

Claverton Parish Council
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 9th March 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: Two members of the public

1. Open forum -

Member of public (MP) registered strong concerns about the extensive Hengrove /Bathampton woodland works being carried out by the American Museum (AM). In particular, MP:

- Believes a site visit should have taken place during the recent meeting between Councillors [Beria, Mitchell and Mackintosh] and AM;
- Feels that the AM are dismissive of the PC's concerns on lack of consultation and questions how genuine their change of heart regarding future consultation with the PC;
- Believes that the statement from the AM that there is no current public right of way in woodland is wrong;
- Expresses concern on adverse impact on Neighbourhood Plan.

Going forward MP suggests that the PC should make a formal representation B&NES to:

- Express concern about lack of consultation with B&NES and seek clarification of recent changes to B&NES planning procedures re Forestry Commission (FC) applications;
- Provide retrospective comments on Woodland Management Plan (WMP);
- Set out the PC's aspirations for future character of the woodland.

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 9th February 2022.

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 9th February 2022 were agreed as accurate and signed by the chair of Parish Council, Councillor Beria.

	Actions
5. Matters arising from the minutes	
Councillors Stirling and Mackintosh will attempt repair of village salt spreader. (held over to April ordinary meeting).	MM/JS
Councillor Mackintosh will continue to have conversations regarding the potential for a solar powered bus information board on the bus shelter. (held over to April ordinary meeting).	MM
Clerk will schedule post-event meeting between American Museum and councillors Shore and Jensen re village reactions to AM Christmas event.	Clerk
No follow-up on action required regarding removal of a fallen tree which resting on OpenReach overhead cables. Storm brought down tree and BNES have removed tree	
Councillor Mackintosh to obtain further information regarding potential development on Lime Kiln Lane and advise Councillors at next meeting. (Held over to April ordinary meeting).	MM
Barclays have not approved new mandates. Clerk sent Bank additional information and will follow up.	Clerk
Councillor Jensen circulated a S137 Grants and Donation Policy to councillors for review.	
Councillor Beria had written to Executive Chairman of the American Museum, on behalf of the Parish Council, expressing strong concerns regarding their Woodland Management Plan and lack of engagement with Claverton PC. The PC had requested a meeting.	
It was agreed that the two commemorative wooden benches located opposite the Village Green needed renovating. Clerk to approach John Beresford to obtain a quote.	Clerk
6. Receive and Discuss Correspondence	
All correspondence relating to Claverton has been circulated to the councillors in advance by the Clerk.	
Local resident had queried new parking restrictions proposed on Ferry Lane. Councillors Beria and Mitchell confirmed that our local policing team are working to improve safety at the level crossing due to vehicles blocking access to vehicular crossing. Police are in discussion with B&NES and Network Rail to alter the markings in front of the crossing, bins & Network Rail parking area and create a yellow box zone, thereby enabling police, rather than the local authority, to enforce parking restrictions more effectively by imposing steeper fixed charge penalties.	
Cotswolds Planning informed Cllr Mitchell that there is no Public Right of Way or other formal public access though the woodland to the American Museum.	
7.Feedback from External Meetings	
Cllr Beria attended a virtual briefing on the B&NES New Local Plan on 1 March. <u>George Blanchard</u> had prepared slides introducing the Council's new approach to the concept of "place". A more co-ordinated approach was embodied in the recently published Supplementary Planning Documents and in partial update to Local Plan to deliver the Council's Core Strategy. Inspector had been appointed and hearings expected in Spring this year. <u>Simon de Beer</u> had spoken of WECA Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) – a high-level, long-term (to 2042) planning framework for the sub-region. Local housing needs assessment based on a National Standards Methodology, showed 12,960 "units" (=dwellings) needed in B&NES. As a result, a full review of B&NES Local Plan would be conducted to align it with SDS, to be adopted in 2024/5. Local communities and businesses would be consulted. Neighbourhood Plans would continue to play a key role in addressing local issues, providing additional level of detail.	

	Actions												
<p>8. Receive Financial Officer's report and review 22/23 Parish Council Capital Expenditure</p> <p>Clerk circulated bank statements and current cheque book for councillors to review.</p> <p>The following cheques were signed at the meeting:</p> <table> <tr> <td>267</td> <td>Bullfinch Gas Equipment (Jubilee Beacon)</td> <td>£588</td> </tr> <tr> <td>268</td> <td>Clerk reimbursement (ICO membership and printer ink)</td> <td>£94.99</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">After item 16 on agenda</td> </tr> <tr> <td>269</td> <td>Donation to Pumping Station</td> <td>£500</td> </tr> </table> <p>Councillors agreed allocation 2022/23 Capital Reserves of £13,000. £5,000 for Link road representation, £3,000 for Neighbourhood Aspirations and £5,000 for Information board and lighting bus stop.</p>	267	Bullfinch Gas Equipment (Jubilee Beacon)	£588	268	Clerk reimbursement (ICO membership and printer ink)	£94.99	After item 16 on agenda			269	Donation to Pumping Station	£500	
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<p>9. Set date and make plans for Annual Parish Meeting</p> <p>Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Wednesday 11th May at St Mary's. Cllr Stirling and Clerk to invite two local speakers.</p>	JS and Clerk												
<p>10. Planning Matters</p> <p>- 22/00717/FUL and 22/00718/LBA - Consultation Request - External alterations for works to rebuild sections of the retaining wall to the north-west side of the former carriage drive leading down to the Coach House and stables, and reinforce the wall running behind the Coach House, American Museum</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>This listed building application relates to proposed external alterations required to support works to rebuild sections of the retaining wall to the north-west side of the former carriage drive leading down to the Coach House and stables, and reinforce the wall running behind the Coach House. Claverton PC visited the site and noted the wall proposed to be repaired was in danger of collapse, and presented a danger to public and American Museum staff walking past (and therefore it was fenced off at the time of the visit). Biodiversity studies are being undertaken as part of the preparation works, the intention is to remove and then rebuild the wall. Claverton PC supports these remedial works which will result in the making safe of the wall and the dismantling, rebuilding and maintaining this retaining wall for the future.</p>	Clerk to send consultation to BNES												
<p>11. Parish Jubilee Celebrations</p> <p>Parish Council asked Councillor Jensen to apply for road closure notice for the village Jubilee Tea Party. Clerk to review the Parish Council Insurance Policy to ensure that there is appropriate public liability insurance for this Parish Council event (led by Cllr Jensen)</p>	VJ and Clerk												

