

Pitcombe Parish Council

Minutes of a Pitcombe Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 10th March 2020.

Present: Chair Richard Waller, Councillors M. Groom, R. Currie and C. Donald.

Also present: Councillor Anna Groskop

Clerk: Holly Callow

One member of the public was present at the start of the meeting.

Public session opened at 19:30

Martin Jennings reported that residents had raised concerns regarding the disrepair of the bridge over the River Pitt, he has inspected it and found that the underneath had eroded, cracks had appeared and mortar had disappeared. Councillor Currie had also had concerns raised to him by a resident. Chair Waller stated that this item was on the agenda and would be discussed during the meeting.

The meeting opened at 19:33.

1. **Apologies:** PCSO Tim Russell and Councillors Wells, Donahue and Bastable had sent their apologies.

2. **Declarations of Interest:** None declared.

3. **To approve minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2020.**

Councillor Groom commented that there was a spelling mistake on the second page in the first paragraph should read 'Bruton' rather than 'Briton'.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the minutes as presented once said spelling mistake had been corrected.

4. **To receive reports from**

i **County Councillor Anna Groskop** reported that the main topic of discussion within the County Council was the possible move towards a unitary authority. The District Council seemed to be against the move as they feared losing their identity, but as many UK Councils had already made the transition it seemed inevitable. Projected savings related to the move were reported at between £25 and £47million across Somerset, Councillor Groskop was worried this money would be spent on a new building to house the new authority. Councillor Groskop reported that there had always been confusion between the responsibilities of District and County Council, there was also some duplication between the two bodies and so the move could make them more efficient. The Council could ask the leader of County Council to come and brief the council if they wished. On another note, Councillor Groskop reported that Bruton Library was doing very well and the wheels were turning elsewhere. The Council thanked Councillor Groskop.

ii **District Councillor Roger Bastable** had sent his apologies.

iii **PCSO Tim Russell** had sent his apologies and provided a report that is attached to these minutes.

Councillor Groom asked the Clerk to record that this was another vanilla report which was almost worthless. The report provided no additional information on the crimes so the Council could not be sure what action should be taken.

ACTION: The Clerk was asked to email PCSO Tim Russell and inform him that they felt the report was unsatisfactory and request more information so that the appropriate action could be taken. The Clerk was also asked to invite Sara Stephenson to the next meeting.

5. **To review Planning Applications, Road Closures, Foot Path Diversions.**

i Outcomes of applications considered at previous meetings:

a) **19/03284/FUL** - The erection of a single storey glazed extension to Threshing Barn to provide enlarged hotel reception area; amendments to previously approved design comprising minor increase in height of single storey lean-to extension, omission of timber board to gable end, addition of set of low level external steps, installation of flue at roof level at Shatwell House Shatwell Lane Yarlington Wincanton BA9 8DL – **Permitted with Conditions**

Noted.

b) **19/03285/LBC** - The erection of a single storey glazed extension to Threshing Barn to provide enlarged hotel reception area; amendments to previously approved design comprising minor increase in height of single storey lean-to extension, omission of timber board to gable end, addition of set of low level external steps, installation of flue at roof level at Shatwell House Shatwell Lane Yarlington Wincanton BA9 8DL – **Permitted with Conditions**

Noted.

c) **19/03396/FUL** - Erection of single storey timber building to provide storage and charging facility for electric buggies and bicycles, following localised adjustment to land levels at Land Adjacent Shatwell House, Shatwell Lane, Yarlington, Wincanton, BA9 8DL – **Permitted with Conditions**

Noted.

- d) **20/00029/LBC** - The carrying out of internal attentions to first floor and the erection of 2No. new windows to first floor rear and side (west) elevations at The Manor House Cole Bruton Somerset BA10 0PL – **Permitted with Conditions**

Noted.

