

# The Charltons Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Rebecca Carter, Portman House, North Barrow, Somerset, BA22 7LZ

Tel: 01963 240226

e-mail: [charltonsclerk@outlook.com](mailto:charltonsclerk@outlook.com)

<http://www.thecharltons.org.uk>

---

“Draft” Minutes of Parish Council Meeting  
held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 at 7.30pm in  
The Reading Room, Charlton Mackrell

## **Councillors Present:**

Tamzin Elliott (Acting Chairman)

Dennis Elliott

Alan Crawley

Peter Moulding

In Attendance: C.Cllr Dean Ruddle, D.Cllr Charlie Hull, four representatives from Grove Property, one member of the public and the Clerk.

## **Public Session**

The Chairman advised that residents would be invited to speak and ask questions following the presentation by Grove Property. There were no other comments.

## **Presentation by Grove Property – Development to the rear of the Fox and Hounds**

The following questions were presented to Grove prior to the meeting and were answered as follows:

1. How do you intend to secure the site boundary between April Cottage and Hawthorne Cottage?  
A. We are in final stage of preparing a landscape strategy, which will inform the design of the means of enclosure plan to be approved by SSDC. We will continue to work closely and collaboratively with the owners of both properties, with whom we have maintained communication to date.
2. How will you incorporate the culvert which runs diagonally across the site into the plans?  
A. We are working closely with the Lead Local Flood Authority and Wessex Water to finalise our drainage strategy. It is unlikely that the culvert will form part of the new SuDS strategy, however we are in the final stages of design an acceptable technical solution.
3. What is the purpose of the proposed footpath to the south of the site and where will it go to?  
A. This is for maintenance access to the ditch/watercourse that runs along the southern boundary.
4. What are the timescales for the proposed improvements to the Fox and Hounds?  
A. Upon planning determination but at a time which causes the least disruption to the operation of the Fox & Hounds.
5. Where will the access be to maintain the Spinney?  
A. The Spinney will be accessed from within the application site.
6. Bearing in mind the traffic disruption caused to the residents by the site opposite the Fox what are your plans for onsite parking and traffic management for the 35 houses you are proposing?  
A. The project team is very much aware of this issue. We will work closely with residents to ensure we cause minimal disruption. We will also be submitting a Construction Management Plan for approval by SSDC. It is our intention to accommodate all vehicles on site and keep deliveries outside of school times/rush hour.
7. Will the roads be adopted by SCC?  
A. We have designed our road layout to fully adoptable standards so that they can be adopted.
8. What are the long-term plans for the maintenance of the proposed Spinney and Pond?

A. It is our intention to form a management company that would be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the spinney and the pond.

9. Could you explain in more detail your proposals for low level lighting?

A. We will use low-level LED bollards which will be sensitive to the surrounding ecological habitat and will be low energy. An external lighting strategy will be submitted to SSDC for approval.

Grove Property presented the revised plan to councillors and residents on the proposed development of **35** houses to the rear of the Fox and Hounds, a summary of which follows:

The feedback from public consultation indicated that there is a need for a variety of different sized homes in the village, especially 3-bed homes. In order to deliver smaller homes to cater for the local market, Grove's proposal is to increase the number of dwellings from the approved 24 to 35 homes. These would include a mix of 5 x 2 bed, 12 x 3 bed, 10 x 4 bed and 8 x 5 bed homes. They would also be working with South Somerset District Council (SSDC) to deliver 13 new starter/'affordable' homes in the village, of which five would be 2 bed homes and eight are 3 bed homes. The 2 homes to the south of Hawthorn Cottage and adjacent to the houses on Neville Close have been designed as bungalows to limit the impact on the neighbouring properties and to cater for a high demand from local downsizers. The houses allocated for offer to locals at a discounted price i.e. 20%, would be via a Section 106 housing agreement for local people, in perpetuity, via a banded 'Homefinder' scheme, with local residents being in the top 'gold' band.

