



**Castle Cary Town Council**

The Market House

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**APPROVED MINUTES OF CASTLE CARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at the Market House, Castle Cary**

**Present:** Judi Morison (Chair), Justin Birch, Philippa Biddlecombe, Stephen Biddlecombe, Nick Crowley, Margaret Bebbington, Bob Gilbey, Pek Peppin, Sally Snook, Penny Steiner, Nick Weeks and Rob Worth

**Also present:** County Councillor Mike Lewis

**Clerk:** Zöe Godden

There were two members of the public present at the start of the meeting.

**19:00 – The Chair allowed a public open session**

A representative from the Royal British Legion reported that the 2019 Poppy Appeal had raised over £4400. With next year being the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE day, the Early May Bank Holiday had been moved to Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May to make a three-day weekend, over which commemorations could take place. Councillors were asked to consider facilitating commemorative events in Castle Cary. The Chair said that she had spoken to a member of the Armed Forces and had discussed the opportunity for a march through the town. Nick Weeks said that there was a specific regiment that had the freedom of the town and that they may also like to march for VE Day. Philippa Biddlecombe agreed to contact someone to discuss this. The Chair also said that young people from the Army Training Corps could be involved in a march.

***Action 191118/1: Philippa Biddlecombe***

**19:04 – The Chair brought the public open session to a close and one member of the public left the meeting.**

**The meeting started at 19:04**

**2019**

**TC95 Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from District Councillor Kevin Messenger.

**TC96 To approve the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to be signed by the Chair**

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to approve the minutes as presented. 10 votes in favour. Sally Snook abstained from voting as she had not been present at the October meeting.**

**TC97 Declarations of personal or pecuniary interest (*these must be declared BEFORE the agenda items concerned are discussed. Persons with a declared pecuniary interest must leave the meeting room when these are discussed*)**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **TC98 Community Safety and Security update**

Judi Morison noted that sentencing had taken place in relation to the shooting incident that had taken place in Castle Cary the previous year.

The Clerk reported that the PCSO had contacted her to say that he was looking to establish Shop Watch and Pub Watch schemes in Castle Cary. He had also contacted County Highways to request some improved road markings in the Town. Nick Weeks asked for this information to be reported to the next Properties and Infrastructure Committee meeting.

**Action 191118/2: Town Clerk**

### **TC99 To receive any reports/updates:**

- a) **Mike Lewis (County Councillor)** reported that Somerset County Council's financial situation remained better than it had been for some years and, providing winter was not too difficult, it was anticipated that budgetary targets would be met.

Nick Weeks asked if Mike could help to accelerate repairs to the railway bridge on Station Road as the temporary traffic lights were causing long delays for motorists. In addition, Nick reported that, due to repairs on the railway line, replacement bus services had been put in place but that, as a result, capacity at the station car park had been reduced, causing cars to be parked dangerously on the main road. Mike agreed to take up both of these issues at County Hall and would try to find out how long it would take for the railway bridge to be repaired.

Mike reported that the next Full Council meeting of SSDC, scheduled to take place on 21<sup>st</sup> November, had been cancelled due to the upcoming election. Nick Weeks asked if Mike would be able to support the Town Council in opposing an application to vary the S106 agreement relating to planning permissions (15/02347/OUT and 19/01871/REM) granted for 165 dwellings on a site off Torbay Road. The application proposed the continued use of access to the site from Torbay Road, rather than via Station Road as agreed in the S106 document. Pek Peppin confirmed that conditions 21 and 22 of the S106 document referred to the access issue. Mike agreed to represent the Town Council's views and said he would also express the Town Council's concern regarding proposed changes to the S106 agreement relating to planning applications 14/05623/OUT and 18/02986/REM, requesting a reduction in affordable units, 50% reduction in educational contribution and removal of contributions to changing rooms, community halls, youth facilities and the theatre at Westlands.

- b) Henry Hobhouse was not present and Kevin Messenger (District Councillors) had sent his apologies.

