

BEERCROCOMBE PARISH COUNCIL

ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council Meeting of Beercrocombe Parish Council held at Beercrocombe & Curry Mallet Village Hall on Monday 8th January 2024

2242 Attendance and Apologies

Councillors: Mr. A Plumbly (Chair), Mr. R. Burrough, Mr. P Dibble, Mr. G Harvey, Mrs. J Mann, Mr. M Rastrick

Public: None

Apologies: Mr. J Down, Cllr M Stanton (Somerset Council)

2243 Declaration of Interests

Mr G Harvey declared a personal interest in Item 10 of the agenda.

2244 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 2nd October 2023 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Mann for chairing the October meeting in his absence.

2245 Matters arising from the minutes.

- **Update on damage to Village Green and purchase of posts**

The posts have been installed around the perimeter of the green and reimbursement is awaited from First Bus.

The Council placed on record its thanks to Andrew Plumbly for the work undertaken in this matter.

- **Coronation Commemoration Plaque**

There has been a delay in receiving a final quote and mock up of the proposed plaque, but this has now been received and will be circulated to Councillors for comment. The cost is approx. £120.00.

2246 Parishioners' Forum

A parishioner commented that the footpath by Frog Street Farm has been partially cleared but that the remainder of the route remains difficult to access. This is a known problem with the footpath where the definite route runs through the river.

2247 Matters of Report

- **Footpaths**

Mr Harvey reported that the fence adjacent to the footpath L5/13 by Mushroom Farm collapsed overnight, causing damage to the rails and footbridge over the stream.

The Somerset Council Footpath Officer will inspect the site shortly, but it is possible that a temporary closure may be required pending repair.

- **Highway matters**

The speed of water cascading through Beer Street during the recent heavy rainfall has led to the edges of the highway being damaged and washed away.

- **A358 Update**

National Highways has delayed its submission of a Development Consent Order for the foreseeable future and are working with the government on the next steps.

- **LCN Update**

Chairman attended the latest meeting of the LCN held in November, but the issues discussed did not seem relevant to Beercrocombe. The Chairman will attend the next meeting on January 15th.

- **Planning**

No new applications have been received since the previous meeting. The issue of Community Infrastructure Levy was raised in respect of new developments that have recently been approved and the Clerk will check whether the Council will be receiving a payment in respect of this.

- **Village Hall Update**

The Treasurer of the Village Hall provided an update. The Trustees are progressing their five year plan which includes reviewing the hall's energy usage with the possibility of installing an infra-red heating system at a cost of £10000. The Trustees are hoping to secure grant funding to assist with the cost and several organisations that regularly use the hall have also offered to contribute.

The Parish Council has been approached by the Village Hall and asked to consider providing an additional grant of £250 to help towards the cost of the heating. This proposal was unanimously agreed by the Council.

Regular usage of the hall is approximately 10 hours per week and income from hiring is insufficient to cover the annual running costs. In the future, further financial assistance from both Parish Councils may be necessary to ensure the hall is adequately maintained and remains viable. The Parish Council currently provides a grant of £150 per year, and it was agreed that this amount would be increased by £75.00 per year over **each of** the next two years to bring the Council's contribution in line **(2/5ths of Curry Mallets' grant)** with the annual grant provided by Curry Mallet PC, which is approx. £700.

2248 To discuss and agree budget and precept for 2024/25

The Council discussed the budget and precept requirements for 2024/25. Following the announcement of a financial emergency by Somerset Council, there is the possibility that parishes would be responsible for funding some discretionary services themselves. The emptying of dog waste bins and filling of grit bins may come into this category **though Somerset Council has yet to specify what services will be reduced**. The Council has sufficient resources to cover the cost, if necessary, of these services for the forthcoming year and it was agreed that these items did not need to be included in the budget.

The Council agreed that the Clerk's salary should be increased by £120 and that the annual grant should to the Village Hall should also be increased by £75.

It was agreed that the precept should be raised by £200 to accommodate these increases and that a precept of £1860 would be levied. This equates to an annual precept on a Band D property of £28.22.

2249 To discuss whether the Ilminster & Crewkerne LCN would be a better fit for Beercrocombe PC

The Chairman was hoping to attend the next meeting of the Ilminster & Crewkerne LCN on January 18th but is unable to do so. It was agreed to defer this agenda item to a future meeting.

2250 Formal Expenditure Approval

It was **resolved** to make the following payments:

a) Clerk's Salary	£ 145.00
b) CMBCVH	£ 150.00
c) Beercrocombe PCC	£ 150.00
d) Remembrance Wreath	£ 20.00

2251 Correspondence for information and items of report

- **Complaint re chainsaw noise in village**

Mr Harvey declared a personal interest in this item.

Several parishioners have raised complaints regarding the use of chainsaw equipment at the weekend to cut up logs in commercial quantities, resulting in a noise nuisance outside of normal working hours.

The Parish Council raised these concerns and following advice from the Environmental Health Officer, the persons concerned have limited the time that the chainsaw operations take place to an average of 45mins once a week during the hours of 10am-12noon to minimise the inconvenience to their neighbours. There is no activity on a Sunday.

The Parish Council noted that every effort was being made to keep the noise to a minimum.

2252 To confirm date of next meeting.

The next meeting will be held on Monday 4th March 2024 **at 7.30pm.**

The dates of the meetings in 2024 will be:

May 13th

July 8th

October 14th

The meeting closed at 8.55 pm.