

BAWDRIP PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of Bawdrup Parish Council was held in the Parish Hall, Eastside Lane, Bawdrup on Tuesday, 7th November 2023 at 7.30pm.

Present: Parish Councillors: Mr R Culverhouse (Chairman), Mr P Clarke (Vice Chairman), Mrs K Bradley, Mr E Crane and Mr D Rayner; **Ward Somerset Councillors** Mr A Dingwall and Mr D Rogrigues; **Clerk**, Graham Jarvis together with seven members of the public and a cat.

The Chairman introduced Jackie Curtis the Parish Path Liaison Officer and Jo Stanhope-White, the accredited Strimmer user.

A presentation by Jackie and Jo followed which was illustrated by photographs showing the labyrinth of footpaths and Public Rights of Way in the Parish. They both had started their roles in May and so far had probably explored only about half of the footpaths/PROW. Appreciation was expressed to Glyn Edwards the Ward Footpaths Officer from Somerset Council who had arranged for considerable investment in the Parish including two new bridges and the cutting back of some overgrown areas. Unfortunately, funding from Somerset Council had recently been severely curtailed with any job over £100 required prior approval. Mrs Earnshaw had provided publicity and support. Details were given of popular path “loops” used by walkers and some other circular routes which with some work could be restored. Five action points were given which, with the active support of the Parish Council, could encourage greater use of footpaths.

Jackie and Jo were thanked by the Chairman for the presentation and for the improvements achieved in the short period since they volunteered for their roles. The Council would consider the action points at the next meeting.

Public Speaking Time: No topics raised.

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- 64. Apologies for Absence, Disclosures of Interest and Dispensations.**
Mr Crane disclosed a pecuniary interest (Business relationship with the applicant) in respect of planning application 04/23/00009. Mr Culverhouse held a dispensation from the Code of Conduct for matters associated with the village website.
- 65. Minutes of Previous Meeting.** The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd October 2023 were presented, approved and signed as a complete and correct record.
- 66. Matters Arising:**
 - a) 56a - Climate Change Local Initiatives** – The Chairman reported that Mrs Earnshaw had mentioned that discussions were continuing with a local landowner for tree planting.
 - b) 56b – Outdoor Gym Equipment Project** – Mr Clarke reported that all the equipment had been installed since the last meeting and was now being used. The Chairman thanked Mr Clarke for his involvement in bringing the project to fruition and mentioned that many favourable comments had been made about

the facility. The Clerk confirmed that the equipment had been added to Council's insurance Policy Schedule.

67. Defibrillator.

The Chairman reported that the defibrillator owned by the Council was now over 10 years old and was considered due for replacement. At present the Council were responsible for maintenance of the unit including replacement battery and pads. Mrs Burfitt who kindly checks the unit regularly had been in contact with the South Western Ambulance Service who could loan a new defibrillator together with a support package for £1,800 + VAT. The cost would include an external cabinet, batteries, pads and training and last for four years. The requirement on the Council would be to arrange for someone to check weekly that the device is operational and notify the provider once a month that this had been done. After a discussion there was agreement that a new unit be obtained from South Western Ambulance Service on the terms summarised above. (Several other Parish Councils had similar arrangements). An appropriate provision would be made when preparing the budget which would be considered at the January meeting.

68. Somerset Councillors' Reports.

Mr Dingwall and Mr D Rogrigues gave a joint report. The main issue mentioned was the financial state of Somerset Council. In the first half of the financial year there was an overspend of £25.3 million and a projected funding gap for next year of £100 million. There was a distinct possibility that a Section 114 Notice (blocking all non-essential spending) being issued before the end of the financial year. Difficult decisions on service levels would need to be taken. The Councillors then answered questions.

(Mr Culverhouse briefly left the room and Mr Clarke proceeded to Chair the meeting).

69. Planning Matters.

a) Application 04/23/00009

Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to a flexible use within commercial (Class B8 storage and distribution).
(Amended description)

Location: Agricultural Building, Lower Stocklands, Bath Road, Knowle, Bawdrip.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Larder.

After a discussion it was resolved that the Parish Council had no comment as to whether prior approval was required. However, it was requested that the Case Officer when determining the application should take into consideration any impact on the flood plain, potential pollution issues and any consequent traffic generation.

