

Corston Parish Council

Chair: John Bravin

Clerk: Position Vacant
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To: all Corston Parish Councillors
Saltford Ward Councillor Cllr Duncan Hounsell
Corston Parish Council Noticeboard
Council Website

The Corston Parish Council Meeting was held at Corston Village Hall **Wednesday, 22nd November 2023.**

The Chair led on Agenda items unless otherwise stated.

MINUTES

Item & Decision Required	Lead
1. Opening of the meeting including its conduct with public participation JB opened the meeting at 1902.	JB
2. Councillors present including Ward Councillor, apologies and reason for absence Parish councillors in attendance: John Bravin (JB - Chair), Susan Charles (SC), Anthony Birts (AB), John Twist (JT) and Kevin Shepherd (KS). Katharine Evans (KE) and Richard Blows (RB) were not present – see item 5.1. Duncan Hounsell (DH), Saltford Ward Councillor was present (left at c.2005h)	JB <i>pp</i> Clerk
3. Parishioners in attendance JB welcomed all parishioners in attendance: Marion Smith, Pamela Newton, Mark de Kretser, Steve Brockton, Cameron Law, Gareth Dixon, Paul Wynne, James Wynne.	JB <i>pp</i> Clerk
4. Declaration of Councillor's personal interests None declared.	JB <i>pp</i> Clerk
5. Extraordinary item 5.1 Resignation of councillor(s) JB informed the council that he had received resignation letters from Richard Blows and Katharine Evans (vice-chair). Their resignation letters were shown to those present and both referred to the recent deterioration in relations within our community as being a contributing factor to their resignation. The letters are posted on the CPC website (https://corstonpc.org.uk/notices). JB noted that Richard has served for 13 years on the parish council including 3 years as Chair. In the absence of a Parish Clerk he has been managing the council finances and has kindly agreed to support the transition to whoever takes over these duties. JB also noted that during the 4 years that Katharine has been on the council she has been Vice-Chair, established the Corston Wombles litter picking group and the Corston Community Orchard project, which recently won a Britain in Bloom award. He thanked both of them for their time and effort. 5.2 Co-opting of new councillor(s) Following the letter sent to all parishioners (dated 16 th October 2023), JB informed the meeting that there had been two expressions of interest, Gareth Dixon (GD) who has volunteered to take over as Chair and Cameron Law (CL). JB invited both to briefly introduce themselves. Following a discussion without either present, it was unanimously agreed to co-opt both onto the council (KS proposed, JT seconded). It was also agreed that the parish council would pay for them to attend courses run by ALCA covering the duties and responsibilities of being a councillor. 5.3 Reallocation of responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Payment of invoices – RB will continue to do this until the end of 2023 calendar year.	JB <i>pp</i> Clerk

<p>CL agreed to assume these responsibilities with JT's support in arranging handover from RB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating cashbook CL • Preparation of budget – RB had already prepared and shared a draft budget with council. JB will work with GD on this prior to the January meeting. • Coordination of AGAR audit – this may be partly done by a potential bookkeeper (see item 9.2) in conjunction with CL. • Submission of precept request for 2024-2025 – this will be agreed at the January meeting and actioned by the new chair. • Preparation of agenda and minutes – The new chair will prepare agendas; minutes TBC (this would ordinarily be the responsibility of the clerk). • Update of website – JB will continue to fulfil this role. • Miscellaneous actions – JT will continue to monitor planning applications; AB will take over as village hall representative from KE 	
<p>6. Approval of the minutes of the CPC meeting 20.09.2023 The minutes were approved. JT proposed, AB seconded</p>	<p>JB pp Clerk</p>
<p>7. Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere</p> <p>7.1 Bank account transfer to Unity Bank – RB, JB and CL will work on moving this forward.</p> <p>7.2 Security bollard at Recreation Ground entrance (KS) – KS reported that the whereabouts of the security bollard remain unknown. Various options for the future including replacement of the bollard, a metal gate or metal barriers were discussed. KS will update at the next meeting.</p> <p>7.3 Replacement of Hanging Tree (KS) – SC will confirm species of existing tree and look into a suitable replacement tree, including costs.</p> <p>7.4 Official email addresses for councillors – JB to investigate options.</p> <p>7.5 Update Let the Kids Loose (RB) – the posting remains on the website, JB to confirm with RB if contact has been made recently.</p> <p>7.6 Valley Field masterplan (RB) – JB confirmed that parishioner Kate Measures is still willing help coordinate a parish-wide consultation on the future of the area. James Wynne expressed frustration that he and his father have felt unsupported in managing the area since it was publicised online. It was emphasised by several councillors that any discussion about its future needs to involve Paul and James. It was agreed that JT and AB would work with Kate Measures and would involve all interested parishioners.</p> <p>7.7 Cherry tree replacement in Meadlands (SC)</p> <p>7.8 Ash dieback tree work (KS) – work is ongoing and progressing slowly.</p> <p>7.9 CPC response to A4 corridor transport plan (KE) – a response on behalf of the parish council has been submitted by KE.</p> <p>7.10 Draft a formal request to PROW team regarding footpath maintenance (KE) – the current status of the footpaths needs to be checked, then the matter can be taken forwards by another councillor now that KE has resigned.</p>	<p>JB pp Clerk</p>
<p>8. Extraordinary item</p> <p>8.1 Resignation of Chair JB offered his resignation as Chair for reasons previously documented.</p> <p>8.2 Election of new Chair including brief introductory statement GD confirmed his offer to take on the position of Chair and was elected unanimously (AB proposed, KS seconded). JB offered to continue charring the current meeting and this offer was accepted.</p> <p>8.3 Election of new Vice-Chair JB made clear that he did not want to take on the role as Vice-Chair. The position remains vacant.</p>	<p>JB pp Clerk</p>

<p>9. Extraordinary item</p> <p>9.1 Appointment of Clerk JB reported that there has been no interest since the last meeting.</p> <p>9.2 Appointment of bookkeeper JB reported that a bookkeeper with appropriate qualifications has expressed an interest. This would be on the basis of 2 hours/month charged at £25/hour (+VAT). The person in question has experience with other small parish councils and has helped coordinate an AGAR audit for them. It was agreed that this person should be offered the position, JT proposed, SC seconded.</p>	<p>JB pp Clerk</p>
<p>9. Ward Councillor's report The Ward Councillor's report had already been circulated to councillors. DH made the following additional points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DH reported that he has spoken to the BANES Councillor responsible for transport improvement and that the A39 through Corston has been added to the list of areas for consideration of a 20mph zone. However, this is contingent on approval and budgetary constraints. • DH said that the next Local Plan is being developed and new housing could potentially be sited next to the dual carriageway section of the A4 – limited details are available at this time. • DH thanked JB for his work chairing the CPC and asked that GD and CL provide him with their email addresses. 	<p>DH</p>
<p>10. Clerk's report</p> <p>9.1 Cashbook</p> <p>9.2 Budget report from Clerk for period 01.09 to 31.10.2023.</p> <p>9.3 Note Cashbook to 31.10.2023 and resolve to approve expenditure entries on it by reference to attached copy invoices and bank statements. It was noted that all expenditure since the last meeting has been routine and expected.</p> <p>9.4 To approve and authorise payment of expenditure. Payment of expenditure was approved and authorised. JB proposed and JT seconded.</p>	<p>JB pp Clerk</p>
<p>10. Agreement of budget for 2024-2025</p> <p>10.1 Financial position end 2023-2024 – the financial position and proposed budget provided by RB was discussed.</p> <p>10.2 Renewal of lease for Recreation Field including increase – lease payments are now up to date and the rental increase proposed by the Duchy was accepted. JT proposed; SC seconded.</p> <p>10.3 Consideration of quotation for Recreation Field grass mowing – the recreation field has not been mown by Paul Wynne in recent weeks and he confirmed that he does not wish to continue to provide this voluntary service at this time; in any case the current length of the grass would require more powerful cutting equipment. However, both Paul and James will continue to look after the Valley Field area. Thanks were expressed by all present for the time and effort that Paul and James have put into the area over many years. SC requested a letter of thanks and appreciation to Paul and James should be sent from the Parish Council. The offer was made to pay Paul at commercial rates (rather than the existing arrangement where a contribution is made by parish council towards his costs), but Paul declined the offer. A quote for cutting the grass on the Recreation Field fortnightly has been obtained. Various options were discussed with input from Paul and James. It was agreed that JB will contact Greenways to clarify their quote and SC will find out more about grass cutting services used by others in the village.</p> <p>10.4 Agreement of level of financial reserve – the appropriate level of financial reserve is considered to be one year's budget. JB felt that there was scope to use some of the financial reserve for the 2024/25 budget without going below this threshold. This was agreed in principle with details to be discussed at the next meeting. JT proposed, JB seconded.</p>	<p>JB pp Clerk</p>

<p>11. Planning applications 11.1 Planning Application Reference: 23/02711/FUL. No decision as yet 11.2 Planning Application Reference: 23/02487/FUL. No decision as yet</p>	<p>JB <i>pp</i> Clerk</p>
<p>12. New items Given the complexity and importance of the previous items, and the absence of a clerk, no new items were considered at this meeting.</p>	
<p>13. Review of meetings attended by councillors & future diary dates 13.1 Environs committee 21st November 2023. JB reported that the online meeting had been postponed 13.2 Remembrance Day (SC) – SC attended the service at All Saints Church.</p>	<p>JB <i>pp</i> Clerk</p>
<p>14. Future CPC meetings 14.1 10th January, 20th March, 22nd May, 24th July, 18th September, 20th November 14.2. Future agenda items: feedback from Martin Bragg from Speedwatch following his initial assessment on the A39. JB closed the meeting at 21:25.</p>	<p>JB <i>pp</i> Clerk</p>

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John Bravin *pp* Clerk to Corston Parish Council

22nd November 2023

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