



Congresbury Parish Council

Orchard House
The Old School Rooms
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ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish meeting was held on Wednesday 15th May 2019 at 7.30 pm in the Old School Rooms, Station Road, Congresbury.

MINUTES

1. Welcome and introductions

Cllr Arthur Hacking Chairman of the Parish Council opened the meeting and welcomed the 21 people including 18 residents of the Parish of Congresbury. Cllr Hacking introduced himself as the newly elected Chair of the Parish Council and outlined the format of the Parish Meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from;

- Cllr's Ballantine and Sheehan. Mary Short, John Mills, Judy Ashley and Stuart Sampson.

3. Minutes of the Parish Meeting of 10th May 2018

The minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 10th May 2018, issued to all present prior to the commencement of business, were approved by the meeting as a true record and signed by Cllr Hacking.

4. Strawberry Line – an update – Gareth Withers – Principal Green Spaces officer – North Somerset Council

Gareth Withers was introduced and put up on the screen for residents a map of the Strawberry Line and began to talk through the changes that have happened recently and those that are planned including;

- Bloor Homes are currently completing the route through their new development to the Kingston Seymour bridge. This will open hopefully in September. This is the start of the aim to have the route through to Clevedon. Current negotiations are continuing to get a link back to the highway onto Kingston bridge. There is also progress on the section north of the motorway, a section is owned by Highways England, another by NSC and the Environment Agency. Therefore all is within public ownership. To aim is to use a culvert to go under the motorway, a structural survey is being undertaken to establish the viability. There is some opposition from landowners closer to Yatton but there is fairly good progress.

- A new bridge made of plastic has been put in place in Congresbury which is working well and will last longer than conventional wooden construction and was much lighter and easier to put in place.
- There was an aim to secure funding to improve the station at Congresbury but unfortunately this was unsuccessful. The aim was to recreate the old waiting room with a metal concession kiosk.
- The opening of byeways has improved the access of the Line from Congresbury and it is hoped that this will improve the use.
- Part of the Hinkley Line development means that a sub-station will be built at Churchill and national Grid will pass over the line to NSC. This will enable that users will not need to use Nye lane and the route will be continuously off road. Thatches will assist in this and there will be room for a visitor's car park. This will probably take 5 years to complete as the national Grid project continues.
- There is pressure to continue the line beyond Axbridge but more pressure is needed to persuade Somerset County Council to back the project to have a route from Clevedon to Wells in the future. This would be an excellent tourist attraction and equal to many cycling trails in the UK.
- Currently NSC are trialling sponsorship boards. This will contain a village map and then places to visit in the villages sponsored by local businesses. This will continue to other sections. Any money will then be reinvested into the Strawberry Line.

Gareth was then asked whether funding is available from Sustrans. Gareth stated that unfortunately not, but Sustrans are a great source of help and provide volunteer rangers locally and nationally.

A local resident brought to the attention of Gareth the large amount of pot holes currently from the section of Tim Thomas farm to Silver Street lane. Gareth stated that he would investigate. Also the gates are not used and it was suggested that this might reduce potential damage. Gareth stated that there was little opposition to the use of the gates by landowners and again he would follow up.

5. Introduction by Ward Councillor Stuart Treadaway

Cllr Treadaway stated that it was very early days for him as the newly elected ward Councillor but he was pleased to be invited to the meeting. He outlined that there had been great change for the Council on May 2nd with the conservative majority being overturned and now the council is made up of 17 independents, 13 Conservatives, 11 Liberal Democrats, 6 Labour and 3 Green Councillors. It has been deemed as a rainbow administration.

Cllr Treadaway has been put forward to sit on the Planning and Regulatory Committee and the Community and Corporate Organisation policy and scrutiny panel. This will need to be confirmed. He now has a new laptop and email address which he will pass to the Clerk for use by local residents.

Cllr Treadaway stated that he was in agreement with the proposed plan for 20mph limit through the village as outlined in the Neighbourhood Development Plan and was also looking at whether there was a need for resident parking permits or double yellow lines in the village. He asked whether residents would contact him about these issues.

Cllr Beyfus asked that he also focused to the issue of providing a safe pedestrian route to the new medical centre. Tom Leimdorfer said that this was currently a live issue which needed to be pursued.

Cllr Treadaway responded to a question about representation by Churchill and Lanford residents Action Group (CALRAG) at the meeting. He stated that there was and that it is something that he and his fellow Lim Dems Cllrs are discussing and currently they are in opposition to the Mendip Village proposals and that he personally would be pressing to oppose it.

