

## WEST CREWKERNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 14<sup>TH</sup> March 2017 at Clapton & Wayford Village Hall

### **Members Present**

Mrs Julia Borland  
Mr Don Yeomans  
Mr Frank Freeman  
Mrs Caroline Broom  
Mr Barrie Carter  
Mrs Sue Osborne (South Somerset District Councillor)  
Mr John Dyke (Somerset County Councillor)

### **Also present**

Miss Jackie Parsons (Parish Clerk)  
3 Members of the Public

Meeting commenced at 7.00pm

The Chairman stated at the beginning of the meeting she should state that the meeting can be filmed or recorded, this meeting is being recorded and the recording device was brought to the attention of the meeting. If any member of the public objects to being recorded at the meeting you do have the right not to be recorded,

1. **Apologies for Absence**  
Mr & Mrs M Wilson

2. **Public Open Forum**  
No member of the Public had anything to speak about in the Public Open Forum.

3. **Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda (Pecuniary or non-statutory interests).**  
The individual Councillors were asked if they had any Declarations of interest in any of the items on the agenda, none of the Councillors had any Declarations of interest in any of the items on the Agenda.

4. **To approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 8<sup>TH</sup> November 2016.**  
The minutes of the above meeting were approved. They were proposed for acceptance by Mr Don Yeomans and seconded by Mr Frank Freeman.

5. **Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the Agenda.**  
The Chairman had two matters arising from the minutes. The First one was lorries going to Coombe Farm. Mr J Wyatt stated that three lorries had got stuck in the lanes in West Crewkerne Parish going to Coombe Farm, two lorries had extruded themselves without incident or causing any damage but the third lorry had got into

all sorts of difficulties and had caused damage to a wall in front of Mr Wyatt's property. Mr Wyatt had spoken to Mr G Coleman (estate manager) for Coombe Farm regarding the incident and he assured Mr Wyatt that this problem with the lorries should not happen again because the lorry drivers both United Kingdom and Foreign had been given a different post code to put into their Sat Nav to take them to the farm. This should alleviate the problem of lorries getting stuck in the lanes trying to get to Coombe Farm. The Chairman asked Mr Wyatt when this incident took place. The incident had taken place two months ago.

The second matter arising from the minutes was the provision of Noticeboards. The Parish Council had received a quote from Mr Alcock's son in law. The Noticeboards would be the same dimensions as the one outside the village hall and mounted on posts and would cost the Parish Council £500. The Chairman asked where the noticeboards should be sited. Mr D Yeomans felt that one noticeboards should be sited at Hewish near the post box. Mrs J Borland felt that maybe another one should be sited at Roundham. Mrs Borland asked Mr B Carter where the best place to site the Noticeboard in Roundham would be but Mr Carter did not think it was a good idea as nobody would bother to read what was put on the noticeboard and he thought the £500 would be better spent on something else. Mr D Yeomans still felt it was a good idea to erect a noticeboard in Hewish. Mrs J Borland asked whether permission needed to be sought from the landowner to erect the noticeboard and who owned the land. Mr J Wyatt stated that the garage wall where we wished to erect the noticeboard belonged to a Mrs Priest. The Chairman asked whether the Councillors wanted to agree in principle to the erection of a noticeboard in Hewish pending agreement from Mrs Priest to erecting the noticeboard on her land. The erection of the Noticeboard in Hewish in principle was proposed by Mrs J Borland and seconded by Mr D Yeomans and agreed by the Parish Councillors. The Chairman asked the Parish Clerk if she would write to Mrs Priest asking her permission to erect a noticeboard on or near her garage.

6. **Planning Matters.**

A): 16/04505/FUL, Hewish Mill Farm Hewish Crewkerne Somerset TA18 8QX. To re-roof, clad and replace doors to garage.

**Application permitted with Conditions**

B): 17/00934/AGN, Maincombe Woodland Roundham Somerset. The erection of a metal implement storage shed.

The application at (B) the Chairman had pointed out had been submitted in between Parish Council meetings, so she had contacted each Parish Councillor to ask if they had any objection to the application. None of the Parish Councillor had any objection to the application. The Chairman asked each Parish Councillor at the meeting to reiterate that they had no objection, each Parish Councillor did so. The Chairman also asked the Parish Clerk to follow up with South Somerset District Council planning department why we had not received notification of the planning application with the plans in writing?

