



# **TATWORTH AND FORTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Tatworth & Forton Parish Council Held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7pm Main Hall Tatworth Memorial Hall**

**Present: Chairman Councillor: R Down Councillors: S Adams, C Brown,  
P Chapple, R Jacobs, L Matthey, K Patay, E Peadon, B Quinn and P Rosser**

Parish Clerk N Tinley

There were 2 Members of the Public present and no Press.

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

### **Somerset Council Report**

Somerset Councillor Connor Payne went through the Somerset Council Financial Budget agreed yesterday. Council Tax is increased by 7.5% but the Council is still £42m short. The Auditor has had issues with the control of finances.

- There are new Somerset-wide car parking charges increases with wide public criticism.
- The Ham Hill Visitor Centre has moved forward with a lottery grant.
- Wessex Water are investing in Chard to avoid sewer flooding.

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

He was questioned about the attenuation pond at Holyrood School that has not been maintained and had become overgrown. How would that have affected the flooding in Tatworth? Councillor Baker agreed that this area had not been maintained; however, the water would have gone in the direction of the River Isle rather than Tatworth.

There was a conversation regarding the school holiday consultation and taking children away during school time.

### **Police Report**

Nothing forthcoming.

## **AGENDA**

### **41/25 Apologies for Absence**

Councillor R Wardell - Holiday

### **42/25 Declarations of interest**

Agenda item 54/25 Councillor B Quinn

Agenda item 62/25 Councillors B Quinn, C Brown, R Down and L Matthey

All will leave the room.

### **43/25 To approve and sign as a correct record Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025**

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor C Brown. All in favour with one abstention (not at meeting)

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025 be signed as a correct record.

### **44/25 To approve Co-Option of a replacement Parish Councillor.**

**Candidates    Mr Christopher Doel**

#### **1)    Questions towards candidate**

Questions were addressed to the applicant, Christopher Doel.

Mr Doel is a full-time Firefighter at Hinkley Point on a shift pattern, including some evening work which may mean some meetings will be missed. He is also a Retained Firefighter in Chard.

He was asked about his experience with the Fire Service for the benefit of the Parish. Christopher Doel confirmed he can help in a personal capacity but cannot speak on behalf of the Fire Service.

#### **2)    Who wishes to propose and second the candidate**

Proposed by Councillor R Down, Seconded by Councillor P Rosser.

#### **3)    Vote to confirm Co-Option**

Voted unanimously.

**RESOLVED:** That Christopher Doel has been co-opted as a Councillor at Tatworth and Forton Parish Council.

*Councillor Doel joined the meeting*

**45/25 Clerk complete Declaration of acceptance with the new Councillor and issue the Code of Conduct, Register of Interest (To be returned to Clerk by 6<sup>th</sup> April) and Training dates**

The acceptance form has been signed and witnessed by the Clerk. The documents have been issued.

**46/25 To accept new Councillor onto committee's that suit their interests and skill set. (Amenities, Cemetery, Finance and Planning)**

Councillor Doel wished to consider this and come back to us.

**47/25 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman used the remainder of his allowance to sponsor the First Responders fund raising bingo - £31.99.

**48/25 Somerset Local Plan. To report from Somerset Plan Workshop- Councillor Chapple**

Councillor P Chapple briefed the Council as follows:

- The Local Plan is a legal requirement at a cost of £250,000 a year.
- It could be subject to Central Government planning law changes.
- It is planned to be completed by 2029: the whole county will be different then.
- As Central Government wants new housing, how many more will be built before then?
- Somerset Council require a larger population to fund the County's budget.
- The meeting was positive as we placed the flooding issues experienced by Chard, Forton and Tatworth onto their maps.

**49/25 Flooding in Tatworth and Forton, Report from Councillor Patay on Flood Forum and Emergency Volunteer Workshop**

Councillor K Patay briefed the Council as follows:

The meetings were productive as we met the main representatives of the decision makers. There is a major investigation of the water flows in Chard, Forton and Tatworth, but this is a few months away and there is no point planning anything until this is available. Grants from the river authorities are regularly renewed.

The existing flood plans have been forwarded by the Clerk and will be updated

The attenuation ponds near Parrock Lodge did not work and were completely dry. This has been reported. Pop Lane grille is full of grit.

**50/25 Blocked Gullies and Drains, current situation and what action can be taken by the Parish. A rough guide for HGV suction with 2 man crew £720 per day plus disposal £200 per ton. Councillor Matthey**

The general feeling is that it is Somerset Council's responsibility to clear blocked drains and gullies. There is a link on the Somerset Council's website to report.

Councillor K Patay has a map of each gully and Councillor L Matthey has volunteered to check each one and to report those that are blocked.

**51/25 To nominate 2 Councillors to be our emergency contacts with Somerset Prepared**

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

**RESOLVED:** Councillors K Patay and C Doel will be the Parish's emergency contacts.

**52/25 To nominate Councillors to represent the Council in future meetings with Wessex Water and Somerset Council over strategy to slow the flow**

Proposed by Councillor B Quinn, Seconded by Councillor C Brown. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** Councillors K Patay and L Matthey have been nominated to represent the Parish in future meetings.

