

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 16TH MAY 2017 IN CARYFORD HALL.**

Present: Chair of Town Council: Barry Moorhouse
Town Councillors: Judi Morison, Bob Gilbey, Pek Peppin,
Sally Snook, Justin Birch, Martin Atkins, Barbara William, Nick Weeks

Approx 55 members of the community.

1	<p>Welcome and introduction of councillors BM welcomed everyone to the Castle Cary Town Council Annual Town Meeting & explained that Liz Stokes had retired from the Council at the end of 2016. She had been replaced by Penny Steiner who had been acting Chair since but had stood down last week due to family reasons, although she is still a Councillor. He then explained that he had was elected as Chair at last night's Full Council Meeting. BM thanked everyone who had set up stalls representing local organisations. He then invited all the councillors to stand up & introduce themselves & to explain their roles on the Council. This took place.</p>
2	<p>Apologies for absence Mike Lewis, Terry Philpot, Penny Steiner,</p>
3	<p>Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held in 2016 JM proposed & BM seconded that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th May 2016 be signed as a correct record, this was unanimously agreed by the Town Councillors who had attended the 2016 meeting.</p>
4	<p>Chairman's Report JM gave this on behalf of PS who is taking a 6 month sabbatical due to family matters. In the last year the 3 new councillors have settled in well. There are now currently 2 vacancies & talks with prospective new councillors are taking place soon. PS thanked Maureen Fletcher who retired from the role of Deputy Town Clerk in January. She noted that the new Deputy Town Clerk Claire Craner-Buckley is 'ace'. Bookings & Promotions Manager Anna Branson has been on maternity leave since the Autumn & her role has been covered by Lara Davis who has put her expertise into design work for the Market House & it's website. Mike Stokes has become the new Maintenance/Caretaker . Sue Hake the Town Clerk has managed all these changes to the paid staff & Councillors. PS thanked Liz Stokes for all her hard work for The Town Council as Chair for the last 3 years. There has been slower progress with the Fairfield Project than hoped due in part to the hoped for Viridor funding, not being secured. There is now new fencing & drainage work is about to take place. There is a hard surface pathway now leading from Priory View to Cary Meadow. The Use Less group are sponsoring the building of a green Gym. It is hoped that money for a Pump Park will be secured this summer. Work is going on in conjunction with the Football & Cricket Clubs looking at the refurbishment of the Pavilion. It is 3 years since the major refurbishment works at the Market House were completed & it is now a venue for many events-meetings, classes, weddings etc. The Tuesday Market is a great success and is also 3 years old. There are a mix of traders. Unfortunately the SSDC licence fees for the Pizza & Burger stalls on the cobbles went up from £13 to £57 so they can no longer afford to come in the evenings. Toilets: there is now one unisex toilet in the Millbrook Car park & one on the playing field. There are ideas in the pipeline to use the other loos for a Youth Cafe/ office/storage. Transport: parking, speeding, more traffic-are all causing problems & the Town Council is looking for residents to be involved in trying to solve these. Planning: the Neighbourhood Plan draft has been drawn up &</p>

	<p>residents are invited to give your opinions to ensure that we get the plans through that we all want. A good working relationship continues with Ansford Parish Council on joint projects including the Fairfield & the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Presentations by Town Councillors & others</p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p>Planning: Pek Peppin reported that the last year has been a nightmare. A difficult year with little evidence that all the new housing proposed is needed. There are 12 people registered as looking for affordable homes compared with facing potentially 650 new homes on green field sites around the town. The Town Council can comment & sometimes our advice is heeded however all decisions are made at District level. Any developer can go to appeal if their plans are turned down & Government inspectors make a decision which is final, with these decisions in our area being found in favour of developers.</p> <p>The Local Plan for the South Somerset Area plans for 374 new homes by 2028, although this may change. South Somerset has to demonstrate that it has a 5 year Land Supply for housing. So the 650 new homes currently in the pipeline here are too many and would make us a dormitory town as we do not have sufficient local employment and the infrastructure to support this many new homes & their occupants is not adequate. Many have signed a Petition to the Government asking for local people to have more say. PP wrote to the Government saying local opinions are not being listened to & that local people are not being given the final say about new housing developments as the Government response claims but she has received no acknowledgement or reply. All is now in limbo with the upcoming General Election. PP feels that the needs of market towns are not appreciated & do not fit in with Government Planning Policy.</p> <p>Developers approach The Town Council & SSDC with outline Plans & then follow up with design & layout details. The Well Farm, Ansford & Station Road developers are consulting the Town Council & Ansford Parish Council.</p> <p>The 1st draft Neighbourhood Plan is now being forwarded to SSDC & is up on the Town Council website.</p> <p>Brownfield sites: BMI & Nursery and Constitutional Club-the owners/developers have all been in touch & promised to continue communication but there has been no news lately.</p> <p>The Town Council were promised that Dimmer would be returned to the Community after 25 years as a landfill site however this has not happened and now a Waste Transfer Station is foisted on us.</p>
<p>5.2</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Plan: Rob Angell spoke and said that 3- 4 years ago he first offered to be involved with The NH Plan. The draft document is now ready with copies hot off the press. It was approved by The Town Council last night. Next it goes to South Somerset District Council. It has taken so long as the NH working group is trying to be realistic about what makes sense with so many planning applications in the pipeline. The team tried to decide what we can plan for & try to influence. The local population is currently 3000 plus & if all the proposed developments go ahead this will cause a 40% increase in population! It is hoped that a strategic environmental assessment will not be needed. Next there will be public consultation in September. Then it goes to the examiner. Then to a local referendum, if approved it becomes part of SSDC's local plan & so they will formally take account of what Castle Cary have said. A website is coming linked to Town Council one.</p>

