

**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 4<sup>th</sup> January 2018,  
at Church House commencing at 7.30pm.  
(in the format to be presented at the next meeting for approval)

Present :

M Smith (Chair), T Brooks (Vice-chair), A Trollope-Bellew, D Lock, B Druitt, J Laver, K Kenyon  
C Morrison-Jones (clerk)  
3 x members of the public

**1/18 To receive any apologies of absence**

None

**2/18 County Councillor's Report**

None

**3/18 District Councillor's Report**

- West Somerset and Taunton Deane have received a 'minded to approve' decision from the Secretary of State regarding the formation of new district council. The consultation period runs until 19<sup>th</sup> January and any support for the new council would be much appreciated. Representations can be sent direct to the SoS. SoS will make the final decision on the formation after the consultation period (by April).
- The WS budget for 2018/19 is looking better (£150K has been saved by WS stopping funding for public lavatories)

**4/18 Declarations of Interest/Dispensations**

ATB - 8/18 and 11/18a and 11/18b

**5/18 Minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> November and 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2017, to approve and sign**

Both sets of minutes were then approved by councillors and signed by the Chairman as a true record

*PCSO Bolton joined the meeting at this point  
The formal meeting was closed to allow for public participation*

**Public participation**

The members of the public present wished to comment on planning application 3/07/17/019 adjacent to Higil Lea. Several points were raised:

- is it true that 28 days trading doesn't require planning permission? Councillors confirmed that this was correct but no material changes to the land would be allowed within this 28 days rule
- if the application goes through concerns were raised that rats could be attracted to composting loos. JL confirmed that all activities would have to comply with environmental health regulations
- young children playing in Higil Lea would be at risk from increased traffic levels & unidentified vehicles/people accessing the area

- Permission was given for 5 dwellings at Higil Lea and the number of vehicles associated with that level of housing. The entrance was not designed to be sufficient for large numbers of vehicles
- The applicant's vehicle was stuck in field this week, proving the poor drainage and mud
- key is the application to change the of use of the land – this opens the door to further expansion of business activities on the site in years to come
- The applicant has planted a screening hedge, yet the application states no trees/hedges on site
- The application has yet to demonstrate the viability of a static business

The chairman explained that the original letter from the PC to Freedom Camping in 2017 outlined many reasons for refusal and most are still valid even though this application is for cream teas not camping. Additionally, WS planners did object to the proposals made for the site last year highlighting several concerns. Pre-application advice taken at that time by the applicant was that change of use would be unlikely

*Public participation was now closed and the formal PC meeting reconvened*

## **6/18 Planning:**

### **a) Application 3/07/17/010 at Leigh Mill Farm – update**

Leigh Mill was granted Grade II listed status on 19.12.17 and therefor planning permission would now be required to demolish the building. The application 3/07/17/010 was withdrawn by the applicant on 2/1/18. It is understood by councillors that now the removal of the thatch would also need permission, even though it was granted in a previous application.

### **b) Any other planning issues brought to the attention of the clerk prior to the meeting**

#### **i) Application 3/07/17/019 on Land to south of Higil Lea, Crowcombe, TA4 4BF Change of use of agricultural land for siting of pop up cafe, toilet facilities and storage trailers with the erection of canvas yurt and formation of track and parking**

BD reported that some villagers have recently been contacted by the WS Enforcement Officer to see if container on site had been moved as the applicant had been advised it needed permission. The chairman outlined two options to the PC - can either make a decision here and now taking into account last years views and those expressed at this meeting or hold another village gathering to gain added views. Councillors resolved to determine a response this evening  
Councillors voted unanimously to express a strong objection to this application. Chair and clerk to formulate response letter.

*The formal meeting was closed to allow for the police report*

## **Police report: PCSO Bolton**

- He does his best to attend meetings, subject to shift patterns and policing needs on the evening
- General stats for force area over 12 month period show a nearly 5% increase in reported crimes in Avon & Somerset, but locally a 17% increase in this force area
- Regarding the speeding cars past Ashfield Farm that were reported at November PC meeting - on that day there was a chase and speeding cars were caught in Minehead using stingers. Police chases are well managed & under control of the officers concerned.
- No major problems for the area to. Drug issues in the area are being tackled. Please report anything suspicious. Key signs to note are lots of people coming and going to a site without staying long
- Any questions/requests?