- c) Update on Key Objectives/Projects

Philippa Biddlecombe reported that work towards becoming a Dementia Friendly town was progressing rapidly. Official recognition of this would be received soon, meaning that awareness sessions could begin.

- d) To review action points from previous meetings

The action points were reviewed. No further action was required.

### **TC100 Chairs' Report:**

- a) To consider plans to mark VE day in May 2020.

The Chair referred to comments heard in the public open session. It was **agreed** that the Chair would contact the Army Training Corps to arrange for a march to take place on VE Day.

**Action 191118/3: Judi Morison**

Councillors discussed other ways that VE Day could be marked. It was **agreed** to consult the wider community and to consider facilitating any events that might be organised, if appropriate.

**Action 191118/4: Judi Morison**

- b) To note a report from the Deputy Town Clerk delivered at a recent Greener Cary meeting.

**Noted.** The Chair added that the Deputy Town Clerk had presented her report well.

- c) To note that Greener Cary will be hosting a Greener Question Time event.

**Noted.**

- d) To hear feedback from a recent meeting between Ansford Parish Council and Castle Cary Town Council.

The Chair thanked those who had attended the meeting. Councillors agreed that the meeting had been positive and it was reported that the two councils had agreed to meet twice per year.

- e) To receive an update on the possible use of the Drill Hall by the Youth Club.

The Chair reported that the Army had expressed an interest in exploring the use of the Drill Hall as a youth facility for Ansford and Castle Cary. A site visit would be arranged and representatives from both councils would attend.

#### **TC101 To agree a Councillor to act as representative to Caryford Hall.**

Margaret Bebbington explained that she was not able to continue in this role. No other councillor wished to volunteer. Pek Peppin said that she would ask for the minutes of Caryford Hall meetings to be forwarded to the Town Clerk.

**Action 191118/5: Pek Peppin**

#### **TC102 Correspondence**

- a) To note receipt of thanks from Playfest for the recently awarded grant.

**Noted.**

- b) To note receipt of notification from Royal Mail that, as from 7<sup>th</sup> November, residents will no longer be able to collect parcels or other items that could not be delivered from Castle Cary Post Office and to consider any action.

**Noted.** Councillors noted that residents were able to nominate a neighbour to take in parcels on their behalf.

- c) To note receipt of a letter from the Information Commissioner's Office informing the Town Council that the case regarding a recent complaint from a resident about the Town Clerk's handling of personal data has been closed and that the Town Clerk had acted correctly in not revealing third-party personal data to the complainant.

The outcome of the Freedom of Information complaint was noted.

#### **Committees Reports, Recommendations & Progress on Major Projects**

##### **TC103 Planning Committee & Neighbourhood Plan**

- a) To hear feedback regarding an application to vary the S106 contributions applicable to the Wayside Farm development (14/05623/OUT and 18/02986/REM).

Pek Peppin informed councillors that the application sought to reduce the number of affordable homes and to omit some S106 payments. For example, the S106 agreement allocated over £60,000 to community halls. Both Ansford and Castle Cary councils had agreed to allocate this to Caryford Hall but the developer was seeking to have this removed

from the S106 agreement. Pek went on to say that the building company working on this site was holding an information session at the Market House on 21st November but that they would not be able to answer any questions about the proposed changes to the S106 agreement. Instead, these questions should be directed to a company called Stonewater, which was the developer involved with the site.

There was some discussion about the S106 process and it was felt that too many developers sign up to S106 agreements only renege on them at a later time, meaning that additions and improvements to local amenities, required as a direct result of the increase in residents, were not realised.

Judi Morison said she had tried to organise a meeting with the relevant Planning Officer and would continue to do so and that representatives from Ansford Parish Council would be invited to attend.

**Action 191118/6: Judi Morison**

- b) To hear feedback from a meeting with SSDC regarding an application for 200 dwellings at Station Road (19/01840/OUT) and to consider allocating up to £2500 from reserves to contribute towards any legal fees involved in opposing the application.