5.3	<p>Marketing & Communications: Judi Morison spoke and advised that The Shambles/Market House has been booked for commercial bookings including 2 weddings in Roundhouse and 2 in The Shambles with 4 more booked for this year. Also a 90th Birthday party. A Polling Station. Tai Chi. Embroidery classes and a Lino Cut workshop. It is a lovely space to teach in or hold a party. There have been Wine Tastings & a pop up restaurant. It's centre of town location adds to atmosphere. Music too. It is promoted through the website, on Facebook & to business groups with a meeting held by the Bruton business group. New signage has been designed by Lara Davis. Volunteers at the Local Information Centre in the Market House see over 5000 people a year. They have produced a Castle Cary & Ansford Information map & leaflet, speaking to local businesses for sponsorship to fund it. Laura Tilling has been working with the Friends of Library Group. At the library there is regular storytelling also a small business training 'digital garage' is taking place with Somerset Skills & Learning.</p>
5.4	<p>Youth: Frazer Cronie took over this role in November 2016 when 12 young people were attending. There are 20-25 now coming with a good mix of boys & girls. They have now outgrown their venue. They have a Big TV for cinema events. Have played Rounders. Set up a Gym and have fun! All the difficult issues have been dealt with & vandalism has significantly reduced. Volunteers are being sought to help. All the latest news is on the Facebook page.</p>
5.5	<p>Properties & Infrastructure: Nick Weeks spoke on behalf of Bob Gilbey. Millbrook toilets & car park: the Town Council are keeping toilets here & at Catherine's Close but are reducing costs from the £10,000 a year it cost when the Town Council took them on from South Somerset District Council. Free car parking will continue in the town costing the Town Council £6,500 a year paid to SSDC. Wincanton TC have stopped free parking there. Street parking issues are dealt with by Somerset County Council. The new track to the Pavilion on the Donald Pither Memorial field is done. The Town Council believe the sports facilities are poor in the town although new cricket nets have been purchased this year. The Youth Club may move to the to the Pavilion. The Market House asset transfer from SSDC is close with a 999 year lease being set up to ensure it stays at the heart of community. High works on PO side of the building took place in the early part of the 2017 with roof & guttering works costing £30,000. A dowry from SSDC helped here. We have a duty to check and ensure that the play area is safe & recent works have been undertaken here. The Cemetery Chapel has just been repainted & improvements made to the cemetery road & paths. The Town Council are trying to buy more land and a review of Committal costs means we are no longer charging for under 16 year olds. Infrastructure: The Town Council liaises re parking issues with SSDC & this is often difficult. There is a vandalism problem in the play area & repairs that have to be made here this unfortunately diverts money from being used on The Market House. Nick Weeks thanked Bob Gilbey for his tireless work for the Town Council & everyone gave a round of applause in recognition.</p>
5.6	<p>Finance: Barry Moorhouse spoke as Chair of Finance. He reported that the finances are in good health. And going forward we can earn more from using our assets better at the Market House. He noted that all the Councillors work is entirely voluntary. Overall the Council Received £207,000 and spent £208,000 last year – the roughly £1000 difference coming from reserves – amounts we have put aside over the years.</p> <p>Income</p> <p>Precept & Grants (amount paid from each household within the Council tax)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">£132,000 63%</p> <p>Grants received for specific items (cricket nets, flooding works)</p>