Grove own the Fox and Hounds pub and would invest in it so that it could continue to meet the needs of the village. They did not anticipate going down the 'gastro route'. They hoped the pub could become the hub of the village and confirmed that it would not be sold. The plans to enhance the pub include the addition of two oak frame and glass extensions, which would not detract from the original building; the skittle alley would remain. The beer garden would not be shrunk and the car park not built on. There followed discussions on the potential for a shop on site in the event Charlton Adam Post Office and Stores closed due to retirement of the current owners. Grove would welcome the addition of a shop, which would enhance the pub becoming the hub of the parish.

Following questions from residents and councillors, Grove stated that the gardens for the proposed 35 dwellings would be commensurate to the size of each house. The plans include an ecological habitat around the perimeter of the site with 6-10m 'no go zones', which would be protected by post and rail fencing, providing wildlife connectivity as part of the gardens. There would also be a spinney on the area of land to the rear of the pub which would be for the benefit of local residents.

Grove stated that during development of the site trucks and delivery vehicles would be taken off the road. The 'spine road' on the site would be built to a Highways adoptable standard. A management company would be put in place to manage the rest of the site that would not be council maintained. There would be more than the minimum number of parking spaces on site and the number of visitor spaces would be exceeded as there would be 8 visitor spaces in the laybys off the spine road, which would also aid deliveries. The proposed development was a 'policy compliant scheme'.

The site plan includes low-level lighting, however, councillors and residents strongly oppose any lighting on site and asked for this to be removed as the lack of artificial light encourages the wild life that has always been a feature of these fields. Grove agreed to discuss removing low level lighting from the scheme with SSDC.

In response to the questions above, forwarded by the PC to Grove prior to the meeting, Grove responded that they were installing their own system to dispose of water from the site and the

culvert was not required. However, Cllr Moulding advised that the culvert is part of the highways system that removes surplus rainwater flowing from the top of Broadway Road running into the field and also to minimise the size of the pool of water that regularly accumulates on the road adjacent to the old entrance to the field.

Following a lengthy discussion, Councillors and residents main concern continues to be traffic generation, which would be exacerbated by the increase in the number of dwellings from 24 to 35. Grove agreed to hold an extra drop in session for those residents unable to attend the meeting and to allow more time to address the outstanding questions prior to submitting the revised plans.

### **Reports from County and District Councillors**

District and County Councillors may give short verbal reports on matters affecting the Parish.

D.Cllr Hull reported on the Somerset Bus Partnership, whereby they are looking into providing transport from the outlying rural areas into towns such as Castle Cary in the evening and at weekends.

D.Cllr Hull provided an update on the forthcoming Unitary Authority (UA). He did not know which ward The Charltons would belong to, possibly Somerton. There was only a 25% turnout for the poll; more residents needed to be encouraged to vote.

C.Cllr Ruddle reported further on the UA. He was uncertain whether the local council elections would be delayed or not. It was more than likely that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities would bring the elections forward to 2022 from 2023 to align with the UA elections. Councillors would then serve an initial five year term, followed by a return to every four years. It was proposed that the total number of councillors would be reduced to 85 from 100, whereas it was preferential to retain 110 councillors to allow 2 councillors for every division. The final proposal would not go through Parliament until the end of February 2022.

### **21/81. Apologies for Absence and to consider the reasons given**

Council to receive apologies for absence and, if appropriate, to resolve to approve the reasons given.

**RESOLVED:** Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs Nick Blackledge (Chairman) and Bob Adams. C.Cllr Tony Capozzoli also tendered his apologies.

### **21/82. Declarations of Interest**

Members to declare any interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Local Authority (NALC Model Code of Conduct 2012) adopted July 2012. (NB this does not preclude any later declarations).

**RESOLVED:** None received.

### **21/83. Minutes.**

To approve the Minutes of the PC Meeting held on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

**RESOLVED:** The minutes were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### **21/84. Parish Council Vacancies.**

To consider applications received and conduct vote to fill two casual vacancies on the Parish Council by co-option.

The Clerk reported that despite two expressions of interest, no applications had been received.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk would continue to advertise the vacancies.

