

**Draft Minutes
of the Meeting of
Yatton Parish Council
held on
Monday 11 March 2024**

At Hangstones Pavilion, Stowey Road, Yatton.

Meeting opened: 7.30 p.m. Meeting closed: 9.15 p.m.

Present: Councillors: David Crossman, Jonathan Edwards, Ann Hodgson, James Hooper, Graham Humphreys, Steve Humphrey, Chris Jackson, Robert Jenner, Steve Lister, Peter Lomas, Massimo Morelli, Jessie McArdle and Roger Wood.

Also in attendance: Clerk, District Councillors Wendy Griggs and Steve Bridger and thirteen members of the public.

Prayers or a Moment of Reflection was held.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

COU89/24: To receive apologies for absence, and to approve reasons where appropriate. Apologies have been received from Parish Councillors Caroline Sheard and Bryan Thomas.

COU90/24: To receive declarations of interests by Parish Councillors and to consider any written applications for dispensations.
NONE.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

COU91/24: Public participation.

- A member of the public spoke regarding agenda item 14. She did not support a bypass for Yatton because it could only be funded by large numbers of housing as was the case with the prospective Banwell bypass. This would result in pressure on rural services and take money away from implementing alternative methods of transport. There was evidence that a bypass would increase traffic rather than reduce it based on roads of this type already built; this could be by as much as 20%. The environmental cost of the road in terms of loss of habitat and wildlife, increase in emissions during and after construction was unacceptable.
- A representative spoke on behalf of Stowells Concrete in support of a bypass. The company had commissioned a study of options into the creation of a road from their site to link up with the A370 including some cost indicators. This report had been shared with the Parish Council. However the costs were beyond the funds of the company. They would welcome progress with any of the options considered suitable in the future by North Somerset Council.
- A member of the public endorsed the comments not supporting the bypass that had already been made. In addition they wished to know more about the process for putting forward the request outlined in the agenda item and highlighted the need for more public consultation before this was done. Chairman Chris Jackson explained the nine step process used in assessing proposals of this type with step one being to check if the

proposal is compliant with all North Somerset Council policies. If not then the proposal would not be taken any further.

- A resident from Claverham asked if the Claverham Neighbourhood Plan was to be re-drafted and what progress had been made towards this. Councillor Peter Lomas advised that work could not start on this until the Local Plan was near completion, which was hopefully in a few months time.
- A resident highlighted that Yatton would be getting more houses anyway and without a bypass the impact was of concern.
- A Yatton resident and member of YACWAG for many years had seen this proposal in the past and the negative impact of such a road as outlined by previous speakers she fully endorsed. She did not agree that a road should be provided to accommodate a business.
- A resident and former District Councillor agreed with all the comments that had been made against a bypass. There was no reference in the local plan or the Neighbourhood plans for Yatton or Claverham and this should remain as such. He urged the Parish Council to defer agenda item 14 and concentrate on renewing the Neighbourhood Plans first. The issue of HGVs in the High Street was not directly related to a bypass. As a member of YACWAG he had witnessed the decline of species over many years and he wanted to see the environment put first not last. A bypass with the increase in housing and traffic would be in direct opposition to this environmental goal. He wished to see focus and investment in other alternative methods of transport.
- A resident had carried out a survey of parents at the school on their views of HGVs in the High Street. She acknowledged the bypass was not linked to this but she did not support a bypass. She reiterated some key responses to questions about near misses, strikes by wing mirrors, mounting kerbs etc. posed by the survey overall too many people do not feel safe walking, cycling or scooting on the High Street. The survey received 142 responses and only two mentioned a bypass and she spoke of the strong feelings in the community against it all of which she shared. She endorsed all the previous comments and reasons that had been made against a bypass.
- A resident agreed with all the previous comments against the bypass but made the following additional points. He did not think a bypass would reduce HGVs in the High Street. The Parish Council had refused The Batch planning application so they should not pursue a bypass that would bring thousands of additional houses on similar land. He acknowledged that Yatton needed business for local employment and to reduce out commuting but considered that if business wanted to fund initiatives to lessen traffic impact it would be better spending it on number recognition speed cameras, more crossings and extend the 20mph speed limit.

North Somerset Council - Ward Councillors' Reports.

