

Claverton Parish Council
Minutes of Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 13th April 2022 at St Mary's, Claverton

Present:

Councillors: Anna Beria, Martin Mitchell, Julian Stirling

Clerk: Lesley Watkinson

Other: Five members of the public and Ward Councillor Neil Butters

1. Open forum -

A number of local residents expressed views on proposals by National Highways to address severance issues caused by A36 in Claverton. Speakers, particularly those with restricted mobility, did not feel safe crossing the A36. Concern was expressed regarding the large number of visitors that come to Warleigh Weir during the summer season, whose parked vehicles lead to blocked sight lines and other traffic hazards. Some support was expressed for the erection of a refuge island (Option 1) but only if it is located near the two bus stops. It was drawn to the attention of the Councillors that a property on the Eastern side of road has a vault that runs under the existing footpath, so any work to widen the footpath would require careful planning.

Questions were raised about how any plan could, in practice, limit or prevent verge parking. Support was expressed for reducing speed limit. Also, it was felt that the grassy verges are in keeping with the rural character of the village and there is strong opposition to seeing them reduced or removed altogether. More significantly, removing or limiting 'unofficial parking' on the verges would simply displace vehicles into the village and up Claverton Hill.

The prevailing view was that a reduction in the speed limit to 40mph (currently 50mph) would be a far greater mitigating factor for the greatest number of people, residents and visitors alike, than any of the proposed options. It was noted that the speed limit changes from 40 to 50mph for a relatively short stretch of the A36 at Claverton

2. Apologies for Absence – Mark Mackintosh, Sarah Shore, Glennis Naylor and Vi Jensen

3. Declaration of Member Interests – None

4. Approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 9th March 2022.

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

	Actions
5. Matters arising from the minutes	
Councillor Mackintosh will continue to investigate the potential for a solar powered bus information board on the bus shelter.	MM
Clerk scheduled post-event meeting between American Museum and councillors Shore and Jensen re village reactions to AM Christmas event.	MM
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 followed up. Councillors Beria and Naylor, need to call Barclays to provide information/confirmations.	GN/AB
Clerk asked John Beresford to provide a quote to renovate the two commemorative wooden benches located opposite the Village Green.	
Cllr Naylor contacted B&NES to reiterate that there were at least two bin fires, due to smouldering disposable BBQs being placed in the bins, over last summer which Fire Brigade had to attend to.	
Clerk sent Claverton Parish Council response (22/00717/FUL and 22/00718/LBA - Consultation Request - External alterations, American Museum) to B&NES Planning.	
Clerk and Cllr Stirling invited two speakers to Annual Parish Meeting	
Councillor Jensen has obtained permission to close road for Village Jubilee Street Party and Clerk confirmed existing insurance policy provides appropriate cover.	AB
Councillor Beria to write to Internal Drainage board seeking information about stream marking the boundary between Claverton and Bathampton Civil Parishes.	
6. Receive and Discuss Correspondence	
All correspondence relating to Claverton has been circulated to the councillors in advance by the Clerk.	
Clerk received extensive feedback regarding severance proposals and this was reviewed by Councillors in advance of Ordinary Meeting.	
All other items covered by Agenda Items	
7.Feedback from External Meetings	
Councillor Stirling attended the Canal & River Trust Annual Public Meeting. No specific matters that touched Claverton	
Councillors Jensen and Shore met representatives from American Museum (AM) to review the Christmas Light Festival and provide feedback from the village residents. The AM shared information on upcoming events for the current season. The AM committed to work to monitor noise levels at events. It was agreed that the AM and Claverton PC will meet twice a year.	
Councillor Shore had a phone conversation with Jane Brewer, B&NES's Arboricultural Officer. Significantly, B&NES now include Forestry Commission application in the Planning Portal.	

	Actions
<p>8. Receive Financial Officer's report and appoint Internal Auditor</p> <p>Clerk circulated bank statements and current cheque book for councillors to review.</p> <p>Clerk advised that instructions for 2021/22 AGAR external audit has been received.</p> <p>Councillors appointed Mr Bill Howe to conduct the 21/22 Internal Audit</p> <p>One cheque was signed at the meeting, after approval of invoice: 270 2022/23 ALCA Subscriptions £60.51</p>	
<p>9. Set date and finalise plans for Annual Parish Meeting</p> <p>The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Wednesday 11th May at St Mary's at 7pm. It will be preceded by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at 6pm. Cllr Stirling and Clerk to invited two local speakers. Councillor Beria to arrange wine for evening and Clerk to arrange food and non-alcoholic drinks</p>	Clerk/AB
<p>10. Planning Matters</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>11. Parish Jubilee Celebrations</p> <p>Parish Council will cover cost of Prosecco for Toast to Queen at Claverton Jubilee Street Party.</p>	
<p>12. Maintenance Issues</p> <p>Councillor Mitchell advised that Claverton Hill will be closed for a week for resurfacing. No specific dates had been set.</p> <p>Councillor Stirling working to ensure that B&NES Cleansing have shared key with Network Rail for parking gate at bottom of Ferry Lane.</p> <p>PC asked to consider light refurbishment of heritage signage at Claverton. Councillor Mitchell to lock up grit bins in advance of Summer Season to prevent rubbish being placed inside.</p> <p>Parish Councillors, like many residents , regularly pick up litter in Claverton. However no official litter pick can be organised as no volunteer has offered to coordinate.</p>	MM

	Actions
<p>13. Transportation - review options for proposed works on A36 to make crossing easier and less dangerous</p> <p>The Parish Council are pleased to learn that National Highways are considering measures to mitigate the severance issues affecting Claverton. Councillors discussed the three options offered. There is a consensus among residents and Parish Councillors that while safer crossing of the A36 is of great concern to some villagers, the large number of visitors that come to Warleigh Weir during the bathing season causes even greater concern.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Option 1</u> The crossing point (with refuge island) shown on the diagram appears to be right by the entrance to a working agricultural field requiring access by large farm vehicles, which calls the viability of this option into question. Residents who support the erection of a refuge island suggested it be placed in the proximity of the two bus stops, where most villagers cross and where a public footpath (<u>not signposted</u>) already exists on both sides of the road. But even those in favour of a refuge island option were not comfortable with the idea of traffic speeding past them if the current speed limit is maintained. • <u>Option 2</u> Residents on the Eastern side of the road feared that reducing the existing grass banks would remove the noise protection afforded by the vegetation. In addition, residents pointed out that the land drops sharply into their properties and widening the path would therefore require a substantial retaining wall. One of the properties also has a vault that runs under the existing footpath, so any work would require careful planning. • <u>Option 3</u> This is closer to where the majority of residents do cross the road, i.e. near the two bus stops and the existing footpath, which runs from the village road to the West-side bus stop, and from the East-side bus stop, across a field, to Ferry Lane. Despite some support for this option, once again the removal or reduction of the existing grass verges raised concerns about road noise. <p>Concern was expressed about the proposal to limit ‘unofficial parking’ on the west-side verge, and questions raised about how this would be achieved in practice. The grassy verges are in keeping with the rural character of the village and there is strong opposition to seeing them reduced or removed altogether. More significantly, removing or curtailing ‘unofficial parking’ on the verges would simply displace vehicles into the village and up Claverton Hill. However the prevailing view is that a reduction in the speed limit (<u>currently 50mph</u>) would be a far greater mitigating factor for the greatest number of people, residents and visitors alike, than any of the proposed options. It should be noted that the speed limit changes from 40 to 50mph for a relatively short stretch of road that starts just before our Parish boundary with Bathampton to the north, and ends by Watership Farm, to the south of the village, where it reverts to 40mph. Given the presence of three junctions and a number of residential and agricultural driveways along that stretch, it is hard to understand why our village should continue to be singled out for the higher limit.</p> <p>Other options to mitigate risk have been suggested, viz:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - introducing physical parking restrictions at the three T-junctions with the A36 (especially at the junction with Claverton Hill), as vehicles parked on the verges severely limit sightlines for drivers attempting to join the A36. - making the existence of the public footpath by the two bus stops more obvious to drivers through adequate signage, including “pedestrians crossing” signs and double white lines on the carriageway, effectively prohibiting overtaking in the village. <p>In its response the PC will draw attention to the following points, which all need to be considered when designing and implementing mitigation measures along this stretch of road:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Claverton Parish lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) ● Relevant CNL position statement regarding requirement to consider biodiversity conservation. ● Relevant objectives in Claverton Parish Council’s Neighbourhood Plan ● A large part of this stretch of road falls both within and on the boundary of a Conservation Area and designated Local Green Space. 	<p>M Mitchell and AB to draft PC response</p>

	Actions
<p>14. Perform an annual review of Claverton Parish Council Policies, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Councillors undertook the Annual Review of Parish Council Policies, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct. Parish Council website to be updated.</p>	Clerk
<p>17. Exchange of Information</p> <p>None</p>	

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Future Council Meetings: Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Parish Council Wednesday 11th May 2022

Signed Date

Cllr Anna Beria, Chairman, Claverton Parish Council