

Claverton Parish Council
Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting Held on 27th August 2013 at St Mary's Church

Present

Councillors: Chris Jensen (Chair), Rodger Sykes, Anna Beria , Thomas Sheppard and Glennis Naylor

Clerk: Lesley Watkinson

Other: Members of public

Open Forum - Two members of the public spoke. One member of public expressed concern with current speed of traffic on A36. Another member of public queried current uncertainties with regard to final costs of broadband project and uncertainties with regard to recoverability of VAT.

Chair thanked members of the public and advised that, where possible, points will be addressed during the meeting

Apologies for Absence - Mark Mackintosh

Declaration of Member Interests - All Councillors at meeting declared that they had a direct pecuniary interest to declare relating to the proposed discussions on the Broadband Project. Cllrs Jensen, Sykes, Beria and Naylor previously requested and were granted a dispensation to discuss and vote on matters concerning Broad Band project. The request for dispensation was made, considered and granted on 7th May 2013 and the dispensations remain valid for a period of six months from 7th May 2013

At the meeting of 7th May the Cllrs resolved that the Council delegates the power to grant dispensations to the Clerk. The power rests with the relevant authority under section 33(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and the basis is set out under section 33(2).

At the meeting the Cllr Sheppard requested a dispensation. After consideration, the clerk granted the dispensations on the basis that so many members of the decision-making body have disclosable pecuniary interests that it would impede the transaction of the business.

A copy of the dispensation will be kept with the Register of Councillors' Interests

	Actions
<p>Progress report on status of Broadband</p> <p>Cllr Sykes updated the Parish Council that the Claverton Broadband working group have now received the draft engagement offer from BT Openreach for the installation of the necessary cabinet equipment to enable the upgrading of the Broadband service to the village to Infinity (superfast broadband). The required community contribution cost is £40,081 exclusive of VAT. VAT at 20% will add a further £8,016 to the cost. The total cost including VAT is £48,097.20. This is a fixed price contract, providing it is accepted within a 60 day period. If the contract is signed by the end of August BT will also commit to the project being completed by May 2014.</p> <p>As part of the detailed assessment carried out by BT it was established that residents in the village centre as well as residents along Ferry Lane and up Claverton Hill would all benefit from a new cabinet which will enable superfast. However it was also established that the four properties at the extreme South side of the Parish along the A36 close to Dundas would unfortunately NOT be able to benefit as these houses are connected to different BT cabinet (in Limpley Stoke) to the rest of the Parish and therefore were outside of the proposal put forward by BT.</p> <p>The working group looked at other options by which the service could be enhanced at a potentially lower cost using either wired or wireless technology than that being proposed by BT Openreach but concluded that the BT Openreach scheme was the most appropriate for Claverton Parish.</p> <p>Following detailed consultations with the residents by the working group and the holding of a public meeting of the Parish Council on 23 April 2013 giving all residents the opportunity to ask any additional questions they may have had on the proposal there has been resounding support for the project by the majority of the residents of the Parish. Residents were asked to subscribe towards the cost of the project and to date a total of £41,000 has been raised. In addition a grant of £750 has also been given towards the project.</p> <p>BT Openreach is currently in discussion with HMRC as to the necessity of charging VAT on projects of this type. It is unlikely that HMRC will have come to a definitive decision before the contract with BT Openreach needs to be signed. 50% of the contract price (£24,048.60) is payable on signing of the contract. The balance is due on completion of the works.</p>	
<p>Decision on whether to proceed to engage with BT and decide on contribution (if any) from Parish Council to Broadband Project and related actions</p> <p>On 7th May The Parish Council has agreed in principle to act as the customer to sign the contract with BT Openreach. The Parish Council has also previously agreed in principle to contribute some monies as needed from its current reserves to the project should this be necessary, on the basis that superfast broadband is now an important and essential service for the community in today's environment.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Jensen and seconded by Cllr Naylor that the Parish Council support the proposal to formally engage with BT for the works to be committed on behalf of the village community. All voted in favour and agreed.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Naylor and seconded by Cllr Beria that the Parish Council authorise Cllr Sheppard and Cllr Sykes to finalise negotiations, and authorised the authorised persons to sign the engagement contract on its behalf. All voted in favour and agreed.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Sheppard and seconded by Cllr Beria that the Parish Council are prepared to authorise the release of up to a maximum £5,000 from its current reserves to cover any shortfall in subscriptions from the residents. All voted in favour and agreed.</p>	

	Actions
<p>Warleigh Weir</p> <p>Cllr Jensen updated parish council on outcomes from stakeholder meeting of (minutes attached)</p> <p>Parish discussed possibility if temporary seasonal urban clear away to prevent parking on A36. If this was possible it would have significant impact on the village as may increase parking in village. All Parish councillors concerned that safety is primary consideration. All decided wider consultation needed with community before decision to be made on how to take forward. Cllr Sykes to take forward.</p>	RS
<p>Exchange of Information</p> <p>None</p>	