7. Highway Matters.

Grit Bin for the B3165 – Location of said Bin.

The Parish Clerk read out a letter that she had received from Mr M Fear (Somerset Highways) which stated that Somerset Highways would fill the grit bin once it had been located. The letter did not state who would be responsible for the purchase of the bin. The Parish Councillors asked the Parish Clerk to ascertain who would be responsible for the purchase of the bin from Mr M Fear. The Chairman then asked the Parish Councillors where they would like the grit bin sited. Mrs C Broom considered it dangerous to site the grit bin on the B3165 because of the traffic on that road. The person who stands in the road putting grit on to the road takes their life in their hands. Mr B Carter felt that grit bins were a thing of the past and that grit lorries should be gritting the minor roads. Mrs C Broom felt that a grit bin would be of little use until the problem with the water running across the road at the B3165 junction with Woolminstone is sorted. The Chairman asked the meeting whether this item should be temporarily shelved until the ditches and drains problem is sorted in this area. The meeting agreed.

Ditches and Drains – update. The Chairman asked Mr D Yeomans to give an overview of the problem of the water across the road and what if any progress had been made. Mr D Yeomans stated that he had first reported the problem via the Somerset Highways website but had received no reply. He then contacted Mr M Fear direct by e-mail and had sent him about six e-mails asking who was responsible for clearing the drain and the ditches on this stretch of road because as far as he could see there was no run off from farming land for it to be the responsibility of the farmer? Mr D Yeomans had also asked for details of whose responsibility the ditches and drains situated in West Crewkerne Parish were but had not received a reply from Mr M Fear regarding this matter nor has he received a reply regarding the clearance of the drains and ditches on this stretch of road that is flooding. Mr D Yeomans felt frustrated at the lack of progress. The Chairman asked Mr J Dyke (Somerset County Councillor) if he had any ideas how the Parish Council could proceed with this matter. Mr J Dyke had no suggestions except to forward copies of Mr D Yeomans e-mails to him and he would send an e-mail to Mr M Fear adding his weight to the correspondence. Mr J Dyke asked Mr D Yeomans the exact stretch of road he was corresponding over. Mr D Yeomans stated that it was the stretch of road from the Maiden Beech Cross-roads all the way down that road. There is a dip by the Stoodley's Farm and water accumulates there. Alongside there is a gully that should be taking the water but it is blocked and nobody is taking responsibility for clearing the gully and the ditches. Mr D Yeomans asked Mr J Dyke if he could obtain clarification on whose responsibility the clearance of the ditches and drains on the above mentioned stretch of road was. Would Mr J Dyke be able to find out whose responsibility the ditches and drains in West Crewkerne Parish were? Mr J Dyke with regard to the second point said that he would rather stick to specifics. The Clerk to the Parish Council at this point stated that she had written to the Legal Services of Somerset County Council asking for details of the ownership of ditches and drains in West Crewkerne Parish they had replied that no records were held either in Somerset County Council or South Somerset District Council. If there was a dispute over the ownership of a ditch or drain then we should first go through Somerset Highways who would then refer the matter to legal services if necessary. The

Chairman and Mr J Dyke commented that the Parish Council is just being led around in circles. Mr J Dyke stated that drainage and ownership of the said drains and ditches does get complicated. In his own parish of Misterton he has an ongoing dispute involving Network Rail which he has had to obtain a copy of the 1856 Railway Act which created the railway line from Yeovil to Axminster.

Mr Alcock (member of the public) stated that the other side of Crewkerne on the A356 they are doing substantial work putting in concrete gullies and they have apparently accepted responsibility for this stretch of road.

