



Brean Parish Council

Clerk to the Council Hazel Brinton PSLCC, 35 Hannah Drive, Locking, Weston s Mare BS24 7JS

Minutes of the Brean Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 5th October 2020 via Zoom Virtual Meeting software

Present

Chairman Cllr T Hicks
Councillors J Augustus, M Baker, M Chatterton, T Legg, N McCoy

Also in attendance Hazel Brinton (clerk), District Cllr Tony Grimes, County Cllr Filmer

Before the meeting started, the Chairman asked for a minute's silence for two long standing Brean residents, Mr Baunton and Mrs Scott, who had recently passed away.

118/20 Apologies

None received

119/20 Declaration of Interests

The Chairman declared an interest in item 124/20 and requested that Cllr Chatterton take the chair for that item.

120/20 Approval of minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 7th September were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

The Chairman noted the issues of grants for cycling and walking, the dunes and their management and the future responsibility for beach management discussion with Sedgemoor District Council were ongoing matters.

121/20 To respond to members of the public

The Chairman noted four emails had been received since the open forum on beach management together with an email regarding Speedwatch which would be covered on the beach management agenda item.

122/20 To hear from the District and County councillors and the police

County Cllr Filmer reported on the following matters at Somerset County Council:

- Coronavirus update – watching brief but low figure compared to national figures and deaths are running at 6% below average for time of year. Over 90% of children in attendance at schools in year group bubbles.
- Applications for school places – reminder of deadlines for secondary and primary pupils
- Finances – external auditors have now withdrawn the adverse opinion from two years ago and the council has received an unqualified opinion on last year's accounts.
- Reminder of Climate Emergency Fund available – bids of between £5k and £75k via the parish council.

- Unitary debate – seminars to ask questions of SCC’s Leader, David Fothergill as sent by the clerk to members

Cllr Filmer would keep lobbying for cycling and walking grants for more rural areas such as Brean. He agreed to take up the issue of slow responses from County Highways to issues such as blocked drains which have remained unresolved after a year of complaints.

District Cllr Grimes reported on the following matters at Sedgemoor District Council:

- Sand dunes – would chase again that week. The issue had not been forgotten but there was an issue of getting to sites due to Covid-19.
- He had been liaising with Adrian Gardener from SDC regarding the ongoing management of the beach at Brean.
- Unitary debate – SDC had drawn up its own proposals with the other district councils

123/20 Progress with on-going planning applications and applications for premises licences

Planning application number: 06/20/00006/AGE Erection of a two storey extension to the front (East) and rear (West) elevations and erection of a detached garage at Sandmore, Warren Road, Brean, Burnham On Sea, Somerset, TA8 2RR.

Decision awaited from SDC.

124/20 To review new planning applications and Licensing Act Premises Licences

Planning application number: 06/20/00007/DD

Proposal: Change of use of land and restructuring to provide lower density tourist accommodation over a larger area and the erection of 2 amenity blocks and additional landscaping.

Location: Diamond Farm Caravan Park, Weston Road, Brean, Burnham On Sea, Somerset, TA8 2RL

The Chairman, District Cllr Grimes and County Cllr Filmer left the meeting whilst agenda item 124/20 was discussed.

The application was discussed and the council resolved to recommend approval but note its regret over the loss of a field outside of the tourist boundary.

The Chairman, District Cllr Grimes and County Cllr Filmer returned to the meeting.

125/20 Clerk’s report on beach management

The Chairman noted the emails received following the open forum session for residents regarding beach management and their concerns.

He noted that Warren Road and traffic management along it fell under the remit of SCC Highways not the parish council. The landowner’s offer of land to widen the road still stood but SCC need to take the matter forward. Cllr Filmer agreed to take the matter back to SCC.

The Chairman further noted the view that the beach should not be used for cars but highlighted that there was no alternative for parking in Brean and until such a time as adequate parking was provided, he could not see an alternative otherwise traffic in Brean would become gridlocked. The access charge funded the provision of wardens for health and safety purposes and litter collection.