### **21/85. Planning.**

a. To consider the following planning applications (PA):

- i. **PA 21/02299/HOU.** Loft conversion with installation of side facing first floor window at 4 Abbey Barns, Top Road, Charlton Adam.

Councillors had spoken to residents in the vicinity who had no issues with the proposal. The only comments the PC wish to make are that as Abbey Barns are in the Conservation Area, the proposed materials to be used for the windows would vary from other properties in the vicinity, although dark grey PVC is preferable to dark stained softwood and woodgrain effect PVC.

**RESOLVED:** The PC agreed unanimously to recommend that the application be **APPROVED** with the caveat that the Conservation Officer approves the materials to be used.

ii. **PA 21/02632/FUL.** Creation of five wildlife ponds to improve biodiversity on the landholding and surrounding landscape at Lytes Cary Manor, Lytes Cary, Kingsdon.

It was agreed that none of the proposed ponds are within the immediate vicinity of any buildings and will not be visible from neighbouring properties. Fencing will be installed around the ponds to prevent public entry and will not pose a risk to pedestrians or horse riders using bridleways L 6/27 and L 6/28.

The proposal will have no deleterious effect on the Grade 1 listed Manor House and gardens and will only effect a small area of poor, wet agricultural land where the tree ponds are proposed.

**RESOLVED:** The PC agreed unanimously to recommend that the application be **APPROVED**.

b. South Somerset District Council (SSDC) Decisions:

i. **PA 21/01141/HOU.** Replacement windows and doors to a single storey dwelling in a conservation area at Fox Hollow Barn, West Charlton, Charlton Mackrell – **APPROVED**.

## 21/86. Finance.

a. **Balance of the Council's Bank Account and Bank Reconciliation.**

To report on the Council's Bank Account.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk previously circulated the PC Accounts which were presented and subsequently approved.

b. **Accounts for payment.**

To review and approve a schedule of items of expenditure (incl. VAT):

PKF Littlejohn External Auditor Fees	£240.00
Reading Room Hire 22 Jun & 20 Jul 21	£36.00
SALC – Chairman Training 24 Jun 21	£30.00

**RESOLVED:** All items of expenditure approved.

c. **Notice of Conclusion of Audit.**

External Auditor Report 2020/21.

**RESOLVED:** The External Auditor reported that the information submitted was 'in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met'. The Clerk reported that she had published the External Auditor Report and the Notice of Conclusion of Audit on the parish website.

## 21/87. Speed Indicator Devices

To consider purchasing a solar Evolis Radar Speed sign for use at separate locations in the parish at a cost of £2,342.84 and to apply for a grant for up to 50% of the cost.

**RESOLVED:** The PC agreed unanimously to approve expenditure of up to £1,500 towards the purchase of a mobile SID and relevant chapter 8 training using funds earmarked for speed mitigation, if funding could be matched by SSDC's Community Grant (total approx. cost of £3,000).

**21/88. Future Parish Council Elections**

To discuss Somerset County Council (SCC) and ‘One Somerset’s’ request for parish and town council’s views on whether the 2023 town and parish council elections should be moved forward to 2022 to remain in sync with principal authority elections going forward.

Councillors agreed that any potential election costs arising should be funded from the professed cost savings made by forming a UA, not by Town and Parish Councils as they did not initiate the proposal or the timing to form a UA, which are the root causes of the next ordinary elections being out of sync with principal authority elections going forward.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk agreed to submit the PC’s comments to Mr J Robinson, CEO Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) who had been asked to seek views on behalf of SCC and the ‘One Somerset’ Team.

**21/89. The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Beacons – 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022**

To consider organising a community event and the provision/purchase of a beacon.

**RESOLVED:** Nothing further to report.

**21/90. Items for Report and Future Business.**

Please notify items to the Clerk at least 24hrs before the meeting.

- a. The Clerk reported that the draft website was available for review by councillors and should ‘Go Live’ shortly.

**Next meeting:** Ordinary Meeting to be held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021, 7.30pm in The Reading Room, Hillway, Charlton Mackrell.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed: ..... Dated: .....