Mr J Wyatt (member of the public) stated that several years ago when he was a Councillor on the Parish Council there was a map. The Chairman stated that she had consulted Mr H Ploszek (former Parish Councillor) on this matter who stated that the map only showed the drains not ditches. When the Contractor at the time came to clear the drains they were using a different map to the Parish Map. Mr H Ploszek also stated that when the landowner had cleared the ditches the water had flowed into too smaller pipes to take the volume of water, therefore blocking the drain and silting up the ditches again. He felt that an underground drainage system is needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The Chairman stated that whilst we were discussing the matter of ditches and drains there was another matter still outstanding, she asked whether the work had begun on the ditch at Higher Stakers Cross. Mr D Yeomans stated that it had not, he had tried to dig the ditch out himself but it needed a digger there to clear it. He had met with Mr P Watkins there who stated that the work would be done within this financial year within the next three months that three months had come and gone and nothing has been done.

Mr D Yeomans asked the Clerk if she had written to Mr M Fear regarding Higher Farm Lane Woolminstone, as per his e-mail of the 23<sup>rd</sup> January. The Clerk replied she had not. Mr J Dyke stated that he had e-mailed Mr M Fear on this matter and he had replied stating that they proposed to replace the existing pipe drain with a concrete dish channel and this work would be scheduled for the first quarter of the new financial year April to June. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr Fear, referring to his email to Mr J Dyke of the 21 June 2016, to seek assurance the proposed work to Higher Woolminstone Lane would go ahead this year.

Mr D Yeomans said before we leave ditches and drains that Mr M Fear is appearing at the Area West meeting of South Somerset District Council on the 17<sup>TH</sup> May 2017 location unknown at present to talk about Highways. Mr D Yeomans felt that it would be beneficial for a Parish Councillor to attend that meeting he is unable to attend himself as he is on holiday. Mr D Yeomans stated that according to the Agenda for that meeting he is to talk on Highway Maintenance. The Chairman stated that as it is a Public Meeting a representative from the Parish Council can attend. Mrs S Osborne (South Somerset District Councillor) stated that the public are allowed to ask questions and they are allowed to talk for three minutes. Mr B Carter asked the Chairman if he could attend the meeting she replied that he could providing he remembered he was representing the Parish Council and not to bring it into disrepute.

Venners Lane Roundham – update- The Chairman referred to the erection of the signpost that Mr B Carter had brought up at the last meeting and had subsequently sent her photographs of the said signpost. The Chairman stated that she had

understood from the last meeting that this signpost was new but looking at the photographs it looked like the signpost had been there for some considerable time. Mr B Carter stated that the signpost was erected about six years ago. Mr B Carter also stated that the lane is called Cinder Ash Lane. The Chairman stated that Cinder Ash Lane is a restricted byway before it joins the rights of way path called Venley Way. Mr B Carter does not consider the signpost to be a directional signpost and that it was a waste of money and time erecting the signpost as nobody local knows the lane as Venners Lane. The Chairman stated that the initial enquiry had been sent to the Rights of Way team and she would follow up for a response.

The Parish Clerk addressed Mr B Carter stating that he had asked about the clearance of the ditches in Venners Lane/Cinder Ash Lane at the last meeting. The Clerk had written to Mr M Fear regarding this matter who stated that Venners Lane/Cinder Ash Lane was a restricted byway and therefore it was the responsibility of the Rights of Way team to maintain or the Landowner responsibility. Mr B Carter stated that nobody knows who owns the land. Mrs S Osborne (South Somerset District Councillor) stated that the best policy would be to write to the Rights of Way team to Mr Les Braunton who was usually very helpful in these matters.

Road Repairs around Hewish – update- The Chairman then asked Mr D Yeomans about the road repairs around Hewish he stated that they had patched up a lot of the repairs and according to Mr Paul Watkins this was ahead of the roads being resurfaced in Hewish.

Maiden Beech Cross roads and signage – update- The Chairman stated that this road is due for resurfacing and the road is going to be closed for one night to enable them to carry out the work. The Chairman said in her naivety she asked if the signage for the was going to be moved at the same time bearing in mind that she had been told that the work would be carried out in this financial year. She was told that the signage could not be moved until the traffic management team had been consulted as it was not just where the 30 miles an hour sign was going to be relocated but the fact that the 30 miles an hour zone would be extended. As this was the first that the Chairman had heard about this and the joint meeting with Crewkerne regarding this signage was held last August she was a little aggrieved over this. She has therefore contacted Mr M Best one of the District Councillors for Crewkerne who remembers Mr P Watkins stating that there would be no problem moving the signage and has asked him to contact Somerset Highways to find out what is happening with the signage on the Maiden Beech Crossroads. Mr J Dyke (Somerset County Councillor) stated that there are various statutory obligations to go through to move existing traffic signage. The Chairman stated that they were not told this at the time and therefore she is no further forward with this problem at this moment in time.

