

Claverton Parish Council
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 9th February 2022 at St Mary's, Claverton

Present:

Councillors: Anna Beria, Martin Mitchell, Julian Stirling, Sarah Shore, Glennis Naylor and Vi Jensen

Clerk: Lesley Watkinson

Other: A member of the public

1. Open forum -

Member of public registered strong concerns about the extensive Hengrove/Bathampton woodland works being carried out by the American Museum (AM), under a Woodland Management Plan (WMP) approved by the Forestry Commission (FC) in 2019. Work started in late 2021 and is, worryingly, continuing apace. Generally it appears that the WMP vision has more to do with improving visitor numbers/experience and generating revenue from an undeveloped asset than considered management of Ancient Woodland.

It is acknowledged that: what is done cannot be undone; that Ash dieback is a serious problem; that the AM is entitled to undertake projects within any part of its estate in order.

Specific concerns are-

1. Extent of tree felling
2. Works to-date have seriously impacted existing vegetation, canopy, forest floor and a stream. It is hard to envisage how damage can be remedied.
3. Planned vehicular access on the A36 in Bathampton
4. Failure of the AM to comply with FC consultation guidelines (Note 35)

It was suggested that the PC undertake the following actions:

- A site visit/meeting with work manager
- Follow-up with Forestry Commission
- A meeting with AM Director
- Engagement with B&NES (Statutory Consultee)
- Garnering support from the VPA
- Pending outcomes of the meetings with AM Director and work manager and feedback from FC, consider other actions.

2. Apologies for Absence – Mark Mackintosh

3. Declaration of Member Interests – Councillor Stirling declared an interest in Claverton Pumping Station where he volunteers and will not take part in any discussion or decisions regarding the Pumping Station.

4. Approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 12th January 2022.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 12th January 2022 were agreed as accurate and signed by the chair of Parish Council, Councillor Beria.

	Actions
<p>5. Matters arising from the minutes</p> <p>Councillors Stirling and Mackintosh will attempt repair of village salt spreader.</p> <p>Councillor Mackintosh advised Councillors that he will continue to have conversations regarding the potential for a solar powered bus information board on the bus shelter.</p> <p>Clerk did not arrange a meeting between Cllr Shore, Mitchell and Jensen with the American Museum to have a post event briefing due to concerns received regarding woodland management plan. Clerk will reschedule at date to be confirmed. Clerk notified contact at the AM regarding fly-tipping on their land.</p> <p>Clerk contacted BT Openreach to follow-up on action required to remove a fallen tree which is currently resting on their overhead cables. Councillor Beria was contacted by B&NES following ward councillor Neil Butters' intervention and Clerk will follow-up.</p> <p>Councillor Mackintosh to obtain further information regarding potential development on Lime Kiln Lane and advise Councillors at next meeting.</p> <p>Barclays have not approved new mandates. Clerk to follow up.</p> <p>Clerk sent completed precept form to Amarjeet Dhanjal, Corporate Finance, B&NES and receipt has been acknowledged.</p> <p>Councillor Jensen has drafted a S137 Grants and Donation Policy and will circulate to councillors for their review</p>	<p>MM/JS</p> <p>MM</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>MM</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>All</p>
<p>6. Receive and Discuss Correspondence</p> <p>All correspondence relating to Claverton has been circulated to the councillors in advance by the Clerk.</p> <p>Councillor Beria will attend Bathavon Climate & Nature Emergency Steering Group meeting on 10th February. Councillors confirmed top priorities for Claverton are: Warleigh Weir; protecting ancient woodland; planning (retro-fitting listed buildings); light pollution and public transport.</p>	
<p>7.Feedback from External Meetings</p> <p>Bath University resident's meeting - no new issues impacting Claverton.</p> <p>VPA meeting - Cllrs Beria reported that there was consensus on the need to review the structure, purpose and working of the VPA. All member Parishes had responded to a consultation and considered it important to continue the collaboration. The structure would be simplified, with rotating chair/convenor and note-taker. A treasurer would be retained as significant funds were still held in a bank account, but membership fees would no longer be called for. Regular meetings would be replaced by newsletters and ad hoc online meetings, with a face-to-face AGM meeting to be held in June. The website was no longer operational and would not be revamped. The Highway group would go dormant as National Highways were no longer interested in holding meetings to discuss A36-related issues, despite the persistent threat of an A46-A36 link road. The VPA would keep a watching brief on the M4 to Dorset Coast Strategic Study currently being undertaken by NH, and would seek to develop inter-parish cooperation on common issues of interest such as the Dark Skies Initiative, the protection of Ancient Woodland, the BathScape Scheme and the promotion of cultural, artistic and leisure activities.</p>	