(Mr Culverhouse returned to the room during the discussion; at Mr Culverhouse's request Mr Clarke chaired the remainder of the meeting. Mr Crane having earlier disclosed an interest was absent from the room whilst the above item was discussed and returned to the room for the rest of the meeting).

**b) Notification of decisions by Local Planning Authority recorded: -
04/23/00007 – 308 Bath Road, Bawdrip – Approved (Delegated Authority).**

70. Financial Matters.

a) Payment of Creditors.

The following payments were approved: -

- i) Bawdrip PCC – Room Hire - £22.50 – Cheque No. 720.
- ii) Somerset Association of Local Councils Ltd – Training Courses - £50.00 – Cheque No. 721.
- iii) Mr R Culverhouse – Reimbursement Poppy Wreath for Remembrance Service – £50.00 – Cheque No. 722. (*Expenditure incurred under the provision of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972*).
- iv) Hugh Harris Ltd T/A Fresh-Air Fitness – Gym Equipment (Final Payment) - £5,645.78 (£4,704.82 + £940.96 VAT) – Cheque No.723.
- v) Citizens Advice Somerset – Grant - £100.00 – Cheque No.724.

b) Bank Reconciliation Statement

The Clerk presented a bank reconciliation statement as at 30th September 2023 together with supporting papers. These were examined by members and agreed as correct.

71. Roads and Footpaths.

a) Former Railway Bridge.

Pursuant of Minute 60d – 3rd October 2023; Mr Rayner referred to a quotation obtained for vegetation clearance on the bridge and abutments, spraying with a follow-up spray for regrowth in the spring. After a detailed discussion it was noted that the annual Inspection Report (commissioned by Highways England and circulated prior to the October meeting) listed some suggested maintenance works. The Council wish to know if or when the suggested work would be undertaken and when the next Detailed Inspection of the bridge was scheduled – the most recent was prepared in 2017. The Clerk to contact Highways England.

b) Bradney Lane

It was reported that recent extensive rainfall and the movement of heavy vehicles had caused further deterioration to the verge and ditches resulting in flooding. The Clerk reported that the Highway Authority had been notified following concerns expressed at the October meeting. An approach would be made to the Somerset Rivers Authority to ask if the prospect of a flood alleviation scheme could be investigated.

c) Impeded Watercourse.

A resident had brought to the Council's attention that the flow of the watercourse opposite the railway bridge (lower side) was impeded by debris/silt causing flooding in Church Road. It was agreed that photographs of the problem would be supplied to the Clerk who would then contact the Highway Authority.

d) Christmas Tree.

It was reported that as usual the Community Café would be sponsoring the Christmas Tree on the Village Green this year. The light-up ceremony was scheduled for 16th December. It was agreed that the situation be noted.

72. Meeting Arrangements for 2024.

Members agreed that they wished for Parish Council meetings to continue to be held in the Parish Hall on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 7.30 pm. The

exceptions for 2024 would be for a recess in August and for the January meeting to take place on the second Tuesday. The Clerk was asked to check with the Bookings Secretary that the preferred dates were available.

73. Correspondence.

The Clerk reported that since the previous meeting the following items had been circulated to members by email: -

a) Somerset Council: -

- i) Notice of the publication for comment on the Puriton Neighbourhood Plan.
- ii) Avalon and Polden Local Community Network – Minutes of the meeting held 9th October.

b) Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service – Details of Consultation.

c) Environment Agency – Various updates on flooding on the Somerset Moors and Levels (Storm Ciaran).

d) Somerset Association of Local Councils:-

- i) Notice of AGM on 2nd December at Somerton.
- ii) Invitation (Via CPRE) to roofing revolution event on 24th November at Stoke St Gregory. .

e) Publications available for viewing:

- i) Clerks & Councils Direct – November Edition.
- ii) CPRE Somerset - Autumn newsletter and details of AGM.

74. Topics for future Meetings: Access gate to gym equipment area.
Discuss action proposals on footpaths, PROW etc mentioned during presentation.

75. Date of next Meeting – Tuesday, 5th December 2023 at 7.30 pm.

Meeting Closed 9.42 pm.

Chairman