.

Councillor Heal. A tree had fallen across the brook on Swiss Tulle land, the groundsman with the assistance of Councillor Peake and 2 neighbours removed the obstruction and made safe. Clerk to pass thanks to the manager at Swiss Tulle.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 7th November 2024