- ii. New Planning Applications:

- a) **20/00240/HOU** - Erection of a detached double garage ancillary to dwellinghouse at Three Keys Cole Road Bruton BA10 0DD

The council discussed concerns raised by a neighbour, the neighbour was worried that the position and height of the building would restrict light in to their home. Councillors generally agreed with the neighbour's views, Councillor Currie agreed that the neighbours comments were fair, but reminded everyone that the Council had previously granted two garages of this type on the road already. Councillor Donald pointed out that the neighbours of previous applications may not have had a patio in the same position. Councillor Groom was neutral as there were trees and hedges between the properties and so felt that the light impact may not be as bad as indicated by the neighbour. Chair Waller informed the council that the applicant had lowered the height of the garage in response to the neighbour's concerns, this alleviated the Council's concerns.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed that the Council had no objections to this application but would ask that the neighbour's concerns should be satisfactorily addressed in line with their letter to SSDC.

- b) **20/00657/PDE** - Proposed rear extension (i) the projection of the rear extension beyond the rear wall is 6.5 metres (ii) the maximum height of the extension is 3.4 metres (iii) the height at the eaves of the extension is 2.4 metres at Ravens Lancombe Lane Pitcombe Bruton Somerset BA10 0PG

Noted.

- iii. Other planning matters:

- a) To receive an update regarding planning application 19/03474/OUT.

Chair Waller read aloud an email from David Kenyon assuring the Council that it's concerns were echoed by him and he was minded to refuse the application in line with the Highway Authority report, although he had not yet submitted his formal recommendation. Councillors were concerned that the main reason for refusal was likely to be design; they believed that the applicant could withdraw the current application and re-submit with new designs. The Council felt it important to highlight the full list of objections which can be found in the February 2020 minutes under point 5 ii a.

ACTION: The Council asked Chair Waller to respond to David Kenyon thanking him for email but drawing attention to the full list of objections.

- iv. Temporary Road Closures: None to report.
- v. Path Diversions: None to report.

6. Reports from Portfolio holders not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

- i. Highways:

- a) To receive an update regarding the condition of the bridge over the River Pitt following recent flooding and to decide upon any action to be taken.

Councillor Currie reported that an occupant of a house near the bridge had reported some damage; he had carried out an inspection and found hair line cracks and bulges which he found highly disconcerting. Councillor Currie had reported this to John Nicholson who had passed the matter on to the Bridges Section, there had been no response as yet. The Council were extremely concerned as there were signs of potential bridge collapse.

ACTION: The Clerk was instructed to chase the matter via email and inform John Nicholson and the Bridges Section that the matter was very urgent.

- b) To discuss road safety.

The council agreed that although road safety is a major concern, it has been investigated before and there does not seem to be anything the Council can do. Councillor Donahue was not present to update the Council but could request this matter be added to the next agenda for discussion.

7. Finance.

- i. To review the Budget vs Spend sheet.

The council reviewed the Budget vs Spend sheet and commented that there was just under £1000 which had not been spent. Chair Waller commented that it was positive that the Council had not overspent. The Council will continue to review the Budget vs Spend on a monthly basis.

- ii. To approve the cash book and bank reconciliation for January 2020.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the cash book and bank reconciliation as presented.

- iii. To approve payments of:

Holly Callow	Salary February 2020	£198.33
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Pitcombe Parish Council

Holly Callow	Expenses February 2020	£7.64
HMRC	Income Tax RE H Callow February 2020	£21.80
Zöe Godden	Locum wages	£63.69
CPRE	Membership Fee	£36.00

RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the payments as presented and that Councillors Waller and Groom would sign the cheques.

- iv. To approve the risk management document for 2020-21

Councillor Groom commented that the document did not seem very comprehensive. Chair Waller stated that it had been a satisfactory document in the past and Councillor Currie reminded the Council that the document template had originally been supplied by SALC. Chair Waller informed Councillor Groom that he was welcome to work on the document for the following financial year.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to approve the risk management document for 2020-21

- v. To approve the asset register 2019-20

The value of the telephone box was questioned and this will be further researched for the next financial year.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to approve the asset register 2019-20

- vi. To agree for two signatories to sign a letter from the Clerk to Barclays Bank instructing a change of address for the bank account.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that Councillors Waller and Groom would sign the letter.

