

Crowcombe Parish Council
The Orchard, Biscombe, Churchstanton, Taunton TA3 7PZ
Tel: 01823 601495
Clerk: Claire Morrison-Jones

Minutes of Crowcombe Parish Council Meeting
Held on Thursday 7th July 2016 at Church House, Crowcombe at 7.30pm

Present : Cllrs B Druitt, D Lock, T Brooks, K Kenyon, M Smith, A Trollope-Bellew and C Morrison-Jones (clerk).

69/16 Apologies

Cllr J Laver

70/16 Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

84/16 c & d A Trollope-Bellew previous owner(c), owns field behind property(d)

71/16 Public Participation

None

72/16 Police Matters

None. Apologies sent by PCSO Bolton

73/16 County Councillor's Report

Christine reported on several matters:

Devolution - J Osman is working hard with all groups involved and is progressing steadily

There is to be a new primary school built at Bridgwater (14 class rooms) and that childrens' services have improved significantly.

SCC Budget - £15,655,000 needed to be saved for 2017/18. Please visit the SCC stand at Dunster show to look at the proposed budget and give your opinion.

Chairman's Award is now open for nominations from parishes.

The next phase of high speed broadband installation has now gone out to tender.

Councillors raised the issue of the small parcel of land by Hagleys Green that has become very overgrown. It was believed that it was the responsibility of Highways. Christine offered to look into this on behalf of the PC.

74/16 District Councillor's Report

West Somerset will publish its business plan for transformation on Monday. West Somerset needs to save money to survive, Taunton Deane wants to save money so it can spend on upgrading infrastructure. Both Taunton Deane & West Somerset councils voting on the 26th July. Options are:

- 1) Two separate councils with one officer team (as is done now)
- 2) Merge the two councils fully
- 3) Two entirely separate councils

The Conservative leadership battle may be an opportunity for West Somerset to push for better rural funding, A Trollope-Bellew will be writing to both candidates.

Hinkley Point C is looking more likely, even in the face of the Brexit vote, to be going ahead but the final investment decision has not yet been made.

Devolution is progressing slowly but there is still uncertainty as to the additional powers that appointing a mayor will bring.

75/16 Minutes – 5th May 2016, APCM and 19th June, Extraordinary meeting

It was agreed that both sets of minutes be adopted as a true record. The Chairman signed the minutes

76/16 Matters Arising from the Minutes

- a) The dumped tiles and rubbish bags are still present in Roundpool Lane. Clerk to report to WSDC
- b) The road signs reported last meeting have been acknowledged by Highways but not yet repaired. Clerk to chase up
- c) J Laver was not present to report, so update on tree inspection in playground to be discussed at next meeting
- d) Replacement bench at Hagleys Green. Research has revealed that a suitable bench could be sourced for the £400 budget set at the last meeting but a plaque, ground fixings and delivery are additional. Council agreed to increase budget up to £500. More quotes to be sought but Clerk and Chairman have the delegated authority to proceed with purchase. Agreed to remove existing bench and evaluated if existing ground anchors could be re-used
Hopefully the overgrown area will be tidied before the bench is installed to avoid damaging it.
- e) Clerk reported that the low flying helicopters noted at the last meeting tied in with scheduled night flights from Yeovilton airbase

77/16 Highways – any issues to report/update

- a) B Druitt reported yellow paint on the road on the Combe indicating repairs are to be carried out. Work has already been carried out on Church Lane and Wood Lane and also to pot holes near Crowcombe Station, Roebuck Gate and Broadoak Hill.
The chairman thanked Christine Lawrence for her work in initiating these repairs
- b) B Druitt reported that a single vehicle accident had occurred on 5th July at Crowcombe Combe when a car had left the road. No injuries reported
- c) B Druitt informed the council that in Brompton Regis the young farmers had cleaned all of the finger posts, resulting in them looking much better. Cleaning of the Crowcombe finger posts needed to be considered. T Brooks commented that there was an Exmoor Lengthsman who worked for 9 parishes on Exmoor – he has his contact details if they were required.
- d) The finger post at Lawford is bent back on its self and therefore couldn't be read. Christine Lawrence offered to report it to David Peake, Highways.