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Dates of Next Council Meeting: Tuesday 10th September 2013

Future Council Meetings: Tuesday 12th November 2013, Tuesday 9th January 2014

Signed
Claverton Parish Council

Date

Warleigh Weir - Stakeholders Meeting 5th August 2013 hosted by Claverton PC

Notes and Actions

Welcome and Introductions

The following official representatives were present:

Avon and Somerset Police	Sgt 2864 Chris Clarke, PC Nick Sheppard
Network Rail	Dave Withers - Mobile Ops Manager
Rail Transport Police	Mark Harris - Sgt BTP 07824556549
Canal River Trust	Chris Pearce, Mark Stevons
B&NES	Cllr Geoff Ward -
Claverton Parish Council	Chris Jensen (Chairman), Lesley Watkinson (Clerk), Thomas Sheppard and Anna Beria

Community representatives including land owners

Wendy and Tony Chambers (Wendy Chambers is also a member of Bathford PC)

Tony and Carol Parr

Robert and June Fear (land owner Island Field)

First Buses and **Highways Agency** were invited but declined to send representatives.

Overview of the problems

The meeting was held to discuss possible solutions to the challenges faced by the Claverton Community and A36 road users. Both safety and access concerns were raised.

For many years Warleigh Weir has been a beautiful spot where Bath residents have been coming to relax and enjoy a swim in the river, taking advantage of the public right of way across Island Field. However, in the past few years, due to publicity on wild swimming and rambling websites, the location has become increasingly popular, even outside Bath. On very hot days, especially at weekends, large numbers of visitors arrive, mostly by car, for which no off-road parking is available. Problems have been exacerbated in July this year due to the long spell of exceptionally warm weather.

Local residents, including the land owner, are keen that visitors are able to enjoy the Weir, but feel that they should do so safely and responsibly. All those presents felt that action should be taken before there is a tragedy.

Main issues were identified as follows:

- Dangerous, irresponsible and illegal car parking - both on the A36 and Ferry Lane.
- Parking in bus lay-bys
- At peak times no access down Ferry Lane and on village road for emergency vehicles
- Reckless and careless use of railway level crossing
- Livestock escaping onto the line, due to fencing being damaged or gates being left open.
- Refuse and litter left by visitors
- Dogs running off lead around site, worrying the livestock or ending up on the railway line.
- Water quality and fast running water and associated dangers

Comments from stakeholders:

Local residents' concern about dangerous parking. On peak days there can be up to 200 cars parked on Ferry Lane and A36. Often the bus stop is full of parked cars and bus cannot pull in to pick up/drop off passengers. Cars also parked at junctions with village roads, limiting 'sight lines' and causing danger to other A36 road users. However, most urgent problem is the fact that on busy days emergency vehicles may not be able to gain access.

Network Rail representative explained that some visitors are not aware of dangers of railway crossing. Trains pass through at 70 mph. Driver sounds warning horn 15 sec before reaching crossing during the day. Network Rail rep stressed importance of emergency vehicles having easy access as speed would be crucial should there be a serious accident. Pictures showed bikes having been chained to crossing gates, making their opening problematic. He also noted the danger of cattle on the line, as impact would be highly likely to cause a derailment, and reported an instance of a car ending up on the wrong side of the crossing. Additionally rep also advised that a

gate at pumping station site had been removed from its hinges (and subsequently repaired by Network Rail.

Stakeholders, including BTP, mooted the option of introducing a “parking suspension” for the summer months, or making A36 a clearway.

It was also suggested that the possibility of a local farmer offering parking, at a fee, to relieve parking pressure, could be considered.

Conclusions and actions

GW to ensure yellow lines on Ferry Lane are maintained and repainted if necessary

GW to follow up with Parking Services to ensure parking restrictions are enforced

LW to send GW photographic evidence held by Parish Council

Network Rail Rep/BTP to feed back to management the need for better and targeted railway crossing signage.

Network Rail Rep to feed back to management that Claverton is a potential accident blackspot

Follow up on possibility of local farmer to offer parking

Follow up on temporary parking suspension / clearway for A36

Local residents to continue to put up friendly focused signage re litter and danger of letting dogs off lead for the rest of this summer but B&NES to take action to erect appropriate official signage re litter

CRT to confirm responsibility/ownership of Weir. A need to consider availability of throw lines, life rings and signage highlighting dangers of river swimming.

Request web-masters of wild swimming/rambling websites to make listing accurate re lack of parking, possible dangers, etc.