**53/25 Update on the resident's survey. What is still needed to make it live and determine closing date**

Matters have moved forward in the last week and everything is ready. It will be in the current Newsletter. Posters will be produced for the website and Facebook. Paper versions will be available on application to the Clerk's office.

It will also be in the next Newsletter.

*Councillor B Quinn left the room*

**54/25 To approve delivery of the Newsletter by Brian Quinn rather than St Johns church. The cost will remain the same**

As the Church has temporarily stopped the Link production we have to arrange our own delivery. Brian Quinn used to deliver for the Church and is prepared to continue delivering the Newsletter. The cost to the Parish remains the same.

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

**RESOLVED:** The payment will go straight to Brian rather than via the Church.

**55/25 Somerset Bus Partnership has requested that the Parish Council organise a public meeting "Lets talk buses" There will be hall hire cost. Councillor Chapple**

Proposed by Councillor P Chapple, Seconded by Councillor L Matthey. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk will organise a daytime event with Somerset Bus Partnership.

**56/25 To approve holding and funding of another Defibrillator training session with Peter Fosh Monday 28<sup>th</sup> April, total cost £162**

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor C Brown. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The event and expenditure have been approved. The Parish defibrillators will be listed in the Newsletter.

**57/25 To actively support “Great British clean up” by organising and attending a Parish litter pick Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor R Jacobs. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The event has been approved and is to be advertised in the Newsletter. There will be posters and it will also appear on Facebook. The school will be informed.

**58/25 To approve staff employment policies as recommended by Personnel Committee. These have been taken from Somerset Association Local Councils website and proof-read by Councillor Rosser**

Councillor P Rosser confirmed that the policies were taken from the SALC website and should be correct and up to date. He has checked to ensure they are relevant to this Parish.

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor E Peadon. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The staff policies have been approved and adopted by this Council.

**59/25 To Approve 2025-2026 earmarked reserves as recommended by Finance Committee**

This item was introduced by the Finance Chairman, Councillor C Brown.

Under auditor rules we must have 6 months of the precept in general reserves and anything additional in earmarked reserves with a legitimate reason for holding the balance against possible future expenditure.

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

**RESOLVED:** The earmarked reserves recommended by the Finance Committee have been adopted by the Council.

**60/25 Any questions concerning the clerks report of the Parish finances against budget up to 18th February**

There were no questions.

## 61/25 Clerks Report

The Newsletter is longer this time which will increase the printing costs. It should be with the printers tomorrow with Councillor B Quinn hopefully collecting on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March.

*Councillors R Down, C Brown, L Matthey and B Quinn left the meeting*

*Councillor K Patay took over the meeting*

## 62/25 Invoices for Payment:

Richard Down Contractor (Instal drainage Allotment gate)	£1980.00 Inc VAT
Councillor Down (Chairmans allowance, prizes for fundraising First Responders)	£31.99
Tatworth Memorial Hall (Hire office and meetings)	£289.00 No VAT
Brain Quinn (Domain name tatworthopinons)	£4.80 Inc VAT
County Lawns & Trees Ltd (Specification entrance pond area)	£420.00 Inc VAT
Councillor Matthey (Tree guards for orchard)	£42.44 Inc VAT
Rhys Hopkins Consultance (IT work in office)	£140.00 No VAT
St John's Church (Hall Hire)	£80.00 No VAT
Vision ICT (Email Hosting)	£120.00 Inc VAT

Items paid by Clerk

Tesco (Sympathy Card, Flowers and Bin Liners)	£14.75 Inc VAT
Amazon (return postage for no entry sign, Combination Lock, Duckweed Algae treatment, pond weed rake)	£86.65 Inc VAT
Brunel Engraving (Plaque for Jubilee Tree)	£191.12 Inc VAT
Moneysoft (Payroll software annual fee)	£103.20 Inc VAT
Timpson (10 Keys cut)	£49.50 Inc VAT

Total	£445.22
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Net Staff Salaries £1507.69

Clerks Mileage Claim March 24-Feb 25 (Checked by Personnel Chairman) £139.73

The Clerk explained that the net salary payment to himself has increased due to his tax code changing since leaving his other employment. The Parish will pay less PAYE each quarter.

Proposed by Councillor K Patay, Seconded by Councillor P Rosser. 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 E Peadon. Councillor P Rosser will log on and authorise payment. Payment date will be 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

## 63/25 Matters which the Councillors wish to report. No Decisions can be made

Councillor C Brown	-	The Church will have a community fridge as well as a table.
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- There will be a Lent walk and a free lunch on 20<sup>th</sup> March at 10:30am.
- There will be a children's event on Good Friday.

Councillor R Jacobs - As it is her first year since retirement, she has lots of holidays planned and is sorry that she will miss several meetings. She has less planned for 2026.

Councillor C Doel - Thanked the Council for accepting him as a Councillor.

**DATE NEXT MEETING: 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025**

**Meeting closed 8:45pm**