	<p>£35,400 17%</p> <p>Contribution from Ansford PC for shared services (Newsletter, Fairfield etc) £4,000 2%</p> <p>Income from the Market House & Market (Rentals, Weddings, LAMP) £22,100 11%</p> <p>Income from the Cemetery £8,500 4%</p> <p>Income from other sources (Big Christmas, LAMP, Photocopy, solar energy etc) £6,800 3%</p> <p>Where we spent it</p> <p>Staffing inc. NI, Pensions (now a legal requirement) £48,000 23%</p> <p>Admin (Insurance, audits, legal, training, telephones) £14,000 7%</p> <p>Properties (Pither Field, Pavilion, Cemetery, Car parks etc) £102,000 48%</p> <p>Market House (Market Manager, Maintenance, LAMP, Cleaning) £28,500 14%</p> <p>Promotion and Communication (Website, Newsletter, Advertising etc) £16,600 8%</p>
6.	<p>Presentations from Ward Councillors</p> <p>Mike Lewis attended early in the evening but had to give his apologies as he had to attend another meeting and Henry Hobhouse did not attend. Nick Weeks for South Somerset District Council: transformation goes on a pace & SSDC are continually having to reduce costs, this has resulted in 70 people losing their jobs. Old faces have gone. Alex Palmer is the new Chief Executive & he is doing a good job. The Area East Team supports Castle Cary with Tim Cook & Pam Williams doing so much to help our community. Area East supports the High St with grants available to improve shop frontages. They also put money into local projects including the youth group. NW welcomes the excellent working relationship between Castle Cary & Ansford particularly in relation to the Market House, car parks & the Fairfield. He hopes for closer links as we go forward. At District level the Planning Department are struggling to deal with all the applications, NW is trying to change the view of SSDC on many of the developments and is hopeful that the number of proposed houses will be reduced. He is hopeful that new businesses are given more encouragement than currently in rural areas. He is always available to help with any local issues.</p>

7.	Questions, answers and other matters for discussion
7.1	David Osborne advised the meeting that there is to be a General Election Question Time at All Saints Parish Church on this Thursday 18 May. He needs questions for the prospective parliamentary candidates in writing before the meeting. He also thanked the Town Council for all it does.
7.2	Liz Mortimer said thank-you too. She advised the meeting that on Friday 23 June there will be a meeting at All Saints Church. The Victorians did a lot of work to the church 160 years ago but much of that now is coming to the end of its life. The whole building needs investment including the roof but first the question needs to be asked: Do we do the work? What is the future role for the building? The Community need to decide.
7.3	A member of the public asked about the poor visibility when coming out of cemetery: She was advised that there is a mirror in place. NW then advised that the issue is that the bank to right is not being cut & we need to get contractors to do this again. Action: Properties & infrastructure Committee.
7.4x	A discussion was held around Speeding in the town & vicinity. Barry Moorhouse advised that unfortunately enforcement is non- existent. He has read the letters from the public and has contacted Highways at Somerset County Council who are responsible for enforcement. A 20mph limit in town was suggested. BM said the Town Council are looking at this. It was noted that there is a 35 MPH average speed in 30 mph zone up Ansford Hill. The TC is investigating a speed indicator device which would indicate to drivers the speed they are going. HGV's are too fast. Highways need to be criticised as are not looking at the local situation. It was noted that Liz Stokes has put in a great deal of personal effort with Somerset County Council Highways but received little response. It was noted that 5 years ago a speed watch group was set up in town. Volunteers were checking speed & informing the police but this didn't do a lot of good. There is a lack of resources at Highways. The Queen Camel traffic calming set up may be possible in the town centre. The Town Council share the frustrations of everyone in town.
7.5	A member of the public asked re: Road Signage : advising the meeting that the signs on the bridge to Crown Pet Foods are currently down. She also said that the Torbay Road 7.5 tonne HGV limit is being ignored. Other comments were made about speeding HGV's. NW advised that it is all down to enforcement & if members of the public see lorries breaking the rules, take the number & phone Crown Pet foods or Highways at Somerset County Council.
	Alan Gibbons Ansford Parish Council advised that the signs are in Ansford Parish & that following a lorry accident the signs came down & are due to go back up. It was noted that road signage in Somerset is in a bad state.
7.6	A member of the public asked about the closed public footpath at 2 Swans . She was advised that the footpath is not legally an adopted footpath but the developers planning conditions said they will allow access in perpetuity. The April opening reported by the District Council has not happened & the Town Council have been asking the developer as it has been closed for over a year but as no legal enforcement is possible, unfortunately cannot demand a reopening.
7.7	A member of the public thanked the TC for getting the Market House clock working again. Nick Weeks thanked the Fire Brigade & Peter Alderson.
8	Thank you and good night.