	Actions
<p>8. Receive Financial Officer's report and set 22/23 Parish Council Budget</p> <p>No cheques presented for payment.</p> <p>Councillors set 22/23 Parish Council budget. Income: Precept: £2,500 Expenditure: Staffing £750, Office admin £60, Publications £50, Audit Fees £200, Chairman's allowance £100, Training £200, Subscriptions £200, Grants/Donations £350, Newsletter £50, Website £500, Events £1,000 (including £600 cost of Jubilee Beacon and gas canister) , Village maintenance £2,000, Insurance £300, Entertainment and refreshments at APM £300, Defibrillator annual maintenance £165 and £200 towards replacement cost in 10 years and Section 137 donation £500.</p> <p>Councillors to review capital reserves at March Ordinary Meeting.</p>	
<p>9. Planning Matters</p> <p>22/00123/FUL – Keepers Cottage - Construction of new extension following demolition of extension and outbuildings.</p> <p>In considering the application, the Parish Councillors took account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Claverton Conservation Area - Claverton Neighbourhood Plan - The Cotswolds National Landscape - The Cotswold Conservation Board Dark Skies and Artificial Light position statement <p>The application involves the demolition of some disparate outbuildings (a garage and part of a L-shaped stables) and rear extension. This will be replaced by a slightly larger rear extension with the intention of providing an improved entrance to the house, larger utility and WC. The sloping area at the back of the extension will be landscaped and terraced. A new outbuilding, linked to the house via a covered walkway, will house a small gym, a workshop, a storage for garden machinery, and a new double garage. A covered carport with electric car charging facilities will connect the new outbuilding to the retained part of the stables.</p> <p>The new buildings are noted to have been designed with an agricultural aesthetics: pitched zinc roof, board on board sawn cladding and large opening towards the turnaround area.</p> <p>It was noted that the design has no windows facing towards the woods which is considered to be a positive and in keeping with Claverton's dark skies objectives and protection of light pollution impacting on the local bat population. In keeping with these objectives and observations, it is noted that there are velux windows and large windows on the south elevation, and the committee asks that the proponent consider installing suitable blinds to reduce light spill from the new development.</p> <p>The Councillors felt that the proposed replacement of the mis-matched and somewhat dilapidated buildings with the proposed modern structures will improve the character of the property, access to the house, and add much amenity. The new building is adjacent to a wood which does not appear to have mature or notable species close to the boundary, and the development should not impact on the adjacent trees. The alteration will be largely not visible from any neighbours or public view points. The Councillors also noted that the proposed materials would be in keeping with the rural setting.</p> <p>Claverton Parish Council Decision: Support, with request that proponent considers the impacts of the additional light spill from the development into the surrounding in keeping with Claverton's dark skies objectives.</p>	
<p>10. Parish Jubilee Celebrations</p> <p>Discussions postponed to March Ordinary meeting, after the village planning meeting.</p>	

	Actions
<p>11. American Museum Woodland Management Plan</p> <p>The Parish Councillors expressed gratitude to a member of public and Councillor Shore for circulating maps, pictures and extensive research of extent and impact of the Hengrove /Bathampton woodland works. It was recognised that the American Museum sought and received permission for the works from the Forestry Commission. However concerns were expressed at the obvious lack of consultation (including our neighbouring Parish Council, Bathampton), the extent of the works and the long-term impact on wildlife and the amenity of the Valley.</p> <p>The Parish councillors agreed to will write to Executive Chairman of the American Museum expressing strong concerns and to ask for a meeting and a site visit. In addition, the Parish Council will follow up with Forestry Commission, Bathampton Parish Council and B&NES as necessary.</p> <p>Councillor Shore updated councillors on Public Right of Way (PROW) application which is being led by David Beard (Bathampton Parish Council). Evidence has been gathered to prove the track's (BA1/27) long-standing and continued use by the local community. It was noted that the AM do not support the PROW. On 21 February 2022 David Beard will make a formal PROW application to B&NES.</p>	AB
<p>12. Village Maintenance</p> <p>It was agreed that the two commemorative wooden benches located opposite the Village greed needed renovating. Clerk to approach John Beresford to obtain a quote in due course.</p>	Clerk
<p>13. Transport update, including actions re Warleigh Weir</p> <p>Councillor Stirling advised that the issue with the lock on Network Rail gate may have been resolved as Network Rail will now give permission for B&NES cleansing team to have combination to NR lock (so that bins can be emptied).</p>	
<p>14. Exchange of Information</p> <p>None</p>	

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Future Council Meetings: Wednesday 9th March 2022, Wednesday 13th April 2022

Signed Date

Cllr Anna Beria, Chairman, Claverton Parish Council