District Councillor Wendy Griggs reported that she had met the Head of Chestnut Park school regarding the ongoing issues they were having with parents using the rear services only access at the rear of the school. Unfortunately no solution had been found to date. She thanked the Parish Council for hosting the Yatton school carnival and sports day.

District Councillor Steve Bridger reported that the North End crossing was finally open and working correctly. The very wet winter had caused further damage to road surfacing and with limited funds it was a situation of 'managed deterioration'.

He questioned what the justification would be for a Yatton bypass and the fact that it was not in the new Local Development Plan. The congestion in Yatton was generally only at peak times and whilst it was severe if the M5 closed this only happened a few times a year and it affected

the entire road network in the county, not just Yatton. A Yatton bypass would be a very complicated engineering task for approximately 1.25 kilometers of road requiring three bridges, crossing multiple water courses and large scale flood mitigation. It would require a business plan that at least half of North Somerset Council supported and the only way it could be funded would be through central government and very large scale housing development. The environmental impact of such a project would be huge and unjustifiable. It was around 100 years since the Banwell bypass had been first raised and the last ten years to get its current state of progress. However as the contractor had just pulled out it was an example of how difficult bringing any bypass to fruition could be.

Councillor David Crossman raised how important gaining a crossing by the Box Bush Farm prospective development site was. He regularly saw unaccompanied children crossing there and it was very dangerous. Councillor Bridger advised that the planning application was currently stalled.

Police report

Police Constable James Rochford reported that one of the main issues had been the attack on sheep in the local area by dogs. There have been eight sheep killed with quite a few others injured in three attacks since Christmas. He had done a leaflet drop to the Chestnut Park development which borders where the attacks have occurred.

He had put up warning signs from the Rural Crime Team and some had already been issued to a couple of the local farmers, but he had a further supply should any other local farmers want them to fix to footpaths running through relevant fields.

Other crime nearby includes the targeting of vans especially their sliding doors where offenders are drilling into the lock mechanisms.

He had also encountered “rogue traders” touting for business in Kingston Seymour a week ago. He urged residents to be mindful of who they employ to cut their hedges, clear their rubbish etc. The trader should show a waste carriers license, not pressurize residents into decisions and give a 14 day cooling off period. If waste is later fly tipped and identified as having come from a particular address the person at the address may be liable to prosecution.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

COU92/24: Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 15th January 2024.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

COU93/24: Exclusion of public:

RESOLVED: that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda items 15 and 16 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business of competitive quotes.

COU94/24: To re-consider approving the Action Plan 2024-25.

The Action Plan that was approved at the January Full Council was incorrectly circulated by the Clerk who had sent an unamended version in error. The correct version had been circulated prior to this evening meeting.

RESOLVED: to approve the Action Plan 2024-25.

COU95/24: Finance

To authorise payments, including to note receipts and petty cash payments for March 2024.

RESOLVED: to authorise payments, including to note receipts and petty cash payments for March 2024.

COU96/24: To consider the Calendar of Meetings for 2024-25.

RESOLVED: to approve the calendar of meetings for 2024-25.

Chairman Chris Jackson proposed to the Council that agenda item 14 was heard after agenda item 9 to allow any members of the public who were interested in item 14 to leave the meeting earlier if they wished.

RESOLVED: to move agenda item 14 to be reviewed after agenda item 9 and then return to the order on the agenda.

COU97/24: To consider an amendment to Standing Orders under Rules of Debate as recommended by the Finance Administration & Personnel Committee on 12th February 2024.

Chairman Chris Jackson gave the background to the review of standing orders.

The amendment gave greater clarity to the procedure to follow under b and f within the Rules of Debate. The amendment had been drafted by the Clerk in consultation with the Chief Officer of ALCA prior to the review by the Finance Administration & Personnel Committee on 12th February 2024.

RESOLVED: to approve the amendment to Standing Orders under Rules of Debate (b & f) as recommended by the Finance Administration & Personnel Committee.

COU98/24: To consider requesting North Somerset Council to investigate the feasibility of a bypass for Yatton.

The Clerk had circulated the report that had been shared by Stowells with Councillors prior to the meeting and slides were shown of the possible routes from the report. Councillor Ann Hodgson explained the reason for asking for this to be discussed following a bypass being raised during the planning meeting on the 22nd January 2024.

Councillors gave their views on a bypass, many of which concurred with the views of members of the public on flood risk, increased traffic, environmental impact, concern that any such request may indicate that Yatton was willing to take more housing, no provision within either the neighbourhood plans or the current and future Local Development Plans.