Interim report on feasibility study on Roundham Crewkerne – The Chairman thanked Mr J Dyke (Somerset County Councillor) for getting the feasibility study done. Mr J Dyke stated that it is a long slow process and this is only the start of the process. Mr J Dyke stated that in his view what the consultants propose is insufficient. He had brought drawings of the proposals for the Councillors to take away and look at their leisure. The proposals are essentially for new road markings and signage drawing driver's attention to the 40 miles an hour limit through Roundham. They are unable to solve the question of a pedestrian footpath because of the narrowness of the road. The consultants have proposed an alternative and that is to create a

permissive footpath at the back of the houses on land that belongs to Coombe Farm estates. Mr B Carter (Parish Councillor) stated that they had already approached Coombe Farm estates in the past and they would only allow a footpath for one person width which is not sufficient. Mr J Dyke stated that he did not know how feasible a footpath at the back of the houses would be but he felt that the plans for Roundham that had been drawn up were inadequate. As he had got the backing of the Parish Council and he had put this proposal through on the small improvement scheme he did not want to let this opportunity to do something for Roundham slip away. However, Mr J Dyke was not happy with the proposals and after talking to colleagues at Somerset County Council he has obtained a meeting at County Hall for either Tuesday or Thursday next week. He would like perhaps two Parish Councillors to accompany him to the meeting. Mr J Dyke stated that some things he had thought about was a Vehicle Activated Device and perhaps a different coloured service on the road to make drivers aware they were entering a different speed zone. The current proposals were also fairly dismissive of any traffic calming measures in Roundham so that needed to be explored as well. Mr B Carter (Parish Councillor) felt that they needed two Vehicle Activated Devices in Roundham together with some form of chicane system through the village to slow the traffic down, the footpath at the back of the houses was a non- started as far as Mr B Carter was concerned. Mr B Carter talked about past schemes but the Chairman and Mr D Yeomans pointed out that we had to look at what was wanted now not what had happened in the past. Mr J Dyke then asked Mr B Carter if he would like to accompany him to County Hall but pointed out to Mr B Carter that any proposals need to be realistic and Mr B Carter needs to be conciliatory as well. It was agreed that Mr J Dyke and Mr B Carter would attend a meeting at County Hall on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 at 1pm. The Chairman reminded Mr B Carter again that he was acting as a representative of the West Crewkerne Parish Council and not as an individual. Mr H Ploszek (member of the public) asked whether the speed limit through Roundham could be dropped down to 20mph and signage depicting elderly people erected. Mr J Dyke stated that the Police would not entertain dropping the speed limit on a major road unless there was some traffic calming measures in place. The Chairman thank Mr J Dyke for getting the scheme this far. Mr Alcock asked the question whether before the meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March the Parish Council needed to approach Coombe Farm as to whether they would allow a permissive footpath on their land. Mr B Carter felt that they would not because of incidents previously. Mr J Dyke did not think a footpath would be feasible and as it is a permissive footpath it would rely solely on the goodwill and discretion of Coombe Farm. Mr F Freeman (Parish Councillor) also stated that he felt the Police would object under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act.

8. Reports from Councillors, including District and County Councillors. The Chairman asked Mr F Freeman if he had anything to report. He stated that there is a footbridge that has a couple of rotten boards that he will report to the appropriate authority to repair. Mrs C Broom, Mr B Carter, Mr D Yeomans and Mrs J Borland (Chairman) had nothing to report. Mrs S Osborne (South Somerset District Councillor) was invited by the Chairman to give her report. Mrs S Osborne stated that the District Council precept is up and