6. Congresbury Community Library – Gail Lee - Chair of Library Management Committee

Gail Lee introduced herself and began by stating that the Library continues to thrive and the past year has been very busy. She continued by outlining the detail that;

- The children's Summer Reading Challenge proved to be a great success again with over 70% of the children who enrolled completing the target of reading 6 books over the summer holiday period. We are hoping for the same level of enthusiasm this year when the theme will be Space Adventure.
- The series of monthly talks, mainly by local experts, were extremely popular – the majority were sold out and some had standing room only. Not only are these talks interesting, informative and entertaining but the profits from the ticket sales are used to fund some of the many activities held in the library and pay for additional equipment needed for the library.
- The library organised a 10 week 'Introduction to Bridge Course' which attracted a number of local residents to join. This was very successful with the majority finishing the course. Subsequently the new beginners have formed their own group which met for the first time last Friday. They will meet weekly and hopefully will soon become more experienced and confident in their game. It is hoped to set up a bridge group for intermediate/expert players. If you are interested in joining please contact the library.
- The recently formed CCL Knitting group is proving to be very popular which meets on the 3rd Friday each month between 10am and midday in St Congar's Room. The majority of members knit articles for charity – and they have been very busy and productive! A successful coffee morning was held last Saturday 11th May where over 250 knitted items were displayed, including matinee coats, hats, blankets, jumpers, vests and teddies for babies, twiddle muffs, hats and hot water bottle covers for adults. These are now being sent to the relevant charities. The coffee morning raised over £100 which will be used to buy more wool to enable us to keep supporting the charities.
- The jigsaw swap shops were held from September through the winter until the end of April, and were well attended. They will re-start in September and continue to be held on the last Saturday each month.
- The Wild Life Photography competition was well supported with 58 entries, the photographs were displayed in the library and visitors to the library were asked to vote for their favourite. The winner was Nick Hayman with Katy Flook aged 5 winning the under 15 class. Further photographic competitions will be held in the future.
- The Library purchased a large number of new books for adults, teenagers and children and so refreshed our book stock. If there are any particular types of books or genres you would like to see in our library then please let us know. Additionally, there is the Honesty Library of donated books which has a large selection of fiction and non-fiction books. We are very grateful to recently receive a generous donation

of £500 from the Fete Committee which enabled us to buy some really lovely children's books and also to fund some children's activities.

- We continue to make improvements to the library as and when funds become available. The next addition will be the erection of a large notice board on the perimeter of the library/Old School Rooms car park – this will enable us to advertise events more effectively particularly to passing pedestrians and hopefully encourage greater participation in some of the activities we hold.
- The library has used some of the S106 monies we received to pay for the refurbishment of St Congar's Room. It is hoped to establish a village hub in this room with more community events and activities taking place encompassing a wide spectrum of interests. So please follow us on the village and library websites – and on our new noticeboard - for further information.
- We are in the middle of our 'Be Creative in May' series of 5 craft workshops and demonstration for adults. So far we have learnt how to crochet and make fabric collages and inchies; we have calligraphy and felt paper weight making still to come – so please come along and learn a new skill all sessions are free of charge.
- There will be craft sessions for children each Monday afternoon during the school summer holidays, booking is advisable as spaces for these sessions can quickly be filled. Again no charge.
- Following on from the very successful EqualTeas Afternoon Tea event marking 100-year votes for women, the library will be holding afternoon teas in support and memory of Jo Cox on Friday 14th June from 2pm. Please support this event, all proceeds will go to the Jo Cox charity.
- We are already planning the next series of monthly talks which will start in October. As before the subjects of the talks will be varied, illuminating and educational, hopefully you will continue to support us.
- We are pleased to welcome 2 new volunteers to the Library; however, we still need a couple more willing and able people to help support our service. If you are interested in finding out more then please drop into the library or phone or send us an email and we will be very happy to let you know what the commitment is and what is involved in being a library volunteer.

So, as you can see we are looking forward to another full and exciting year ahead. Please continue to give your support to your local Community Library.

7. Parish Council Financial Report – Cllr Arthur Hacking



Congresbury Parish Council

Finance Report 2018/19

Financial Summary

	Actual- 2018/19	Estimated- 2019/20
Income	146,006	136,767
Expenditure	145,048	135,282
Surplus/Deficit	957	1485
Reserves at Start of Year	68,294.06	56,901.54
Reserves at End of Year	56,901.54	53,784

General Reserve of £50k within acceptable tolerances

Decision made to increase the precept by 2% for 2019/20 and to set a balanced budget for operating costs.