8. Council Matters:

- i. To discuss the stile on the footpath at the entrance below Old Station Lane towards Cole.

Covered in item 8 ii.

- ii. To consider the situation in respect of the diverted footpath from Cole Lane to Pitcombe Village.

Councillor Currie reported that the diversion put in place was temporary and that over time both the steps and stile had deteriorated and were consequently now dangerous. Councillor Currie believed the solution was to reinstate the previous footpath and remove the steps and stile. Councillor Donald suggested that this would be difficult as the house which owned the land the original footpath crosses was for sale and the details did not state that there was a right of way across this land. Chair Waller stated that it was the duty of any appointed solicitors to inform buyers of the right of way. The Council decided that the best way forward would be to contact the footpaths officer and arrange a meeting to explain the situation and seek advice regarding the possible reinstatement of the footpath.

RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed that Chair Waller would email the footpath officer Eve Wyn to arrange a site meeting.

Councillor Anna Groskop left the meeting at 20:54.

- iii. To note that no response had been received from a resident regarding plastic pollution and agricultural waste on Pitcombe Hill.

Councillor Donald felt it difficult to comment as she had not seen much waste. Councillor Currie explained that there was waste and plastic pollution up the hill and Chair Waller expanded, stating that over time plastic waste had been trodden in to the ground. Councillor Currie commented that although it would be preferable to follow the matter up, he did not believe a favourable outcome could be reached, and it may worsen matters rather than improve them. Councillor Groom suggested that the Council refer the matter to the Environment Agency now that the farmer has been given a fair chance to respond and the Council **agreed**.

ACTION: The Clerk was asked to arrange a site visit with the Environment Agency so the Council could make them aware of the various forms of pollution including plastic and effluent and decide upon any further action.

- iii. To discuss the local Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

Councillor Currie explained that there is now a central Neighbourhood Watch scheme which is managed online and connects all Neighbourhood Watch individuals electronically. Councillor Groom pointed out that under the current scheme most of the community was not covered, Councillor Currie agreed and said that a benefit of the new service would be that everyone could be included. The council were generally supportive of this idea and Councillor Currie volunteered to gather more information and report back at the next meeting.

ACTION: Councillor Currie will gather more information regarding the new scheme and will report back at the next meeting.

- iv. To receive an update regarding the recent clearing of parish roads and passing places.

Chair Waller informed the Council that Lime Kiln Lane had recently been cleared and that residents were very

appreciative. Honeywick had not been done at the same time but it was reported by Councillor Donald that there may have been a vehicle clearing Honeywick earlier that day.

- v To receive an update on a meeting attended by Chair Waller and Councillor Currie regarding the Rail to Trail Project.

Councillor Donald had also attended the meeting. The idea was to connect Wincanton and Pitcombe with a trail suitable for walkers, bikes, horses and wheelchairs. Councillor Donald thought that it was a lovely idea but noted that there had been a lot of resistance from the land owners. Councillor Groom commented that the principal was very good but that the plans would need to be ironed out so that residents were supportive. The Council would discuss the matter further when the project had moved forward.

- vi To decide upon any appropriate action to be taken by the council regarding Covid-19.

Councillor Donald had set up a whatsapp group to help local residents who may have been more vulnerable and was offering to get shopping and provide soup. The Council thought that this showed great initiative and was a good example for others to follow. Councillor Groom reported that males over the age of 65, the elderly and people with underlying health concerns which affected their immunity were the most vulnerable. If people adhered to government advice then some effects could be mitigated, but the true extent was still unknown. The Council summarised that the community could take initiative and help neighbours where necessary, but that government advice should be followed and it was expected that it would be updated as the situation evolved.

9. Items for report and for the next agenda

Please note this item can only be used for statements of information and requests for items to be included on the agenda at the next meeting.

None stated.

10. Date of the next Parish Council meeting: 14th April 2020 at 7.30pm

The meeting ended at: 21:26

Date:

Signed: