

# PAWLETT PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Meeting of Pawlett Parish Council held at the Village Hall, Old Main Road, Pawlett on Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020, commencing at 7pm.

(in the format to be presented to the next meeting for approval)

**Present:**

Cllrs W Barnard (Chair), A Warner (Vice-Chair), A Baker, J Kingman, M Thomas, M Smith  
C Morrison-Jones (clerk)  
6 x members of the public

**Public speaking :**

- BCA planning application – the last application withdrawn to omissions in landscaping and ecology. This time has changed lighting to tilted lights. The residents of Walpole have been totally ignored. The plans are in breach of clause D25 of the Local Development Plan. Already too much noise and disturbance, this will only increase. The Walpole properties still don't feature on the application documents. The pond is still not indicated on the site plan. Urged the PC to think of the Walpole residents when responding
- What is considered poor behaviour in the case of County or District Councillors? – they never attend PPC meetings.

**Statement from the Parish Council Chair, Cllr W Barnard.**

Cllr Barnard stated that he is very disappointed regarding the rumblings in the community about perceived lack of commitment from the parish councillors. All the councillors are volunteers trying to do their best for this small community, combining their parish council roles with multiple other commitments to employment, family and the voluntary sector.

Whilst the Parish Council is here as an organisation to facilitate the needs of the village it is not solely responsible. Ask not what your PC can do for you, but what can you do for your PC.

**1. To receive any apologies for absence and disclosures of interest**

None.

**2. County and District Councillor Reports**

SCC Cllr M Healey sent a report which was circulated to councillors and those present at the meeting.

AW asked that the clerk request a report from SDC Cllr J Woodman, as he does not attend PC meetings, explaining how he is supporting the residents of Pawlett and the wider area.

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Chair .....

Date .....

**3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019 to be presented and signed.**

Councillors resolved that the minutes represented a true record of the meeting and they were signed by the Chair

**4. Casual Vacancy on the Parish Council**

There is still one vacancy on the council to be filled by co-option.

**5. Any Matters Arising from the minutes not covered by agenda items below.**

**i) Christmas tree on the Green**

WB reported that the tree is now taken down and the lights are ready to be stowed away. He also offered to dispose of the tree and thanked all those involved in installation.

**ii) No cold calling stickers**

MS had obtained plenty more stickers for distribution around the parish.

**iii) Hare coursing in the parish**

The clerk has received acknowledgment from Bridgwater Police that the PC letter raising concerns over lamping and hare coursing on the Hams and surrounding areas had been received and logged and this will now be sent to the Rural Crime Unit who will be making contact with the clerk in due course.

AW noted that there seem to be a much greater night-time police presence on the Hams which will hopefully deter the protagonists.

**iv) Any other matters arising from the minutes, not covered below**

None.

**6. Community Shop - update**

MT reported that this is no longer a real possibility as the new Budgens will be less than a mile away. The steering committee has disbanded.

**7. Roads and Footpaths:**

**a) Update on previously reported issues**

The following has been received from Highways:

- Grit Bins – These have now been topped up.
- White Lines – Where required, the faded road markings will be added to a refurbishment programme.
- Road patching – The recent patching has been done in preparation for surface dressing works to be done next summer. However, where required, the road markings will be reinstated shortly.
- Footway vegetation – Works to expose the full constructed footway width are intended to be carried out within the current financial year.
- Signage request – This has been forwarded to our Traffic Management team, as they would be dealing with this request.

**b) Access road running alongside the Green**

WB contacted the preferred contractor and has chased but with no response yet. Hopefully now the Christmas break has finished normal work will resume.

**c) New bench on the Green**

AB reported no further contact and it was agreed to remove this as a regular agenda item unless further contact was made.

**d) Existing wooden benches on the Green**

WB reported that the hardwood bench wood is in good condition, but it does need a coat of wood preserver this year.

**e) Consider request to site Church noticeboard on Parish Council land**

During public speaking at the December PC meeting, permission was requested to site a small (A4 x 2) wooden noticeboard on a wooden stake on the land owned by the Parish Council outside the Church wall, to the left-hand side of the left gate pillar. Councillors granted permission and requested that the clerk to respond in writing as confirmation.

**f) Consider the planting of a live Christmas Tree on the Green**

This was thought to be a good idea. AB offered to carry out research on species / suitability. The optimum maximum size is 15-20 foot so as not to be a hazard / too big in a few years. It would need to be sited near the electricity box to enable the lights to be put on at Christmas. AB to report back at a later meeting.

**g) Any other matters relating to roads and footpaths in the parish**

- Parking Old Main Road / Monmouth Farm Close

Following further issues regarding the bus being unable to pass between the parked cars Cllr M Healey, Traffic management & Police have been re-contacted.

SDC (Traffic enforcement) have passed the villages concerns on to their parking enforcement contractor (NSL) and asked them to visit the location. Unfortunately, they are only able to enforce parking contraventions where there are restrictions and the only restrictions currently in place are the bus stops and the dropped kerb (with tactile paving). While the Highway Code states (Rule 243) "do not stop or park... opposite or within 10 metres of a junction" this is not law and so is only enforceable if there is a road marking (such as a yellow line) and a valid Traffic Regulation Order in place.

However they have stated that they quite agree that the way cars are currently parking, as shown in the photographs supplied, does look like there are road safety concerns and so they have returned the PC's email to the County Roads team and copied in the Traffic Engineer for Sedgemoor to consider additional parking restrictions.

**8. Playground and Outdoor Gym:****a) Routine playground and outdoor gym inspections**

AW reported nothing new to note. GB Sport & Leisure are coming to inspect the rubber matting in the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January

**b) Any other matters relating to the playgrounds or outdoor gym**

Councillors proposed to consider purchasing another piece of play equipment. The age group 7-14 years old appears to be under-represented at the moment. AW offered to ask GB Sport & Leisure for some suggestions when they visit to inspect the rubber surface (potential budget approx £3-7K fully fitted)

**9. Consider grass cutting arrangements for 2020**

On Feb 19th 2018 (minute number 13) the PC resolved to award the grass cutting contract to Greenacres for 2018 & 2019, with the option to with the option to renew for 2020 at the same price.

Greenacres have confirmed that they would like to continue the next season with the grass cutting under the same terms as 2019 and wait to hear the PC instructions.

Councillors unanimously resolved to request that Greenacres continue with the grass cutting for 2020. Clerk to contact Greenacres.

**10. Tree planting in Sedgemoor**

MT and AW to feedback at a later PC meeting from the meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January that they are due to attend regarding tree planting on the Levels.

**11. Community Land – update**

The clerk reminded those present of the details of the community land arising from the Springfield development and of the PC's resolution at the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017 meeting, minute number 7:

*“....Councillors felt that the legal agreement requiring the land owner to bear partial financial responsibility for the roads and paths of Springfield Close was a potential open cheque in the future and not a liability that the PC could afford to expose itself to.*

*Councillors unanimously agreed that the PC will put the formalisation of the ownership of the community land on hold until Springfield Close roads and paths are adopted by SCC Highways. If it proves that the process of taking ownership cannot be delayed and it must be completed within a required timescale, Councillors resolved to decline ownership of the community land as the financial liability as it currently stands is unacceptable.”*

Until recently no further had been heard from SDC about this matter. Recently an Officer from SDC has recently been in contact with the clerk about the land, as they are revisiting s106 orders that haven't been fulfilled. The clerk explained the difficulties and the resolution passed as a result by the PC. SDC are going to investigate the situation further and get back to the PC with an update.

To clarify the current PPC position on this matter, councillors resolved, that whilst still keen in principle to take ownership of the community land, to support the original resolution passed on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

**12. Planning Matters****a) Previously considered planning applications – updates**

Proposed Bridgwater Tidal Barrier Order:

The PC has received correspondence from Andy Hohl, the Project Manager from the Environment Agency in response to the concerns raised at the December meeting confirming that modelling has proved that the barrier will not increase the risk of flooding downstream and the flood defences will reduce the risk of flooding to property and land in the Parish of Pawlett.

The Transport and Works Act Order application for the scheme will be submitted to the Secretary of State, Defra on the 19 December (the consultation period runs until 13<sup>th</sup> February) and the Parish Council can access the application documents and the process for making any formal representations to the Secretary of State if they still have any concerns about the proposals

JK noted that according to the figures received from the EA, the bank needs to be built higher at a couple of sites. This issue will be addressed at bottom of River Road but the White House area at risk is not covered in the submission. This will cause some overtopping according to the EA data.

WB noted that the Hams is becoming a pinch point in several projects that at present don't seem to be coordinated or in alignment.

Councillors felt that the PC is minded to make an objection to the TWAO as there appears to be an issue at White House (banks are currently in a bad state of repair) that isn't addressed in the report.

The clerk was requested to write to the EA to ask for an holistic view of this parish over the next 100 years given all the separate projects (Bridgwater Barrage, Compensatory Habitat for Coastal Squeeze, Coastal Realignment all combined with the long term neglect of maintenance on existing structures), proposed for the area for information to help the PC formulate a response to the TWAO at the February meeting.

**b) Consider planning application 41/19/00026**

Change of use of land from agricultural to provide additional vehicle

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Chair .....

Date .....

parking and storage, erection of fencing and 21 No. lighting columns.  
 Erection of single storey extension to valet building for vehicle imaging.  
 British Car Auctions, Bristol Road, Walpole, Bridgwater, TA6 4TN

AW described this as a resubmission of defective previous application (previously no consideration was given to great crested newts). The lighting has also been slightly changed.

Councillors resolved to re-submit its original objection plus the fact that the PC considered that the application, as drafted, is contrary to policy D25 of the Local Development Plan in that there is no consideration of the impact of the development on local amenity and residents.

**c) Possible planning breaches in the parish**

None

**d) Any other planning related matters notified to Clerk in advance of the meeting.**

**i) Flooding concerns, Manor Park gardens**

The PC has received correspondence from a resident of Manor Park concerned about water flooding and run-off in their garden from the development site. Whilst sympathising, WB felt that this is a civil (not planning) matter between the resident and the developer. However the clerk was requested to contact SDC to highlight the issues reported to the PC by residents to ask if any help or advice be offered.

**13. To consider the condition of the riverbank around the Pawlett Hams, in particular the area at White House**

This matter had been raised by a local resident and was supported by the PC. The issue was covered during agenda item 12a and would be included in the request to the EA to be sent by the clerk.

**14. VE 75 celebrations**

Following the December PC meeting, an email was received from one of the organisers of the VE75 celebrations stating that various groups in the village are now co-ordinating and planning events over the weekend of 8-10th May. They won't expect any involvement from the Parish Council but hopefully can ask for some money. As a courtesy they will keep the PC informed.

As a result of this contact the Chair confirmed that a grant could be a possibility, but would only be given following a formal request to the PC.

**15. To Receive Reports from Members of any Meetings attended as a representative of the parish council**

None

*6 members of the public left the meeting at this point*

**16. Financial Matters.**

**a) Approve bank reconciliation**

Councillors resolved to approve the bank reconciliation, dated 30.11.19, of £51,034.65 £2,782.09 of this balance is held in reserved funds

**b) Consider grant request from Mendip Community Transport**

The PC last awarded a grant of £50 to MCT in March 2018. A decision on a grant for 2020 was postponed until the February meeting as more information into villagers use of the service was required.

**c) Approve payment of creditors.**

Clerk's salary	(December 2019)	£420.30
Clerk's expenses & reimbursements		£145.33

Green energy, electricity on the Green	(December 2019)	£9.94
Green energy, electricity on the Green	(November 2019)	£9.63 (paid December)
M Thomas, reimbursement for ticket purchase -tree conference		£11.37

**d) Receipts received**

None

**e) Agree Parish Council Budget and set Parish Precept for 2020/21**

The clerk had previously prepared and circulated a spreadsheet showing previous PC spend, and a suggested forecast for spending in 2020/21

In addition to the regular financial commitments of the Parish Council, various other projects were considered by councillors for 2020/21 and allocated funding:

New lighting (on bollards) along the road along the Green (£5000)

New piece of play equipment (hopefully could be match funded by a grant) (£5000)

Repairs to rubber surfacing around the play equipment (£2000)

New grit bins (by Old Post Office, Manor Park junction and 1 other) (£140 x3)

6 month trial of a PC / Parish magazine (hoping that it may become self-funding) (£2000)

Councillors resolved to submit a precept demand to SDC for 2020/21 of £19,000, which will result in the charge to a band D property in the parish being £45.63, a 1% increase on 2019/20.

**f) Any other financial matters notified to the Clerk**

The clerk reported that the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the PCs staging date with the Pensions Regulator fell on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020, with the redeclaration of compliance deadline being by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020. She confirmed that she had submitted the required declaration of compliance with the Pension Regulator on behalf of the Parish Council in regard to its duties as an employer on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020 confirming that none of the staff employed by the PC (the clerk) were eligible for a workplace pension scheme to be provided.

**17. Circulated Correspondence****1) Sedgemoor DC:****a) Council Tax scam warning****b) Road Safety Fund from the Police****2) SWP: December Briefing****3) Hinkley Point B: November and December Briefing****4) SALC:****a) Pay scales for 20/21****b) Grants information towards trees and woodlands****c) Legal Updates****d) Training dates****e) Palace Garden Party****5) Somerset Wildlife Trust: Somerset's Brilliant Coast****6) Correspondence regarding village parking issues****18. Topics for Future Meetings.****19. Date and time of the next meeting – Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020 at 7pm in the Village Hall, Old Main Road, Pawlett**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20.39