Income

	2018/19	Budgeted 2019/20
Precept	110,132	112,335
Council Tax Support Grant	2,338	0
Bank interest	144	60
OSR lettings	12,720	8,550
S106 Library Funding	7740	2000
Burial fees	4,957	6,000
Village amenities	2507	2,470
Donations(inc solar farm)	5468	5352
Insurance Claim	0	0
Total	145,006	136,767

Precept/CTSG - Household precept increased by 2%.

OSR lettings - Continued strong use of OSR.

Burial fees - Burials pretty much on budget for 2018/19.

Village amenities - rental income from allotments and Broadstones. Reflects increase in allotment rents.

Donations - Includes solar farm community payments. Donations also included Blooming Congresbury.

Expenditure

	2018/19	2019/20
Office staff costs	46,424	48,315
Civic costs	3277	4100
Youth activities	19,500	19,000
Grants & donations	7000	6000
Community library	4034	5125
Village amenities	24082	13,300
Parks and open spaces	23389	27097
Public toilets	7290	5435
Burial ground/churchyard	7353	3910
Cadbury Hill	2699	3000
Total	145,048	135,282

Office costs- no real change

Civic costs- not much of an increase

Village amenities including OSR- decreased due to high expenditure in 2018/19.

Public toilets- decrease again due to building works in 2018/19
 Burial ground- cremation plots made, churchyard listed wall last year.

Breakdown of reserves	
	31/03/2019
General	72,211
Cadbury Hill	255.43
CIF grant – public toilets	913.50
Neighbourhood Plan	6,674
Community Resilience	309
Old School Rooms	27,177
Burial ground	1,500
Closed churchyard	1,450
Play areas	15,000
Library transfer from NSC	2,576
Library S106	1046
Total	113,187

Diagrammatic labels on the right of the table:

- General reserves: General, Cadbury Hill, CIF grant – public toilets
- Ear-marked reserves: Neighbourhood Plan, Community Resilience, Old School Rooms, Burial ground, Closed churchyard, Play areas, Library transfer from NSC, Library S106

Cadbury Hill - effectively the “top up” reserved by each of the two councils.

Old School Rooms – Reserve decreased by £4994 with property repairs.

Public toilets - EMR reduced by £3,200 due to property repairs.

Burial ground - Earmarked reserves and Sinking Fund combined. In longer term, reserves will be needed for eventual new site.

Play Areas – Reserve stayed the same.

Cllr Hacking responded to questions;

- 1) What are the earmarked reserves for?

Cllr Hacking stated that the reserves are in place for planned or emergency funds to be spent on particular PC functions such as the Old School Rooms, public toilets or the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

- 2) What is happening about the Strawberry Line grant from the PC which was usually automatically sent?

Cllr Hacking stated that he was unaware that it had been agreed at any PC meeting that it would be automatically paid, however he had been in contact with Gareth Withers who has stated that he would send it a formal request.

- 3) Ian Sheppard has previously sent in questions which were; What were the agreed outcomes for the s106 £23,000 spent on the OSR in 2018 and have these been achieved, if not what remedial actions are being taken. If no outcomes were set, why was this as this was a significant amount of public money? The submitted Neighbourhood plan includes this comment ‘.....provide details on how to prioritise the spending of any s106 or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to ensure maximum benefit for the community.’

Cllr Hacking replied that the agreed outcomes were to improve the use of the room which had been completed as many more organisations were using the room as a training room

and also the talks in the library has increased the use. Due to staff issues this has not been promoted as well as hoped but this will now improve with new admin support recently recruited.

- 4) Memorial Hall – have the council monitored whether the recommendations contained in the 2015 report it paid for, on the Memorial Hall have been carried out particularly the ones related to potential health and safety issues for users.

Cllr Hacking stated the Parish Council was a Custodian Trustees and that means that in the event that the Memorial hall goes bankrupt the PC together with the Charities Commission would fold the assets and the PC also hold the deeds of the hall. The PC however paid for a condition survey in 2015 and following a recent visit to the premises for a grant application, the PC has asked the hall to provide a detailed report on what items from the survey have been completed. This is essential before any further grant applications are submitted.

- 5) As Custodian trustees are the Council aware that as the Memorial Hall charity has not submitted its annual returns / accounts for the last 4 years there is a risk it could lose its charitable status?

Cllr Hacking stated that as custodian trustee this was not within the Parish Councils remit.

Cllr Hacking thanked everyone for attended and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Signed: Date: