

## PITMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Parish Council Meeting held at Angersleigh Village Room on Thursday 21st October 2021 at 1900 (7PM).

### **Present**

Cllr Burnett (Chair), Whatmore, Lee and Neale.

Mr. R Tyzack (Clerk to the Parish Council).

Members of public 0

Planning Officer Mike Hicks.

Cllr Thorne

Cllr Wakefield.

Cllr Johnson sent apologies.

### **1. Apologies**

Cllr Chapman, Garland, (unwell), Threlfall (other meeting), all accepted.

### **2. Declarations**

None

### **3. Delegated planning applications to be RESOLVED**

- **30/21/0043** erection of first floor extension over garage. Conversion of garage into ancillary accommodation, erection of detached garage with room over and formation of associated driveway, erection of carport to side of garage, rendering of garage side wall, changing of roof tiles to plain clay tiles and relocation of oil tank at Amberley House Blagdon Hill.

Panning Officer Mike Hicks from SWAT presented the application.

RESOLVED the application be approved.

REASON for granting permission. The proposed alterations and extension form 3 separate elements. The first-floor extension projects out towards the neighbour but looks out over existing flat roofed areas and is not considered to have any adverse amenity impact.

The design is subservient and is considered to comply with policy D5 of the Local Plan.

The car port runs parallel with the side of the existing garage and while the upper part will be visible to the neighbour it runs along the neighbour's drive and only marginally projects above the boundary fence. It is not considered to adversely impact on neighbour's amenity. The third element is a new garage set to the rear and this has been amended considering the neighbour's concern to remove the first-floor room and reduce the height to less than 3.95m. While this will still have an impact on the neighbour it is not considered to be overbearing or result in such light loss that would cause a significant level of amenity impact to warrant refusal. If moved just over a metre further from the boundary it would be permitted development on its own. The other elements referred to in the description by the applicant would not need permission, i.e., the moving of the oil tank and change in tiles. While there are still objections to the garage element of the scheme the impact on this on neighbouring amenity is an acceptable one and the application is recommended for approval. In preparing this

report the planning officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 199

- **30/21/0045** erection of outbuilding in replacement of former demolished garage and summer house at 2 Lodge Cottages Pitminster.  
Planning Officer Mike Hicks from SWAT presented the application.  
RESOLVED the application be approved.  
REASON for granting permission. The determining factors for consideration are the affects on the amenity of neighbour's, the appearance of the development and the impact on the street scene. The previous application 30/21/033/LP sought a certificate of proposed development, due to the main access to the property is on the west elevation the proposed outbuilding would be forward of the principal elevation of the property and therefore required planning permission, hence this application. The proposed outbuilding would be single storey and would be subservient in scale to the main dwelling house that screens the building from the east and mature hedges screen the property to the west. The proposed use of materials is acceptable, and samples have been submitted which will not adversely affect the character or visual impact of the dwelling with no impact upon the street scene. As the building is forward of the principal elevation of the property it is recommended that it be controlled to remain ancillary to the main dwelling house and not be separated off. The proposed outbuilding would be single storey in height and so it would not adversely impact upon the amenity of neighbour property. The proposed development is thus in accordance with policies DM1 and DM2 of the Taunton Deane Core Strategy and policy D6 of the Taunton Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (2016). It is recommended for conditional approval. In preparing this report the planning officer has considered fully the implications and requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

#### **4. Planning applications for OBSERVATION**

Notification to fell one Apple tree and to carry out management works to one Whitebeam one Cherry one Golden Rain tree and one Sweet Gum tree within Pitminster Conservation Area at Sunnysbank's Pitminster. RESOLVED No further observations.

#### **5. Matters arising**

None.

#### **6. Minutes**

Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021 at 1900, already distributed were approved and signed.

#### **7. To discuss and Resolve the Emergency Response Email.**

As Cllr Chapman was absent (unwell) it was proposed to add this item to next Agenda.

#### **8. Election of new Councillor- Update**

Notices had been posted on noticeboards; one prospective member of the parish had contacted the Clerk. SWAT will advise Clerk when Co Option can take place.

#### **9. To receive the latest CiL figures**

Clerk reported a cheque to the value of £4357.34 had been received in the council bank

account. The total CiL money available is 16300.18.

#### **10. Website – update**

Clerk reported the website is progressing well. The structure is complete. Clerk is now transferring the Agenda and Minutes and all text including Financial Information to the new site. It will take a while.

#### **11. To receive AOR Reports**

Cllr Whatmore reported an email had been received from Ian Gouge. He set out what he proposed for the Speed Watch.

He went on to report that Cllr Threlfall had ended his AOR of setting up Broadband in the Angersleigh area. It was too difficult/ impossible.

Cllr Whatmore read a letter from Rev Jim Fallon on his proposals for the forming of a youth club for the parish. He had received offers of help from members of the parish. Jim in his letter wanted the support of the council. It was Resolved the Council will support Rev Fallon, with his proposal to form a Youth Club. Cllr Burnett stated that she did not wish for any further involvement.

Clerk reported Cllr Threlfall had stated he is very busy with his business and it may get to the point that he will not be able to attend a reasonable number of meetings. He may have to resign from council.

Cllr Neale reported on the proposal of stone being placed at the muddy point of the footpath between his land and the playing fields. He explained that the risk of members of public falling and causing an injury was a worry. He will revisit the area and make a proposal.

Cllr Lee reported on Connecting the Culm.

#### **12. Agenda items next meeting**

- List for AOR
- CiL
- Emergency Response

#### **13. Bank balance**

Clerk reported the balance of £26062.87 as indicated by the Bank Statement which was signed by the Chair.

#### **14. Resolve payments**

RESOLVED to pay the invoices as written in the Agenda. Checks signed by Cllr Burnett and Whatmore.

#### **15. Close meeting**

There being no further business the meeting closed in 2025

**Signed**

**Date** Thursday 25th November 2021

Cllr Wakefield and Thorne had circulated reports prior to meeting. Attached below:

I (Sarah) must apologise for missing some of your last few meetings due to an embarrassing run of holidays some delayed from last year due to Covid. I would like to mention the following matters to you on behalf of Cllr Dawn Johnson and myself:

1. We have obtained an apology from the Orchard Grove developers about the numbers of HGV lorries passing through Trull village and Blagdon Hill from their site. Now that they are alerted and we have highlighted that we are aware of the issue we hope things will be managed better by the developers and their subcontractors. However, residents are our eyes and ears over this. Photos dates and times are invaluable should we have to chase this again. As you know, we have also been chasing SCC to take action about the amount of lorries coming through Blagdon Hill to access the Fulwood Farm bund development. I believe that these have dropped down now (they seemed to be at a peak during late August and early September and to be taking advantage of the holiday period and lack of any enforcement activity at SCC. I believe that they have been warned that they have been exceeding the daily estimated visits (7 - which makes 14 journeys there and back) by up to 500% on some days. Again, if you or residents you know live on the Honiton Road and are bothered by this please let us have details of what you see and when. There have been a lot of tipper trucks carrying soil in and out of Trull coming up to Fullwood Farm too - we don't know where this soil is coming from yet but are continuing to monitor it.
2. Dawn and I are continuing to liaise with the planning department over the 2000 home Orchard Grove development outside Comeytrove and Trull. We have and will continue to protest about the plan to use an existing access off Comeytrove Lane as a drive to the parking spaces for some flats on the development. This contravenes the spirit of the agreement in the outline permission that there would be no new accesses to the development except from the A38 and eventually the Trull Road. Councillors may also be interested to note that planning permission to demolish 2 large sections of the wall opposite the Trull shop (and associated vegetation and trees) which (wall) runs up to the entrance to Gatchell Oaks was granted in 2019 - this was needed as the wall is in a conservation area. The permission runs for three years and expires next August. After representations the developers have agreed to implement the permission soon by demolishing only an 18m part opposite Gatchell Green but to leave the rest of the demolition and tree removal until the new roundabout and road layout is being built which could be as long as 5 years away. When the work is carried out people will want to know how much is being done. Some maps will be placed outside the Trull shop and Trull Community Centre too.
3. At Full Council on 5 October the full plans for ending homelessness and rough sleeping in the district by 2027 were adopted including the necessary budget. This includes the closure of Canonsgrove as a temporary shelter by the end of March 2023.

Other places closer to or within Taunton town centre are now being considered and appraised. Last night at a special meeting of Full Council we agreed to set up a town council for Taunton after first consulting with the surrounding parishes. There is a sense that Taunton now includes some of the new developments which are situated in existing parishes but which look and feel part of Taunton town as they are effectively joined to it. In due course a boundary review will be necessary in any event.

4. A358 upgrade Taunton to Ilminster. After many online meetings with feedback from affected parishes, which I have attended and participated in, there is now a general consultation period which has started lasting until 22 November. Members of the public are invited to send in their views to [www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A358-taunton-to-southfields](http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/A358-taunton-to-southfields) and/or to attend one of three events the closest of which is at the Holiday Inn on 3 November from 11am-6pm (as the one at the Racecourse was on Tuesday this week).
5. On 4 November at Trull Community Centre from 6-8pm SWT's Climate Change Portfolio Holder Cllr Dixie Darch will be running a workshop with participation about Climate Literacy Somerset. This will include amongst other things ideas about what we can all do to reduce our carbon footprint. All are welcome but you are asked to email if you want to attend as numbers will be limited by the size of the room there. I will provide details but in the meantime please let either Dawn or me know.
6. We hope all householders will have received or will soon receive their Coming Soon leaflet about the start of the Recycle More waste collections. This leaflet should be kept as it includes the timetable for collections from 1<sup>st</sup> November. Black bin emptying will move to three weekly (the week day may also change) but recycling and food waste will continue to be weekly as now but will include the new blue bag for plastic as well as some other changes to how the waste is sorted by the householder. Garden waste collection days may also change but will remain fortnightly. We apologise again for the 6 week long disruption to this service due to staffing difficulties and Covid.
7. Cllrs may be been confused and annoyed (as have many residents) by the confusing road signage about diversions around our villages. Dawn has taken this up with SCC as their contractors have made nonsense with the placing of some of the diversion signage. A road closure of part of Comeytrove Lane will take place between 8 November and 31 December with diversions in place. This relates to the pumping station installation works at the Comeytrove end. On another roads issue please accept my personal compliments on the repaired and repainted finger posts (which I believe was carried out by the PC) - they look wonderful and fresh and give a real lift to the area in my view.
8. Finally, I would add that we believe these written Cllr reports (district and county) could and should be attached to your Minutes online (they are in Trull for example). It would be helpful if the

community were able to view them along with the PC minutes - especially as very few residents attend the meetings. By the way the website (when I looked yesterday) does not appear to be up to date with Minutes or meetings since about June.

Thank you

Cllrs Sarah Wakefield and Dawn Johnson

Cllr John Thorne

• **Covid stats** - The infection rate in Somerset continues to see-saw and by the weekend it was falling again to 363.6/100k, after a 20 per cent rise the previous week. Somerset is now higher than the South West's 309.1/100k and slightly below England's 375.1/100k, both of which were rising. However, a figure I saw today for Somerset was 810.9/100k, the highest ever, with Somerset West and Taunton the highest of any district and going off the scale at 939.9/100k. Some of this is attributed to the recent issue of erroneous results being given for tests handled by a laboratory in Wolverhampton. The latest R number range for the South West by the weekend was 0.9-1.1 which is the same as for almost the whole country. Recently. The South West's R range dropped to -0.5 to -0.1, which was the first time I have seen negative rates and meant at that time the number of new infections was shrinking daily by between 1% and 5%. Sixty per cent of cases in Somerset are in 'educational settings', although the numbers are now said to be stabilising, and I understand the Government is looking nationally at revising how schools manage Covid-19 cases. There are 54 schools in the county which have had to introduce extra measures. Somerset continues to have one of the highest vaccination rates in the country with more than 95 per cent of the eligible 18+ population having at least one vaccination while more than 85 per cent have been double jabbed. About 65 per cent of 16-17-year-olds have been vaccinated.

• **Covid vaccinations** - The Taunton Racecourse large vaccination centre was relocated last week to a site at Firepool, in Taunton. It will continue to take walk-ins from the age of 16 and is open seven days a week 8.30-7.30. There were 170,000 vaccinations given at the racecourse site. The Firepool site will continue to operate for bookings and as a walk-in centre along with Boots Pharmacy for first and second doses of both the AstraZeneca and Pfizer vaccines while Taunton Tourist Information Centre offers first and second Pfizer doses. Anybody in a priority group can still book their jab if they have not had it already. More info on vaccination centres is here

<https://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/health/local-services/health-services-during-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccinations-in-somerset>. Mobile vaccination units are continuing to use the racecourse site as a base for the time being.

• **Somerset Coronavirus helpline** -The Coronavirus one-stop helpline number is 0300 790 6275 as I am sure you will be familiar with by now. The service runs from 8 am-6 pm every day of the week.

• **Local Government Reorganisation** - A conference for parish councils was

held earlier in the month at the Junction 24 centre near North Petherton where speakers covered subjects such as Local Community Networks, an update on LGR progression and asset devolution, VCSE opportunities, and lots more. Two representatives from each parish were able to attend. On the most recent list which I have seen, it did not appear that Pitminster signed up to attend. Indeed, disappointingly, the only one of the 11 parishes in our county council division which did sign up was Wellington. I have since learned that invitations to some parishes were missed because the county's contact info for parishes had some 'gaps' in it! The slides which were used at the event can be found here <https://somersectcc.sharepoint.com/sites/SCCPublic/CouncilDemocracy/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FSCCPublic%2FCouncil%20Democracy%2FT%26PCConference7thOctober2021&p=true&originalPath=aHR0cHM6Ly9zb21lcNldGNjLnNoYXJlcG9pbmQuY29tLzpmOi9zLlNDQ1B1YmxpYy9FbU9XeWtlZ0gwSktsaDF6eU5uYnN6Z0JqTV9JMDVlX2pWVnY2bDNLWVdDeDZBP3J0aW1lPVNJREdabWlVmlVn>. A website with comprehensive info on 'the new Somerset council' is here [www.newsomersetcouncil.org.uk](http://www.newsomersetcouncil.org.uk). It looks like the unitary will be what is called a 'continuing authority' which means the county council will continue and absorb the districts, which avoids the need to TUPE staff across to a 'new authority' and to transfer contracts across, which would be more expensive. It is a worrying time for employees of all five councils, and personally it concerns me when I hear the phrase 'compulsory redundancies will be kept to a minimum'. A Local Government Reorganisation Joint Committee has been set up to oversee the implementation plan and development of the new council's constitution and budget. It will also offer collaborative decision-making in areas which could impact on the position of the new council. There are nine members, the five leaders of the existing councils plus four county councillors. They will meet at venues around Somerset and the meetings will be open to the public. Beneath the joint committee is a programme board and a programme steering group both made up of a mix of officers from all five existing councils who will sort out the detailed workstream planning to ensure that when the new council is 'vested' on 1st April 2023 it hits the ground running with all essential services functioning from day one. Children's services and adult social care will be separate from the workstreams because of the nature of these services. The work involved will be intensive enough to require 90 fte staff initially, growing to 180 in the next year. You will be aware of the responses to the SALC consultation on how to align parish council elections with those for the unitary council and the suggestion that the 2023 elections could be brought forward to May 2022. A big majority of responses supported bringing the elections forward, but I was disappointed that fewer than half of the parishes in Somerset responded. I am told we could get an indication at the end of the month or beginning of November as to what may happen when the Secretary of State drafts his Structural Change Order which will be laid before Parliament in the New Year.

- **Democracy** - Councillors are being given advice on personal safety in the wake of the murder of MP Sir David Amess and Avon and Somerset

Police are to hold a workshop with us shortly. You might be surprised at the amount of abuse which local councillors receive, most of it being verbal but some tipping over into threatening behaviour. Sadly, I have actually witnessed it even in this parish! I attribute much of it to the way social media has allowed abusive behaviour to become 'mainstream' and accepted by many in society today - which is why I do not 'do' social media.

- **Rural broadband** - The Blackdown Hills Parish Network has made a written submission to the Public Accounts Committee which will meet on 4<sup>th</sup> November to question Ministers on the progress of the nationwide rollout of superfast broadband. The essence of it is that Somerset and Devon have one of the slowest rollouts in the country because of the failings of Connecting Devon and Somerset and a call to rethink the exclusion of the CDS area from Project Gigabit's £1.2 billion of funding, of which we might have been able to obtain up to £30 million but for CDS. While being apolitical, the BHPN does suggest that some of the failings are due to 'politics' in that they point to the Government, local MPs, and the two county councils all being of the same political Party where tribalism prevents any 'rocking of the boat'. I have to largely agree with them on that point, although you will know that personally I have certainly not been part of any tribalism and have definitely rocked the boat but have not been able to sink it.

- **Crossroad improvements** - I have queried the high-friction surfacing plans for Chillander Cross, the accident data for the crossroads in comparison with others, and the concern about not using 'Stop' signs but as is now increasing common at SCC, I have not even had a reply as yet.

- **A358** - The statutory consultation started last week and runs to 22<sup>nd</sup> November. A dedicated consultation website containing all the plans is available here <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/south-west/a358-taunton-to-southfields>. I attended the consultation event held on Tuesday at Taunton Racecourse and I understand that more than 200 people visited it in total. Another event takes place at Monks Yard, Horton Cross, on Saturday (23rd October) from 11 am to 6 pm, and a third at the Holiday Inn, Taunton, on Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November, from 11 am to 6 pm. Several themed webinars covering different aspects of the project will be held online, details from the website. There will also be webchats, a virtual exhibition, and telephone surgeries where you can arrange a call back from National Highways to talk to you on the phone. Call backs can be requested by emailing [A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk) or calling 0300 183 5000. Anybody who cannot access online material can register to have a paper copy sent to them - one per household - by calling 0300 123 5000.

- **Bus services** - The bus service improvement plan (BSIP) was approved yesterday (Wednesday) and sets out the plans which will be submitted to the Government before the end of the month with a bid for a share of the £3 billion allocated to the national 'Bus Back Better' initiative. Somerset's plans are costed out at £163 million. None of it is rocket science! The plans include making sure larger communities are served more often, providing later buses in key corridors up to 11 pm at night

so people can get home after a night out, extending demand responsive services such as the Slinky Bus, real time info at bus stops, and working towards electrification as soon as possible as part of the carbon net zero target. The BSIP will be available here <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/transport-strategy> once it is published next week.

- **Carbon reduction** - The county is working to make public buildings more energy efficient as part of the plans to become carbon net neutral by 2030 and has been awarded a £4.1 million Government grant to spend alongside its own funds. Work includes installing heat pumps to either replace or supplement existing gas heating systems, double glazing, upgrading insulation, improving ventilation systems, and installing solar panels. County Hall and Taunton Library are two of the properties where work is underway.

- **Recycle More** - The introduction of expanded recycling services in Taunton Deane at the start of November is getting closer. Residents should by now have received the two letters being sent out before the service starts, and the new blue bags will be distributed next week. A comprehensive range of engagement activities by Somerset Waste Partnership has been undertaken, including Facebook Q&A sessions, the last of which is Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November 7 am to 8 am. Despite this, there is likely to be considerable confusion during the initial launch because more than half of Taunton Deane residents will see their collection days change. There will be one-off extra collections for many people on Saturdays 30<sup>th</sup> October and 6<sup>th</sup> November to ensure that nobody goes more than three weeks without a collection.