

Clatworthy Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 7 May 2024 in Clatworthy Village Hall

Present: Sally Moran (Chair), Kevin Chesterman, Margaret Deer, Jake Forgham, Frances Nicholson (Somerset Councillor), Linda Sharp, John Ward, Norma Martin (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Stephen Branfield.

2. Election of Chairman

Cllr Sally, proposed by Cllr Linda and seconded by Cllr John, was elected unanimously as Chair for a further year. Chair Sally presented her report of the past year to Council and noted that there had been no other attendees at the Annual Parish Meeting.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 6 February 2024

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 6 February 2024 were confirmed as correct and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters arising not covered on the agenda

Hedges and verges cutting: The Clerk reported that the definition of 'verge' in Somerset Council documents was vague and maintenance plans were lacking in detail. There is a commitment to one cut a year, a minimum of one swathe wide, on C road verges.

For further information see: SCC Transport Asset Management Plan (2010!) pp125-131, Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy (2018) pp23-25.

5. Update from Somerset Council

Cllr Frances reported that the Exmoor Local Community Network (LCN) Highways pilot and associated funding have now ended. The pilot appears to have been very well received and successful, involving all interested parties in decisions related to highway maintenance (scheduling of work, closing roads, diversion routes, etc.). The Highways working group are investigating how the scheme could be carried forward and funded across one or more LCNs. Funds would have to come directly from parishes and an algorithm therefore needs to be developed to define a fair, proportionate levy that takes into account such things as miles of road in the parish, population, traffic levels, etc.

This was clearly a move of responsibility for road maintenance from County to parishes, but Cllr Francis noted that given Somerset's financial situation it had no alternative. The now disbanded District Councils had run down their reserves and taken out some major short term loans before unification, leaving the new Somerset Council with inadequate liquid assets and an increasing burden of debt..

Chair Sally will be attending the Exmoor LCN meeting later this week to learn more details.

6. Village Emergency Plan

Cllrs Sally, Kevin and Jake continue to work on the details of the Emergency Plan. A first draft will be available for comment at the August meeting of Council.

Action: Jake, Sally and Kevin.

7. Finance

7.1 Annual Review (AGAR)

7.1.1 Internal Audit

The last internal audit took place in May 2024 and no issues of non-conformance or concern were identified. An audit for the current year is expected to be arranged in the next few weeks.

Action: Clerk

7.1.2 Review of Governance

Council reviewed the system of internal controls applied to its financial transactions and the preparation of the accounts and confirmed that they are adequate and follow Proper Practices. Council agreed the governance statement for 2023/24, which was then signed by the Chair.

7.1.3 Agree accounts for FY ending 31/3/2024

The Receipts and Payments account and Bank Reconciliation, which form part of the annual Accounting Statements, were reviewed and approved by Council and signed by the Chair.

7.1.4 Approve Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

Council reviewed and approved the variances and the Accountability Return, which was then signed by the Chair.

7.1.5 Certify exemption from external audit

Following the above reviews, Council certified Clatworthy PC exempt from external audit and the Chair signed the exemption certificate for submission to the External Audit body. **Action: Clerk**

		£	
Balance at Lloyds Williton 31/1/24		4572.28	
Receipts	Ref	£	Details
None	Precept	1000.00	
Total Receipts		1000.00	
Payments	Ref		Details
Air Ambulance	Chq #87	100.00	Donation - Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance
N.E.Martin	Chq #88	47.96	Website subscription Oct23-Jan24 – reimbursement
St Margaret's Hospice	Chq #89	100.00	Donation
WAP – Wivey Link	Chq #91	100.00	Donation
Hugo Fox	D/D	11.99	Website monthly subscription - Feb24
Hugo Fox	D/D	11.99	Website monthly subscription - Mar24
S.Moran	Chq #92	168.00	Replacement defibrillator pads – reimbursement
Hugo Fox	D/D	11.99	Website monthly subscription – Apr24
Total Payments		551.93	
Balance at Lloyds Williton 30/4/24		5020.35	

7.2 Current Position

Spend against 23-24 budget

	Plan	Actual	Comments
Audit fees	30.00	30.00	
Insurance – Parish Council	180.00	127.56	
Clatworthy VH – Insurance	300.00	315.97	
SALC membership	30.00	23.26	
Defibrillator	100.00		Pads replaced after year end.
Phone box		514.96	
Parish Web site		115.10	
WAP – Wivey Link	100.00	100.00	
St Margaret's's Hospice	100.00	100.00	
Musgrove hospital	100.00		
Other local charities	75.00	200.00	
Total	1015.00	1526.85	

It was noted that the above table shows the spend against the budget that was set for the year 1/4/23 to 31/3/24. From the next meeting, the comparison shown will be between the budget set in November 2023 for the year 1/4/24 – 31/3/25.

7.3 Payments for Authorisation

There is one payment pending to SALC, £100, for the councillor courses attended by Cllrs Kevin and Linda.

The training was authorised by Council and no separate authorisation is therefore sought.

The Clerk noted that it would be useful to have another signatory available and Cllr Kevin volunteered.

Action: Clerk

The Clerk also felt that the Council should have a second signatory registered for on-line banking so that on-line payments could be authorised in a similar way to cheque payments. Councillors were asked to consider if they would be prepared to take on the role. A volunteer will be sought at the August meeting.

Action: All

8. Meeting dates for 2024-25

It was agreed to move the meetings to the second Tuesday in the month:

13 August 2024, 12 November 2024, 11 February 2025, 13 May 2025

9. Other matters for information.

Risk Register - to be reviewed at November meeting.

Code of Conduct - draft to be ready for comment at November meeting.

Standing Orders - draft to be ready for comment at November meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.46 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday 13 August 2024