



# **TATWORTH AND FORTON PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Tatworth & Forton Parish Council Amenities Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7pm Forton Community Hall**

Present: Chairman Councillor L Matthey; Councillors S Adams, R Jacobs, K Patay, B Quinn, E Peadon and co-opted member of the public Rick Chubb

Clerk N Tinley

There were no Members of the Public present.

### **AGENDA**

Chairman Councillor L Matthey welcomed Councillor Rebecca Jacobs to the Committee.

#### **14/25 Apologies for absence**

Councillor P Rosser - Unwell  
Councillor R Down – Overran at work

#### **15/25 Declarations of interest**

Councillor R Jacobs holds an allotment plot.

#### **16/25 To approve and sign as a correct record Minutes of the Amenities Committee Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025**

Proposed by Councillor E Peadon, Seconded by Councillor K Patay. All in favour with one abstention (not at last meeting).

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Parish Council Amenities Committee Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025 be signed as a correct record.

#### **17/25 To consider and approve the co-option of member of public Matthew Giles onto the Amenities Committee**

The Councillors commented that Matthew was very keen to become involved, has several good ideas and is a practically minded person.

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor E Peadon. All in favour with Councillor R Jacobs abstaining.

**RESOLVED:** Matthew Giles has been co-opted as a member of the public on to the Amenities Committee, the Clerk to determine if he accepts the position.

### **18/25 Jubilee Field**

1) *An update of the placing of a memorial bench in the dog exercise field*

This has been advertised in the Newsletter and on Facebook with no interest. Councillor B Quinn has created a short video which will be placed on Facebook.

2) *Update from Councillor Down regarding the repair of land drainage pipe*

It was hoped that Councillor R Down, whilst dealing with the drainage issues at the allotment gate, would investigate the land drain. He reported to the Clerk that he had ran out of time. The Committee requested that this remains an agenda item.

3) *Update on the protection of trees in the orchard*

Tree guards have been purchased and fitted to many trees, but more are needed. Some trees were badly damaged but are still budding. The situation will need to be monitored, and the gaps filled in if required. The Clerk is to check before the next meeting.

4) *Consider replacing the padlock on the top of the field onto the A358 - Clerk*

The Committee felt that the existing arrangements for the top A358 gate were sufficient. It was suggested that a combination lock would work on the top allotment gate. This item is to be placed on the next agenda.

5) *Response from Somerset Council Environmental Health regarding dogs on lead - Clerk*

All public spaces are covered by Public Spaces Protection Order in respect to dog fouling and dogs on lead. Whereas if a Somerset Council officer witnesses a dog off a lead causing a disturbance i.e. acting in a manner that causes alarm or distress to other users of public open spaces or livestock, that dog owner can be forced to keep that particular dog on a lead and then fined if not. As Parish council staff and Councillors we can report but no more. In reality with 6 staff covering the whole of Somerset they cannot stake out the field waiting for a particular dog to appear.

There is not an order that can force all dogs to be on the lead, the general rule is that in most public spaces dogs off the lead are allowed. The only option is to apply for a byelaw from The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) who have responsibility for byelaws covering pleasure grounds and open spaces. These relate in the main to the peaceful enjoyment of parks and open spaces and the suppression of nuisances. It would be at the Parish Council's cost to monitor and enforce this.

This is regarded as a final option when all other avenues fail to work.

It's a legal requirement that dogs are under control whilst in public, and this usually means walking on a lead but we cannot enforce this just ask for the public's co-operation and explain the consequences if not.

It has been noted that more dogs are on the lead in the main field and the exercise field is being used more often. This will be highlighted in the next Newsletter.

- 6) *Other matters that committee members wish to discuss about Jubilee Field. No decisions can be made*

The Parish Council applied for additional orchard trees from Thatcher's Cider but were unsuccessful as the offer was over-subscribed.

Councillor Peadon stated that due to a bad knee he could not complete the laying of the hedge. Hopefully he will be able to manage this next year after a replacement operation.

## **19/25 Allotments**

- 1) *General update from Clerk*

6 new plots have been taken up over the last few months which is excellent news. The Clerk needs to measure out fresh plots along the fence.

There has been a pile of rubbish dumped on to Plot 23, which the tenant has apologised for and assured that it will be removed. The Councillors indicated that this needs to be by the end of April.

The Clerk has been informed that the Association is close to being formed.

- 2) *Other matters that committee members wish to discuss about the allotments. No decisions can be made*

Councillor E Peadon will look at the pump as it now needs priming before it works. This has not happened in the past.

## **20/25 Coombses Pond**

- 1) *To approve quotation for the fencing and footpath at the entrance area*

As approved at the last meeting 06/24 1) the Clerk requested a specification from County Lawns and Trees Ltd for the work at Coombses Pond entrance. This was provided along with their quotation. Using the specification the Clerk approached 3 local contractors. After several reminders one quotation was received, which was slightly more expensive than County Lawns and Trees.

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

**RESOLVED:** To accept the quotation from County Lawns and Trees of £4,035.79 using Jackson 10 year warranty timber products. County Lawns and Trees have agreed to reduce by £350 the amount charged for the specification. The work should be completed after the leat has been cleaned out.

- 2) *To consider the way forward with the management of the pond itself*

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

- 3) *Open Reach placed a cable across our land without permission, update from Clerk*

After being transferred around Open Reach departments, the Clerk has completed and submitted a Wayleave application form. We will have to await a response.

- 4) *To assess our responsibility in respect to overhanging vegetation and trees over the brook*

The Parish Council appreciates its responsibility. Last Autumn the banks on both sides of the brook were cleared by Somerset Council. We need to monitor the situation.

- 5) *Leat restoration to approve specification*

The Clerk contacted the neighbouring landowner who explained that the leat was not the boundary between the two properties but wholly owned with the pond.

The specification was put together after viewing the leat with the Chairman.

The Clerk is hoping the full Council will agree to take this from earmarked funds rather than from the Amenities budget.

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor K Patay. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The specification has been approved for the Clerk to obtain quotations.

- 6) *Other matters that committee members wish to discuss about Coombses Pond. No decisions can be made*

Councillor L Matthey has received positive comments from the public walking around Coombses Pond.

Councillor B Quinn suggested that when the work has been done, we should advertise this amenity.

### **21/25 To approve the placing of a waste bin at Dyke Hill bus shelter at a cost of £415 plus VAT and fitting**

Following comments on Facebook backed up by Councillor E Peadon, the Clerk has approached Somerset Council for permission to place a waste bin at Dyke Hill bus stop. This has been approved and will be added to the weekly collection. There will be a charge of £338 per year which comes from a separate budget. The cost of this will come from the street furniture budget.

Proposed by Councillor R Jacobs, Seconded by Councillor S Adams. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk has authority to proceed with the purchase of the waste bin.

NOTE: After a site visit the Clerk will be purchasing a narrower bin at a cost of £340 plus VAT and fitting.

**22/25 To review the Clerks assessment of the state of Parish dog bins and approve replacements £710 plus VAT and fitting**

The Clerk has assessed the suitability of our 15 dog/waste bins. 5 have issues. 3 are rusty or broken and need replacing, the one at the Memorial Hall is too small and the bin in Forton opposite Blacklands Lane has issues but is okay for now.

After discussion it was agreed to replace the 3 that are rusty and broken. The bin at the Hall can be left in case we get the opportunity to purchase the green land opposite and can fit in a large bin. If this happens then the Hall bin can be used in Forton.

Proposed by Councillor L Matthey, Seconded by Councillor B Quinn. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk is to purchase 3 50 litre dog bins at a cost of £234 each plus fitting, to fit on to the existing poles.

**23/25 Watermead to Abbey Close gate, consider changes to make accessible to all**

Currently prams and mobility scooters are unable to go through the gate and it was considered to take one side away, thus converting it into an open and close gateway.

The Clerk raised a few issues of ownership, cost of reinstating if this did not work and the fact that raised pavements would stop mobility scooters using it.

Proposed by Councillor K Patay, Seconded by Councillor B Quinn. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** To leave the gate as it is and to reconsider if the general public demanded it.

**24/25 Update on repairs to Solar panel streetlight**

This has been reported as under warranty and has been chased twice but no action has been taken. The Clerk is to chase again.

**25/25 Consider the purchase of 10 addition mounting bars for the speed indication device, £280.30 plus VAT**

The last bracket has been used and more will be needed if the existing brackets break or disappear.

Proposed by Councillor E Peadon, Seconded by Rick Chubb. All in favour.

**RESOLVED:** The expenditure has been approved and the Clerk can purchase further brackets when needed.

**26/25 Matters which the Councillors wish to report**

The Clerk explained that a casual conversation with Somerset Councillor Jason Baker led on to our situation with the purchase of land opposite the Memorial Hall. He feels

that the development is unlikely to go ahead and the Council might be willing to offload the area to avoid the annual grass cutting costs. The Councillors requested the Clerk to investigate further.

Councillor L Matthey would like to see a waste bin in each bus shelter.

Rick Chubb will contact the Clerk with photographs of daffodil planting.

**Date of Next Meeting – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025**

**Meeting closed 8:50pm**