Pek Peppin reported that councillors from Ansford and Castle Cary councils had attended this meeting. Planning Officers had said they were minded to approve the application due to SSDC's inability to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Planning Officers also said that, should the application be refused and brought to appeal, a Planning Inspector would likely grant permission. It had been suggested at the meeting that Ansford and Castle Cary councils employed an expert to make a study of the visual amenity at this site and others around the Parishes. Planning Officers suggested that the cost of such a study would likely be around £7000 and that SSDC would consider sharing the cost with Ansford and Castle Cary councils.

There was some discussion about the pros and cons of engaging an expert to look at the visual amenity aspects of the site.

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and agreed to allocate up to £2000 from earmarked reserves to contribute towards the engagement of an expert to look at the visual amenity issues at this site and other locations around Ansford and Castle Cary. Nine votes for; Two abstentions.**

- c) To note receipt of a draft S106 contribution list covering play, youth facilities and changing rooms in relation to planning application 19/01840/OUT and to consider any amendments required.

Judi Morison informed councillors that Ansford and Castle Cary councillors had agreed to meet to produce a joint response to this consultation. It was **agreed** that this matter would be discussed further at the next Properties and Infrastructure Committee meeting to be held on 25<sup>th</sup> November and that any ideas raised would be shared with Ansford Parish Council.

**Action 191118/7: Town Clerk**

Mike Lewis said that the Town Council should contact Somerset County Council in the first instance to discuss the allocation of S106 funding to facilitate improved pathways for pedestrian and cycle links needed to join up the new developments with existing amenities.

#### **TC104 Properties, Infrastructure, Pither Project & Fairfield-updates**

- a) Market House – to hear an update on progress with works.

Nick Weeks reported that the work was progressing well. Due to additional pointing required, it was estimated that the works would cost approximately £1000 more than the original quote but that this amount could be covered by the reserves earmarked for Market House maintenance. The roof had been found to be in better condition than expected and it was hoped that the side door could be redecorated after the main works had been completed. All

of the windows and downpipes that needed to be removed had been and were being repaired and painted off-site.

b) To consider forming a Market House task and finish group.

Nick Weeks explained that several redecorating jobs needed to be completed on the first and second floors of the Market House. Nick said he planned to start at the bottom of the stairs and to work upwards. Nick went on to say that he had been obtaining quotes for an external stair lift to help make the upper floors of the Market House more accessible.

**RESOLVED:** It was proposed and agreed to form a task and finish group to deal with the internal decorating works and the external stairlift.

**Action 191118/8: Judi Morison and Nick Weeks**

c) To hear an update on the Friends of Fairfield group.

Penny Steiner reported that the Fairfield Working Group had met on 16<sup>th</sup> November. Extra topsoil was added to the sensory garden and the wildflower meadow had been planted. A small orchard would be planted on 7<sup>th</sup> December. The Working Group would take a break over the winter months.

Nick Weeks asked if the Working Group would consider planting 30 to 40 trees of native species along the zigzag path. Judi Morison suggested that trees could be planted as memorials for the deceased and that members of the public could be offered the opportunity to fund such trees. Penny Steiner agreed to bring up this idea with the Working Group.

**Action 191118/9: Penny Steiner**

### **TC105 Marketing & Communication**

a) Marketing and Communications update

Penny Steiner reported that the Signage Group had met with a representative from County Highways to agree the type of gateway signs that could be erected. As a result, the Signage Group would draw up proposals and refer them to County Highways for approval. Three sites for gateway signs had been identified. The current signs were small enough to be reused in the town, with the replacement signs being larger.

Penny went on to report that a Communications meeting had taken place on 12<sup>th</sup> November to engage with newsletter contributors and other community groups. Turnout was good and the meeting had been positive. Suggestions for improvements to the newsletter were gathered and it had also been agreed to speak with the editors of the Together Magazine to discuss joint working.