RESOLVED: to **not** make a request to North Somerset Council to investigate the feasibility of a bypass.

COU99/24: To consider a formal letter of complaint to North Somerset Council regarding the service by their legal department in issuing the lease for the new cemetery and the subsequent increased legal costs that have resulted. The letter as recommended by the Finance Administration & Personnel Committee on 12th February 2024.

RESOLVED: to submit the letter of complaint to North Somerset Council as approved by the Finance Administration & Personnel Committee.

COU100/24: To consider requesting that the land allocated for Community Use (cemetery) in the Site Allocation Plan 2018 is transferred forward as part of the Local Plan to 2039 as recommended by the Planning Committee on 26th February 2024.

The area of land in question was presented to the meeting and Councillors discussed the recommendation from the Planning Committee as outlined above. All the Councillors present were keen to protect its use in providing essential cemetery services for the future residents of the parish.

RESOLVED: to request that the land allocated for Community Use (cemetery) in the Site Allocation Plan 2018 is transferred forward as part of the Local Plan to 2039.

***** Councillor David Crossman left the meeting.**

COU101/24: To consider reclaiming the vat on sports fees charged February 2020 to February 2023.

Chairman of the Finance Administration & Personnel Committee gave a brief overview of the background to this agenda item. HMRC's guidance prior to 2023 was that local authority sports and leisure services may either be taxable or exempt from VAT. This has been challenged in the courts, with test cases for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland going on for several years resulting in HMRC losing the case. On 26 January 2023, HMRC advised that local authority sports services can be treated as non-business and are therefore outside the scope of VAT. We received advice from ALCA to stop charging VAT immediately which we did and have been waiting for further advice. The VAT charged can be reclaimed over last four years but must be returned to the hirers who were wrongly charged. The Clerk and Finance Officer had worked on this and the amount to be reclaimed and returned to various football clubs would be £676.

Councillor Peter Lomas made a request that if the VAT reclaim was approved that the work be done after year end to relieve work load pressure on the Clerk and Finance Officer at the financial year end.

RESOLVED: to reclaim the VAT and return it to the various football clubs after the financial year end was completed.

***** Councillor David Crossman returned to the meeting.**

COU102/24: To form working groups for reviewing the Yatton and Claverham Neighbourhood Plans

Councillor Peter Lomas had agreed previously to undertake work on the Claverham Neighbourhood Plan and Councillor Steve Lister had agreed to work on the Yatton Neighbourhood Plan. They were seeking assistance from fellow Councillors.

RESOLVED: to form a working group for the Claverham Neighbourhood Plan – members Peter Lomas and James Hooper and a working group for the Yatton Neighbourhood Plan – members Steve Lister and Jessie McArdle.

***** District Councillors Steve Bridger, Wendy Griggs and the remaining members of the public left the meeting.**

COU103/24: To consider quotes for the wall with a fence work along the right hand side of the driveway to the new cemetery – Confidential Item.

The Clerk presented three quotes for consideration.

RESOLVED: to accept the quote from Weston Outdoor Services of £15,600.

COU104/24: To consider quotes for a new chipper and shredder – Confidential Item.
The Clerk presented three quotes for consideration.

RESOLVED: to approve the quote from Shinnars Bridge Garden Machinery of £3,457.50 ex VAT.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

COU105/24: Clerk's Report.

- i) The New Cemetery Working Group required a meeting to look at fencing and gates for the entrance into the driveway and to the cemetery area itself. The Clerk was to send round date options.
- ii) The Clerk asked about who was judging the Volunteer of the Year nominations. Councillors Chris Jackson, Peter Lomas and Robert Jenner agreed to carry out the judging.
- iii) The new flagpole base had gone in and the flagpole itself was due to go up later this week.
- iv) Chairman Chris Jackson advised that he had resigned as Chairman of the Planning Committee to Vice Chairman Peter Lomas who had accepted his resignation. He felt that to Chair the Council and a Committee was expanding his influence a little further than he felt was best practice. The election of a new Planning Committee Chairman would be on the next agenda for the 18th March.
- v) The following Planning Committee meeting will be held on the 22nd April.

COU106/24: Future agenda items.

The new proposed cemetery off Mendip Road.
Weight limit signs in the Parish.
Newsletter provision.

Chairman

___/___/2024