

RUISHTON AND THORNFALCON PARISH COUNCIL

The minutes of the meeting held 2nd August 2023 at 7.00pm held in the Village Hall.

CLLRS PRESENT: Duke, Bulgin, Fudge, Liz Harper, Richard Harper, Marshall and Tarr

ALSO, PRESENT: Two representatives from Homes and Horizons, 6 members of the public and the Clerk, Heather Bryant.

As the Chairman was absent, it was agreed that Cllr Marshall would be in the Chair

A presentation was given and questions answered by the two representatives from Homes and Horizons

PARISHIONERS QUESTION TIME (ON GENERAL PARISH MATTERS)

A parishioner offered to post agendas and minutes in the Post Office Notice Board.

There were four residents present in regard to a seat at the bus stop – Stoke Road (Minute No 23/8/9)

SOMERSET COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS

A report had previously been sent by email from the Somerset Councillors.

The Somerset Councillors were not present as they were attending the Chard and Blackdown LCN meeting

23/8/1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from Cllrs Mullins and van Bussell

23/8/2 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS TO FILL THE VACANCIES ON THE COUNCIL (3)

No candidates have come forward

23/8/3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared

23/8/4 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5th JULY 2023

RESOLVED: the approval of the minutes as a true record.

23/8/5 LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORKS

Chard & Blackdown LCN meeting has been re-scheduled for Wednesday 2nd August at 7.00pm. The Chairman, Cllr Mullins, is the Council's representative. He could not attend as he had family commitments and it was this Council's monthly meeting night. The Clerk sent this Council's apologies.

It was agreed to bring forward Agenda Item 9

23/8/6 BUS STOP – STOKE ROAD

A parishioner has requested a seat, to assist the elderly and disabled as it is sometimes a long time waiting to stand for the bus.

Cllr Bulgin reported that he had investigated this matter and a bench could be placed against the wall if the hedges were to be cut back. There is a base and there is evidence that a seat/bench was originally situated there. He has been advised that we may need a licence from Somerset Council for permission. The Clerk reported that we may not need a licence as it could be a replacement. It was agreed in principle to site a bench/seat and Cllr Bulgin will continue with his investigations

23/8/7 PLANNING

There were no planning matters

23/8/8 FLOODING MATTERS

Report from Community Response Group

An update was given by Cllr Duke

RESOLVED: to approve a payment of £1069.20 including VAT for the upgrade of the Village Pump.

Flood Activated Signs

There work started on 1st August. The signs have the ability to send a text message to inform that a sign has been activated/deactivated. There is a limit of phone numbers that can be stored, so it really needs to be individuals who also have the means to disseminate the information to the wider community quickly (maybe via social media)

It was considered that Ruishton Flood Group would be the appropriate contacts

Flood Alleviation Scheme

The Clerk has had no response from the Environment Agency. She will continue to chase

Bushy Cross Lane flooding near the junction with the A358

There has been no further progress. The Clerk will chase S.C. Henley to contact Somerset Highways again to stress that this is a safety issue.

23/8/9 HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATHS

Speed Indicator Devices (SID's)

Email from Josi Young, The Tess Group, on Chapter 8 Operative training. Course scheduled for Tuesday 8th August 9.00am – 5.00pm at Bridgwater Town Council. Cost £200 – Noted

Cllr Duke reported that the data from the Stoke Road SID for the month of June, numerous vehicles are regularly travelling over 40mph and several vehicles are travelling over 60mph and 70mph. The Clerk will contact the Speed Enforcement Unit to ask if Stoke Road can be put on the list of locations.

Small Improvement Scheme

Update from the Chairman - There has been a site meeting with National Grid and contractors. They are looking to programme the works in after 18th September. The team are checking road space availability and making contact with other involved contractors so all outstanding works can be coordinated.

Speed limits in the Parish

20mph – The Council can pay a non-refundable fee of £500 for will cover an initial assessment including up to 2 no week-long speed data readings. Note, at our discretion we may be required to collect data from more than 2no locations to determine the suitability. These will be charged at £200 per location and will be included in the final cost of the scheme.

Cllr Duke had drafted a resident's consultation

RESOLVED: by majority vote to approve the £500 (6 in favour 1 against)

30mph – in the vicinity of Stearts Cottages

It was agreed to ask County Highways if the 30mph could be extended to Stearts Cottages

A358 Dualling Scheme- Southgate roundabout to J. 25

National Highways has offered this Council a meeting with the purpose to introduce the possibility of preparing a draft 'position statement' between your individual Parish Council and us as National Highways, ahead of our DCO application. This meeting is scheduled for 30th August at the Holiday Inn.

After discussion, it was agreed for Cllr Marshall, Cllr Bulgin and Jim Claydon to attend

J25 Issues

S.C. Ross Henley previously reported that he had contacted Andy Coupe who has stated that post construction still has to be completed but nothing fundamentally will change to what is on the ground.

Footpath Report from a site visit

The Chairman has had a site meeting with the Rights of Way Officer. The stile at Rose Cottage will be replaced with a kissing gate. The issue with the gate to the school does not affect the rights of way.

Other footpath issues

- The overgrown vegetation on the footpath between Virginia Orchard and Newlands is on the Council's maintenance contract. The Clerk will contact Somerset Council
- The problem on the footpath between Stearts Cottages and Bushy Cross Lane is overhanging tree branches. The Clerk will contact the Landowner to ask him to cut them back

23/8/10 RECREATIONAL GROUND

The Clerk reported that NBB has a 3-seater King Charles Coronation seat in recycled plastic with a plaque for £370. It was agreed to go ahead

Quote from Somerset Council to repair the safety surface and replace an end cap of £198.53 excluding VAT

It was agreed to accept the quote.

23/8/11 FINANCIAL MATTERS

FINANCIAL REPORTS AND CHEQUES FOR PAYMENT

To consider: that this Council approves the schedule of cheques/invoices and bank statements with the Financial Report subject to the requirements of our Risk Assessment Document

23/8/12 CORRESPONDENCE AND CLERKS REPORT

Report on Somerset Council's Clerks Forum (26.7.23) – 20mph speed limits

The Clerk attended an online LCN meeting for Clerks on 20mph speed limits. Reference for why this meeting was called is the letter that was sent round recently.

Some facts that were given at the meeting:

- They have a £200,000 budget for implementing 20mph speed restrictions for the whole of Somerset
- They have to focus on areas where there are known safety issues
- The £15,000 is a high-level estimate
- They need to cover their costs but do not make money
- They do not have a budget for taking speed readings

23/8/13 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr Marshall reported that there was nothing new since his last report

23/8/14 MATTERS TO REPORT (for information only) OR FOR THE AGENDA AT THE NEXT MEETING

There were no matters to report.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.25pm

DATE OF THE NEXT SCHEDULED PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6th SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.00PM.