they also have to at present levy for the Somerset Rivers authority. Mrs S Osborne stated that on Thursday they were being given a presentation by the Boundaries Commission as it was Somerset's turn to have their boundaries and wards reviewed. There will be Public and Parishes consultation but she will know more of the timetable and timescale after Thursday presentation. The one thing that concerns Mrs S Osborne personally is that at present Somerset has a good spread of rural wards and she does not want these to be chopped up and merged with urban wards as then you would be in danger of losing the rural voice. The South Somerset District Council is also introducing a series of Civil Penalties for failure to notify the District Council of changes in circumstances that result in more monies becoming due to the Council. There is going to be an amnesty period up to the 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017 but anything after that date could result in Civil Penalties being charged. The Revenue Support grant will disappear by 2020 and the business rates have been revalued. Mrs S Osborne has seen some business rates that have significantly increased and there could be some appeals coming in on these. Mrs S Osborne had nothing further to report.

The Chairman then asked Mr J Dyke if he had anything to report. Mr J Dyke stated that Somerset County Council had their boundaries changed four years ago and it is a long drawn out process but they do listen to what Councils have to say about the proposed changes. Mr J Dyke also stated that Somerset County Council also had their budget meeting three weeks ago and their precept has gone up by 1.99% plus the 2% for adult care plus the rivers authority levy. The percentage of people over 60 years of age retiring to Somerset is set to rise dramatically over the next few years which although nice for the County in terms of spending power brings its own set of problems. The other item to report on is that Somerset County Council is looking to privatise the Learning Disabilities Centres. This has caused great concern amongst persons who have people at these centres citing disruption to their learning and unsettling them with new ways of teaching them or even new people being brought in. The matter is also causing great concern to staff working at these centres as their working terms and conditions may also be lowered. Mr J Dyke stated that was all he had to report at present.

## 9. Finance

### A) To pay:-

1. Clerk Salary of £74.23 + £80.88 for printer inks = £155.11 Cheque no.265
2. HMRC of £18.40 Cheque no.264

The above cheques were agreed for payment by the Parish Councillors

### B) Update on the payment of tax on the Clerk's salary to HMRC.

The Clerk gave an update on the above. She had phoned HMRC stating that she had received notification to pay the tax over on the Clerk's Salary electronically. This was not a convenient way for the Parish Council to pay the tax over and they would prefer to continue paying by payslip and cheque. The Cheque was still an acceptable method of payment and we could continue to pay this way.

C) West Crewkerne Parish precept for 2017/18 was sent off to South Somerset District Council by the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017 and constituted a 2p rise. The Chairman stated she had received her Council Tax bill today for 2017/18 and West Crewkerne Parish Council increase was nil. Mrs S Osborne stated that the

average rise for Parish Councils was about 9% but in monetary terms this is a very modest rise as so many of them have modest budgets.

10. Correspondence

The following memos have been sent to all parish councillors;

Growing a Rural Community for South Somerset.

West Dorset Weymouth and Portland local Plan.

Somerset Waste Partnership recycling for January and February

Footpath Closure

The Repair shop

Rural Crime

In addition to the above two memos had been sent to Councillors today which was the Speed Indicator Device for West Crewkerne and a survey on the Housing White Paper. The Chairman stated that on the Speed Indicator Device report for Clapton shows the 85% speed as 37mph and this is 1mph above the intervention speed. The figure for Roundham was 53 mph which is 6mph above the intervention speed. The Chairman asked the Councillors if they wanted the Clerk to complete the survey on the Housing White Paper and how to fix our broken housing market. The Clerk stated that she felt that the survey would be better completed by a Councillor as she did not live in the area and therefore did not know the needs of the Parish. The Chairman agreed to complete. Mr D Yeomans stated that the memo on "Growing a Rural Community for South Somerset" was asking a member of the Parish Council to complete a questionnaire online. The Chairman asked Mr F Freeman if he would like to complete the on-line questionnaire. Mr F Freeman agreed to complete the questionnaire,

11. To confirm that the next meeting that will be held at Clapton & Wayford Village Hall at 7.00pm on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017 will be the Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Parish Council Meeting.

The Chairman confirmed that the Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Parish Council meeting will take place on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at the Clapton & Wayford Village Hall at 7pm.

Meeting finished at 8.15pm.

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Chairman