TB reported an incident earlier in the day at 10.30am. A van going too fast overtook him – he noted the registration number and reported it to the company concerned who will view the vehicle dashcam footage and get back to TB

*PSCO Bolton left meeting at this point and the formal PC meeting reconvened*

## **7/18 Highways**

### **a) Any issues to report**

i) The cattle grid has been damaged at Bincombe. The gate has been locked shut now to prevent stock leaving the hill, so the road is closed, as repairs will take 4-6 weeks. LJ expressed concerns that it is too long to have road closed, could a fairer repair period be considered - clerk to write to highways

ii) Leaves in run off on the combe (whole combe on right hand side, going up) causing flooding at bottom of the road. Clerk to report to Highways

iii) Fly tipping -3 bags rubbish dumped at Stickle towards crossroads at Leigh. Clerk report to WS

iv) Gully at Leigh needs clearing again. Clerk to report

### **b) Any accidents in the parish to report**

i) 10.11.17 at the Ashfield Crowcombe Junction with A358. Car rendered un-drivable and left on the verge

ii) 18.12.17 at Redpost in the evening. No casualties

## **8/18 Play Area**

### **a) Strategy for repair or replacement of play equipment**

The chairman summarised that the annual inspection usually brings up 'green' or maybe 'amber' issues that need attention. Whilst the necessary repairs to ensure user safety are carried out by the PC as required, following the last inspection the PC resolved to enter into a rolling programme of repair, selecting one piece of equipment per year for major overhaul

This year the multi play piece of equipment was selected and TB came up with a plan for repairs but this was rejected by the inspection company. Any DIY repair is likely to not be recommended and professional repairs would be beyond the budget of the council

In light of the above, the chairman suggested that the PC maintain the equipment as it is but as and when a piece reaches the end of life, scrap it and fundraise for a new piece.

JL observed that Bicknoller have just spent £110k on new equipment. How many children use it, and how many are from the parish? JL's personal experience is that that most popular pieces are the sand pit and the swings and that most children using the Crowcombe play area are from outside the parish. BD noted that if people miss the equipment when taken out of action, they may be more inclined to fundraise for new equipment

Councillors unanimously resolved to use the current equipment while safe and continue to do minor repairs, with the view to remove the piece from service when considered unsafe and consider fundraising for new equipment. Any new equipment installed must be 'future proofed' to prevent this issue arising again

### **b) Weekly inspection reports – any new issues to report**

A couple of minor issues with the multi play piece of equipment and the suspended bridge – MS offered to evaluate (as he is doing the Jan inspections) and liaise with TB

### **c) Consider grass cutting contract for the 2018 growing season**

The clerk had circulated to several contractors a maintenance schedule.

Three quotes had subsequently been received for the grass cutting contract for 2018.

One was immediately discarded by councillors as too high which left two in contention. One was the current contractor and one other – both quoted comparable amounts for the 2018 season

Councillors resolved to award the contract for 2018 to the current contractor, Wood Land Southwest

### **d) Any other matters regarding the playground**

The chairman reported that he has ordered another 'no dogs' sign for the gate to the playground

## 9/18 2018-19 Budget / Precept setting

Clerk had prepared and circulated amongst councillors draft expenditure figures for the 2018/19 financial year

Councillors unanimously resolved to set the precept for 2018/19 at £9750. This would result in an annual precept charge for a band D property of £40.81, an increase of £1.95 on 2017/18

*KK left meeting at this point*

## 10/18 Finances:

### a) Payments to approve

i) Clerks Salary & expenses	£380.69
ii) HMRC – Clerks NI /PAYE (to be paid by direct debit)	£74.20
iii) M Smith– reimbursements	£12.74 & £6.13
iv) Woodlands Southwest – grass cutting	£654.00
v) Information Commissioner – data protection registration	£35.00

### b) Receipts received

8.11.17	HMRC	PAYE refund	£7.80
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### c) To approve bank reconciliation

The clerk reported that the available balance held by the council as of 30/11/17 to be £24,788.40, accounted for with £11,878.65 in the current account, £3,225.18 in the deposit account and £9,684.57 in the amenities account

### d) Any other financial matters notified to the clerk prior to the meeting

The clerk advised councillors that she had resigned as clerk of Combe Florey Parish Council but had been asked if she would consider continuing to offer IT advice and support to the council, with her hours being outsourced by Crowcombe PC. Councillors agreed in principle that this would be acceptable but only if written agreement can be gained from CFPC

## 11/18 Footpaths

### a) New footpath to school

PC have received a letter of support from the school governors regarding the formation of a new path from the pub to Pound Orchard, which will keep children walking to school off the road. With this support confirmed, councillors agreed to progress the research into the formation of the path. JL and ATB offered to take the lead with the project and will gain a quote for the drainage pipes, stone and fencing required. Additionally, JL is to research the specification required for the path; does it have to comply with adoptable highways standards or can be done to a standard for a permissive path? The PC hoped that s106 money held by WS on behalf of CPC would be able to be used for this project – the clerk was tasked to clarify if s106 grant needs ownership/lease of land to be allocated to the PC.

### b) Footpaths temporarily lost to ploughing -update

ATB reported that the wheat was drilled on 4.11.17 and that the path can be used now  
ATB offered to organise a trip for councillors to view the bio-digester (the crop from Lawford will be used to feed it)

### c) Any issues with footpaths to report

None

## 12/18 To Receive Reports from Members of Meetings attended as representatives of the Parish Council.

None attended

The clerk reported no response to the CAW article asking for volunteers to attend the flood group meetings on behalf of CPC

## 13/18 Clothes recycling bin in Village Hall car park

The clerk reported that a response from BIU confirmed that funds went to Dorset & Somerset air ambulance & 19 bags of clothing were removed last month. However, the amount of money that this generated was not released.

The clerk requested to contact air ambulance & BIU to request how much funds are raised from the bin before councillors would commit to renewing the SLA

#### **14/18 Defibrillator**

The clerk had circulated example costings for the purchase of a defibrillator. An additional cost to the purchase price would be connection to an electricity supply. The ambulance service no longer supplies defibrillators for lease but will register a purchased unit so that its location and availability is made known to 999 callers reporting an incident in its immediate vicinity. Siting is key as ambulance service will only direct a 999 caller to a defibrillator if it is within a certain distance of the casualty - the shop or the pub were discussed as possible locations in the village.

JL offered to speak to a first responder in the village about the options and what will bring the most benefit to the parish – a defibrillator and / or CPR training for volunteers

#### **15/18 Kesteven Recreation Ground**

A KRG Trustees meeting was held on 16.11.17 when, amongst other matters, the ground rent and its impact on the PC was discussed.

Historically, the £50 per year ground rent from the Crowcombe Hall has not gone into a separate KRG charity fund but has been absorbed by PC.

The current PC insurance liability insurance covers the playing field if PC is responsible for its maintenance (this is currently delegated to the Cricket Club). If standalone insurance was purchased by KRG a quote for £280 has recently been obtained, therefore PC has absorbed the ground rent as a contribution towards insurance cover costs. Currently CC is drawing up a memorandum of understanding for consideration by the KRG Trustees outlining the CC commitment

#### **16/18 Musgrove Scanner Appeal**

The chairman had received a request from Julian Anderson (Bicknoller) for CPC to support fundraising for a new scanner for Musgrove.

Although the Councillors concurred that this was most worthwhile cause, they did not feel at liberty to use the PC's very limited funds to make a grant in support of the general fund-raising campaign, preferring PC funds to be focused directly on the parish. They felt rather that it should be left to individual parishioners to contribute in whatever way they desire. MS to respond

#### **17/18 Clerk's Report**

**a)** A request has been received to erect a couple of gazebo's (and possibly a small marquee) for a wedding reception at the Hall on the grass area by the patio on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

Councillors agreed that this would be acceptable but to remind the event organiser that it is their responsibility to ensure that appropriate insurance cover is in place

**b)** Finger posts. The two volunteers report that they have now surveyed 14 posts in total. They will try and complete the outstanding surveys in the next few weeks (they don't anticipate there being more than 20 posts in total) and submit their findings to SCC. They have met with the AONB ranger, and have been offered help (physical not financial) with the posts within the AONB boundary.

Councillors formally thanked the volunteers for their work on this project

#### **18/18 Topics for future meetings**

- i) Annual Parish Meeting
- ii) MS informed councillors that, due to future personal commitments, he will not be intending to stand for re-election as chairman at the May PC meeting

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.58pm