78/16 Demolished wall adjoining car park

A Trollope-Bellew reported that West Somerset DC were doing their best to define ownership of the wall as the insurance company refuse to pay until ownership is proved. West Somerset will not pay for the cost of repairs until reassured by the insurance company that they will be reimbursed. Councillors agreed that the repairs need to be done as wall is an eyesore and will continue to degrade whilst in a damaged state. In order to try and speed up the process, councillors asked that A Trollope-Bellew request a copy of the quotes received by West Somerset and to also to enquire from the insurance company that, if the parish council agreed to responsibility of the area of the wall needing rebuilding, would the funds be released to enable repairs to be done?

Cllr C Lawrence left the meeting at this point

79/16 BT and super fast broadband installation

The topic was raised again after the discussions at the Annual Parish Meeting that highlighted the areas in the parish that have yet to be connected. A Trollope-Bellew had taken up the matter with the officer responsible and had been informed that these areas would be covered by 'phase 2' but B

Druitt believed that it was not the case because Triscombe and Crowcombe Heathfield are not, due to errors when initially mapping out the area, included in the 'Connecting Devon & Somerset' plan for phases 1 or 2.

80/16 Finances:

a) Payments to approve:

The chairman notified councillors of the National Pay Award for clerks, backdated to 1st April 2016 and it was agreed that it would be implemented with immediate effect.

- i) Clerk's Salary and expenses £394.33
- ii) HMRC – clerk's NI/PAYE £65.00
- iii) Church House, meeting room hire £36.00

b) Receipts received:

- i) HMRC – VAT reclaimed for financial year 2015/16 £692.79
- ii) Came & Co. Insurance excess refund regarding bus shelter claim £250.00
- iii) Came & Co. Insurance refund regarding readjustment of asset values £57.14

c) Expenditure to date:

The clerk reported that the bank balance total held by the council as of 31/5/16 to be £17,659.88 consisting of £11,752.78 in the current account, £3224.03 in the deposit account and £2683.07 in the amenities account.

d) Grant application for IT funding to comply with the Transparency Code:

The clerk had prepared a grant application for funding (both for IT equipment and the clerk's time) to assist the parish council with the need to develop their on line presence to comply with the Transparency Code. The application was approved by members and the clerk authorised to submit it. Councillors further authorised the clerk to proceed with the purchase of the IT equipment specified if the grant was awarded before the next meeting. Clerk to mention to Jane Chipp that she will be working on that part of the Crowcombe website pertaining to the PC

81/16 Play Area

a) Weekly inspection reports – any issues highlighted

None

b) Update on schedule of repairs highlighted by annual inspection

T Brooks had met with two contractors with a view to obtain quotes to relay / replace the grass mats. It was felt that the prices indicated by both contractors were prohibitive so the clerk was requested to contact the play ground inspection company to find out what alternative to grass mats would be deemed acceptable

c) Grass cutting

It was noted that the grass was growing quickly due to the wet weather and the current monthly schedule agreed with the contractor was not sufficient at present. Clerk was asked to request a cut as soon as possible and again before the Play Day on 5th August

c) Sand pit

Thanks were given to K Davis who had recently cleared the sandpit of overgrown grass and weeds. Clerk was requested to ask contractor to add the sandpit to his maintenance list. It was noted that the level of sand in the pit was much reduced – councillors offered to fund the purchase of additional sand if a working party of volunteers could be arranged to move it to the pit once delivered.

d) Moles

Prior to the meeting J Laver had obtained a quote of £200 from the Exmoor mole catcher to deal with the issue of mole hills raised in the playground inspection report. Whilst it was a higher quote than expected, it was understood that it was due to the area to be covered (traps would not be able to be left out unattended during the daytime). This quote was authorised by the council and agreed that request J Laver to organise

- e) Any other matters regarding the playground
None

82/16 Sycamore tree in public car park

The chairman reported that residents in Pound Orchard had raised concerns about the very large sycamore tree in the car park behind Church House and had requested reassurances that it was safe. The car park is owned by West Somerset DC - clerk was asked to contact them to request the tree be examined.

83/16 Meeting between TD/WS Council, AONB and Bicknoller, Crowcombe & Stogumber Parish Councils on 8th June

The chairman reported on the key points of the meeting, which was the first of several to promote better links with PCs on local planning matters and attended by several Crowcombe Members

- i) Much discussion about the largely “hidden” process for permitted development, no requirement for detailed plans to be lodged initially, DC’s need to react fast and call in further details if the application is not to succeed by default. Positive outcome is that relevant PC will in future be notified of all applications for permitted development, but Councillors must act fast (individually or as a group) if they feel that the DC should call in the application. Not a formal consultation exercise, but an opportunity to flag up locally sensitive applications.
- ii) Chris Edwards (AONB rep) said that detailed fieldwork was being undertaken to inform DC about the case for an Article 4 Directive to restrict permitted development– but resource was very limited and no timescale was offered for completion of this exercise.
- iii) Process re delegated powers had changed in November 2015. If the views of case officer and relevant PC are opposed in relation to any particular planning application, the case will be referred to a full committee meeting rather than be decided under delegated powers. If decision is to go to committee, the PC involved will automatically be invited to attend.

84/16 Planning

- a) **Consider Planning Application 3/07/16/007 Sunnybank, Crowcombe Road, Crowcombe, Taunton TA4 4AE. Installation of floor tiles in utility room including under tile electric heating to improve the appearance of the area and provide warmth to minimise the effects of damp and cold**
Councillors unanimously agreed to support the application as it was not visible from the exterior of the property and would bring the building in line with modern living standards.
- b) **Update on application 3/07/16/004 Station House, Stogumber Road TA4 3TR**
Crowcombe PC had previously objected to this application. Application referred to the Planning Committee. Permission granted.
- c) **Update on application 3/07/16/005 Leigh Mill, Leigh Lane, Stogumber TA4 4BL**
Crowcombe PC had previously objected to this application. Application referred to the Planning Committee and J Laver attended on behalf of Crowcombe PC to reinforce the PC’s concerns. Permission granted
- d) **Update on application 3/07/16/006 3 Hillcrest, Stickle Hill, Crowcombe TA4 4AN**
Crowcombe PC had previously supported the application. Application granted

85/16 Clerk’s Report

- i) West Somerset Local Plan Consultation – proposed modifications consultation closes on 15/7/16

Councillors discussed the proposed modifications that would result, if adopted, in Crowcombe’s housing increase reducing from the 23 proposed in the original consultation to just 9. Councillors were concerned with this proposed large drop in numbers as it is recognised that in order to

- survive and thrive Crowcombe needs to encourage new families to move into the village. Clerk to respond, in consultation with B Druitt, to express discontent with the new proposed figures.
- ii) SALC training dates – councillors updated on courses available over the summer months
 - iii) Insurance refund obtained regarding the re-valuation of council assets following the signing over of the artificial cricket wicket and score box to Crowcombe Cricket Club
 - iv) Letter from DeafPLUS asking for permission to visit Church House car park on 1st September (10.30-12.30) with their mobile information unit. Councillors offered to put up posters advertising event and clerk to submit a short article to CAW
 - v) Chairman's Award for Community Service was now open for nominations. Councillors agreed to propose a David Freemantle in recognition of his work within the parish over many years. D Lock to provide details of Mr Freemantle's contributions to the village to the clerk to assist in the completion of nomination form.

86/16 Matters with Permission of Chairman

- i) T Brooks reported that the hedge by Pound Orchard had been cut back
- ii) B Druitt noted that, despite the work done by highways to the gullies, the bottom of Greens Hill flooded again in the recent heavy rain

Clerk left the meeting at this point

87/16 Employment Matters

Councillors discussed the clerk's annual appraisal - M Smith to report back to the clerk at a later date

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 10.00pm

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 1st September 2016 at Church House, commencing at 7.30pm