	Actions
<p>12. American Museum Woodland Management Plan</p> <p>On 2nd March 2022 Claverton Parish Councillors, Anna Beria, Mark Mackintosh and Martin Mitchell met Fritha Costain, Matt Amos, Peter Oliver and Damian Mitchell (new head gardener) at The American Museum. The meeting was arranged at the request of the Parish Council to discuss significant concerns about the Woodland Management Plan as outlined in our letter to Mr G Thomas of 14th February. Cllr Beria and Mitchell reported on the meeting</p> <p>Peter Oliver, an ecologist as well as a forest management consultant, explained the rationale of woodland management, viz. encouraging resilience and bio-diversity. After many years of neglect, the woodland may become a revenue-generating asset for the Museum. Grants for a WMP were now available. Ongoing operating deficit needed addressing if Museum is to survive, and the woodland could be an added visitor attraction and increase footfall. However, there were no definite plans as yet. Selling timber was not a long-term money maker. The Forestry Commission-approved plan is by necessity formulaic and applicants need to follow the set form. The FC process means the AM had to include contingency measures (e.g. clear felling) even where they felt these would never come to fruition. The FC process apparently encourages this, as it avoids the need to submit revised plans as new info emerges during work.</p> <p>Some discussion items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>roads vs rides</u>: forest tracks will be rides, not forest roads. Some hard-surfaced tracks are already there - unclear what is or isn't a 'hard surface' but taken to mean rock covered. Work on rides was to restore them to a level surface, as they had developed a gradient sloping towards the valley and were therefore a danger to forestry vehicles. • <u>idea of upgraded entrance from A36</u> already abandoned. Gradient up from the A36 is too steep for large vehicles. The tree works by the A36 in the future will be focused on avoiding impacts on the A36. • <u>access to woodland from Skyline walk</u>: There are no plans at the moment on how that might work. To be considered, but not for the immediate future. • <u>failure to inform and engage</u> with PCs/local community. American Museum management apologised for lack of engagement. However, due to extensive personnel changes at the top, they could not explain how this happened. • <u>boundary stream</u>: Peter Oliver was clear that surface water, as we knew it, resulted from broken culvert, now 'fixed' as part of the restoration of the ride. • <u>re-stocking/replanting of native species</u> would start once slopes consolidated and necessary clearance is completed. Planting will be to restore native species rather than non-native (beech trees are not native to these hills for example) <p>The WMP is an attempt to bring the woodland under control so that it can be used safely, whatever future plans might be.</p> <p>Councillor Shore updated councillors on Public Right of Way (PROW) application which is being led by David Beard (Bathampton Parish Council). Application submitted to B&NES.</p>	<p>AB to follow up with Interior Drainage Board</p> <p>SS to follow up with Jane Brewer</p>
<p>13. Village Maintenance</p> <p>B&NES have no plans to install metal BBQ bins at bottom of Ferry Lane. Cllr Naylor will contact B&NES to reiterate that there were at least two bin fires over last summer which Fire Brigade had to attend to.</p>	<p>GN</p>
<p>14. Transport update, including actions re Warleigh Weir</p> <p>None</p>	

	Actions
<p>15. Adopt Grants and Donation Policy and perform an annual review of Claverton Parish Council Policies, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct</p> <p>Councillors adopted Grants and Donation Policy. Annual review of Parish Council Policies postponed till April meeting. Thanks expressed to Cllr Jensen for drafting the new policy and undertaking annual reviews.</p>	
<p>16. Donation to Claverton Pumping station</p> <p>Parish Councillors agreed to make a donation of £500 to the Pumping Station appeal for their winter storage project. The Pumping station is a Grade One listed heritage asset in the Parish and it is run by volunteers. The accounts of the Pumping Station were recently reviewed by an independent auditor and the PC donation fully meets the criteria of the Parish Council Grants and Donations Policy.</p>	
<p>17. Exchange of Information</p> <p>None</p>	

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

Future Council Meetings: Wednesday 13th April 2022, Wednesday 11th May 2022

Signed Date

Cllr Anna Beria, Chairman, Claverton Parish Council