Finally, Penny reported that the new Welcome Pack covers and postcards were almost ready.

### **TC106 Finance and Management**

a) To note receipt of a performance report from Castle Cary Community Library, in association with the grant provided by the Town Council.

**Noted.**

b) To consider quotes for the extension of the path at Fairfield.

It was **agreed** to defer this matter as the Clerk had not yet obtained three quotes.

- c) To consider a recommendation from the Marketing and Communications Committee that the business rate for hiring the Shambles should be increased from £13.20 including VAT to £15.00 excluding VAT and for the Undercroft from £7.20 including VAT to £7.50 excluding VAT from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.

Penny Steiner explained that a comparison had been made with similar rooms and it was felt that a small increase was justified.

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to increase the charges for business users, as described, from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020.**

- d) To note that the Town Clerk, in conjunction with the Chairman, authorised the payment of £1000 to the Donald Pither Trust on 23<sup>rd</sup> October as there were insufficient funds to cover all October payments in the Trust account. This is in line with Financial regulation 4.5.

**Noted.**

- e) To approve the payment of the balance of the grant to the Donald Pither Trust, amounting to £9050.

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the transfer, as described.**

***Action 191118/10: Town Clerk***

- f) To consider a recommendation from the Finance and Management Committee that the Town Council should appoint Safety Wise Limited to carry out a health and safety audit of all Town Council premises and land at a cost of £800; to further consider employing Safety Wise Limited as the Town Council's Health and Safety adviser for a period of one year at a cost of £100 per month.

The Clerk explained that three companies that offered health and safety guidance had been approached and summarised the services on offer. Two of these had met with members of the Finance and Management Committee.

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to appoint Safety Wise Limited to carry out an initial audit and to act as the Town Council's Health and Safety Adviser for the period of one year, in the first instance.**

***Action 191118/11: Town Clerk***

- g) To consider a draft Full Council budget (excluding Marketing and Communications and Properties and Infrastructure Committees).

The Town Clerk summarised the changes in the draft budget. Councillors noted receipt of the draft budget and had no objections to the proposed changes.

- h) To approve the cash book and bank reconciliation for October 2019.  
It was **agreed** to take this item after TC106 i).

- i) To approve the November payment schedule for the Town Council and the Donald Pither Trust and to nominate Councillors to verify and authorise payments.

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the payments as presented, that Margaret Bebbington would verify the payments on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November and that Sally Snook would authorise the payments after verification.**

***Action 191118/12: Margaret Bebbington and Sally Snook***

h) To approve the cash book and bank reconciliation for October 2019.  
The cashbook and bank reconciliation had been checked by Justin Birch.

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the cash book and bank reconciliation as presented.**

**20:36 – County Councillor Mike Lewis and one member of the public left the meeting.**

**TC107 Exclusion of Press and Public: To consider exemption of press and public for remainder of meeting under Public Bodies Admissions To Meetings Act 1960, Section 1 (2) on the grounds that discussion of the following business is likely to disclose confidential information.**

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to exclude the press and public for the remainder of the meeting.**

**TC108 To consider proposed salaries for the office staff for 2020-21.**

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to approve the salaries for office staff for 2020-21.**

Judi Morison asked the Town Clerk to record the Council's thanks to office staff for their hard work over the past 12 months.

**TC109 To note that the Town Clerk's trial period has elapsed and that her appraisal has taken place; to consider a recommendation from the Finance and Management Committee that the Town Clerk's contract is made permanent.**

**RESOLVED: It was proposed and unanimously agreed to make the Town Clerk's contract permanent.**

*Members of the Council are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of its functions, that "No member of the public, job applicant, elected member or employee shall receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, sexual orientation, marital status or disability"*

**The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December in the Market House at 7:00pm. Any items for inclusion on the agenda should be forwarded to the Town Clerk by Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November.**

**The meeting ended at 20:45.**

**Approved as a correct record.....J Morison 9<sup>th</sup> December 2019**