The Chairman advised that the parish council did have a risk assessment for the beach which he had reviewed recently. He believed the parish council was following all of the recommendations in the assessment. He added that the beach had probably seen its highest number of visitors this year due to Covid-19 and staycations and that whilst the council probably needed to redo the risk assessment as a result of Covid-19 and the volume of visitors, this work fell into the review that Sedgemoor District Council was undertaking on the management of the three beaches across the area. It was noted by a member that the council had employed two wardens every day during the summer previously and felt this needed to be put back in place for next summer together with a review of the suitability of the warden vehicle. Whilst budget was an issue particularly if Covid-19 restrictions were still in place next year, it was pointed out that any shortfall could be raised via a precept on residents and the access charge could also be increased to fund any shortfall.

The Chairman noted that some residents who spoke at the open forum were of the opinion that the access charge should be higher together with a precept being raised as part of an overall financial package to support the activities of the council.

The issue of Prescriptive Rights in respect of people using and driving on the part of the beach that was on some residents' deeds was brought up and whether the council should be availing itself of this right as some had not heard of the right before the open forum. The Chairman noted that the matter of Prescriptive Rights had been discussed at the parish council before particularly during the discussions surrounding the lease the council held with the beach entrance landowner. He added that the council could arrange for more legal advice on the matter should it wish from the council's solicitors. A member noted that this was a legal point and that it was a right of access by people to cross and use the land not something the parish council had decided.

A member noted the clerk had recommended appointing a beach manager which the Chairman acknowledged would be part of the budget debate.

The clerk's report was noted and it was resolved that:

- The photo shoot on 28th October could take place as requested for a donation
- The Chairman would approach the council's landlord with a view to only opening the beach entrance on the weekend during the winter months
- The winter warden rota would cover November to March inclusive and that council would consider the requirement for wardening from mid-March at a later date
- The positive comments received about the temporary wardens by the council be noted and the council's thanks for the work they were doing
- The council's thanks to Jake, the Berrow beach warden, be noted for helping the council's warden out during a time of need
- The residents of Brea who report issues to the council's beach warden be thanked for their support

The clerk reported that she had received confirmation during the meeting that the Berrow beach wardens towed and jumpstarted vehicles as necessary.

It was noted the police had taken no further action on an incident involving three vehicles on the beach which a member found disappointing. The Chairman noted that any action or not was a matter for the police to decide given the facts of any incident.

Members asked if incident reports were completed by the wardens and reported back. The clerk replied that they were completed as necessary by the wardens both written and verbal but she had previously advised that the council needed to employ a paid beach manager to

manage all aspects of the beach including the monthly reporting of incidents to council. A member noted that the management of the beach wardens required a beach manager as it was too much to ask the clerk to do. This would ensure the wardens have someone to speak with in the event of a traumatic incident and to whom immediate decisions required could be referred.

126/20 Unitary Authority/ies for Somerset

Cllr Chatterton updated members on the current unitary debate and the differences in the two proposals currently on the table.

It was agreed that individual members would complete the One Somerset questionnaire.

127/20 Village Matters

- Speedwatch Group – it was noted that to be effective 5 or 6 residents were needed as a minimum and that it should be led by residents. Cllr Augustus would put the request in Coastline and anyone interested in forming a group should contact the council in the first instance.
- Village Hall public toilets – Cllr Baker will update members at the next meeting after talking with local businesses.
- Village Hall – Cllr Chatterton updated members on the maintenance of the hall and surroundings. Cllr Augustus updated members on bookings which were not being taken currently as the hall cannot be made Covid-19 secure. He noted that only he and Cllr Chatterton were committee members at that time and that offers of help would be taken up when the hall can be used again.

128/20 Approval of cheques, online payments and Direct Debits for the current month's expenditure

The payments for the month were approved. The clerk noted that further invoices had been received from Plimleys for repairs to the council's trailer and lease invoice from Warren Farm for the beach entrance.

129/20 Financial matters

- The council noted the bank reconciliations as presented by the clerk.
- The council noted the income and expenditure report from the clerk to 30th September 2020. Cllr Legg noted that the process for invoicing for bus shelter adverts needed to be looked at further. It was agreed not to do an end of season beach clean.

130/20 Future agenda items

- Budget setting for 2021/22 including the requirement for a future precept from residents. Cllr Augustus would update his report on raising a precept and send out.

131/20 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting would be 2nd November at 19.00

132/20 To resolve that members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following agenda items by reason of the confidential nature of the items of business to be transacted, in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

It was so resolved.

133/20 Beach Concessions

A confidential discussion took place on matters relating to the beach concessions.

There being no more business the Chairman closed the meeting at 20:40.