



Congresbury Parish Council

Orchard House
The Old School Rooms
Station Road
Congresbury
BS49 5DX

Chairman: Councillor Lizzie Burd
Parish Clerk: Carolyn Crocker
RFO: Gemma Palmer
Administrator: Catrin Lewis

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ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish meeting was held on Thursday 26th May 2022 at 7.30 pm Jubilee Hall, The Old School Rooms, Station Road, Congresbury, BS49 5DX

MINUTES

1. Welcome and introductions

Cllr Lizzie Burd Vice-Chair of the Parish Council opened the meeting, introduced herself, the Councillors and new staff of the Parish Council to the attendees and outlined the format of the Parish Meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from;

- Cllrs Arthur Hacking and Stuart Sampson (Chair)

3. Minutes of the Parish Meeting of 15th May 2019

The minutes of the Parish Meeting held on Thursday 29th April 2021, were circulated prior to the commencement of business, were approved by the meeting as a true record and signed by Cllr Burd. Cllr Clark proposed and Tom Leimdorfer seconded.

4. Chairman's Annual Report – Cllr Stuart Sampson

Cllr Burd read out Chairman Stuart Sampson's report and added some additional comments as follows

I am honoured to provide the Congresbury Parish Council Chairman's report. Recent years have been tough for all, both our community and individuals. Throughout the pandemic and emergence after, the Parish Council has faced a number of difficult challenges. However, I am proud to recognise that through the combined hard work of committed councillors, clerk, responsible financial officer (RFO) and administrator, plus the team of dedicated cleaners and contractors, we continue to improve Congresbury.

I will start with some special thankyou's:

- Arthur Hacking - as chair of the Parish Council since 2019, Arthur has led us through some very difficult times, providing great leadership. Due to personal reasons, Arthur stepped down but hopefully will take up the chair role again soon.

- Mike Greaves resigned earlier this year. He has been involved with the parish council since 1971 until the millennium. He then had a gap, but returned four years ago and has worked tirelessly in the interests of the village. His expertise and experience have been invaluable and his good sense and good humour will be much missed. We know he hasn't retired altogether and we wish him well in his on-going work. His parting gift to us was getting planning permission for the Old School Rooms windows replacement a seemingly impossible achievement.
- Liz Greaves – has been a brilliant clerk, making lots of improvements for the village and for the Parish Council. We wish Liz all the best with her next career move and hope to see her back as a councillor one day.
- Alicia Fox – kept the Parish Council finances in order for a number of years and wish her well in her next role.
- Jo Swift and Nina Flint who stepped in as locum clerk and RFO while we undertook our recruitment process in early 2022.
- Catrin Lewis – our administrative assistant who has been busy keeping the office running through this period of change.

I will now welcome our new clerk and responsible financial officer:

- Carolyn Crocker joined the Parish Council in May as our new clerk.
- Gemma Palmer joined the Parish Council in April as our new RFO

A review of the past 12 months

In May 2021 we were still in the world of Zoom meetings, finally returning to in-person meetings in August. During this time, the Parish Council had worked hard on responses to planning applications and tendered for projects, including a new water supply at the allotments and new kitchen in the Old School Rooms.

Following the departure of Liz and Alicia in the New Year, the Parish Council had to consolidate its activities to core duties while the recruitment process started. The main focus for councillors was the recruitment of a new clerk and RFO.

Planning applications, both new and old, also dominated the start of 2022. On Wrington Lane, there were yet more twists and turns to 5 years of issues since planning was granted. North Somerset Council made a decision that infuriated local residents and the Parish Council. However, that is certainly not the end. Elsewhere in Congresbury, there was yet another speculative planning application made for land of Mulberry Road. This is against the current local plan and Neighbourhood Plan. We hope North Somerset Council reject this and send a clear message to developers to work with us, not against us.

Finally, the Parish Council responded to the new draft Local Plan. While supporting a lot of good work in the new plan, the council has recommended a number of changes and advised North Somerset Council on how Congresbury should grow.

We ended 2021, with a brilliant Christmas street party for the village that benefited from Liz Greaves' application to North Somerset Council for a special grant. The whole village enjoyed an amazing event, especially having had the previous year cancelled due to covid.

Looking ahead over the next 12 months

With a new team in place, the Parish Council will look to catch up on a number of projects and look forward to the support from the village.

Stuart Sampson
Chair of Congresbury Parish Council

5. Question and Answer Session

1. A resident asked about the administration of the Millennium Green Trust and the involvement of the Parish Council. He expressed concerns about publication of the date of the AGM and queried why this was not publicised to members of the public,

Cllr Burd firstly clarified that the Trust was a Charity. The parish council is the sole trustee but the business of the Millennium Green had to be kept separate. This was confirmed by the Clerk. Cllr Burd explained her passion for the MGT and that all relevant information will be publicised on the website. She clarified that the AGM was publicised in the usual places. Cllr Burd explained that a management group had been set up and the terms of reference for this group was currently being agreed.

2. Sarah Sheehan stated that the condition of the burial ground was concerning, family graves are appearing messy and untidy and the cut grass has been left rotting. Cremation headstones are untidy and it is not a nice place to visit. Benches are also appearing.

Cllr Clarke stated that she was happy to conduct periodic rubbish collections. It was explained that this location also comes under the village orderly's schedule of responsibility for keeping the area tidy. The Contractors pulled out of the last grass cutting contract and a new contract has been awarded.. They have explained that first cut has been difficult but that a cutting schedule has now been established. As to the issue of benches appearing and other floral tributes appearing at the location, Cllr Burd explained there were cultural issues which are being sensitively managed by the parish council but that rules needed to be observed by all.

3. A resident thanked the council for the strong objection made re building proposals. She also raised the issues of a recent arson attack and vandalism at the allotments expressing her concerns for the security of older persons and asked if the parish could consider any improvements to security. A previous request for new gates was discussed. Lastly a request was made regarding the new water supply to the allotment which had been agreed at a previous council meeting.

Cllr Burd asked that the matter of security in the allotments was taken to full council meeting. A meeting with the local police had also taken place which the questioner was present at and plans in respect of increased patrols had been agreed. Regarding the

water supply, this has been approved, a budget has been agreed and the matter progressing.

4 A representative from the Library Committee wished to encourage more people to use the library facilities. There are current knitting groups and various other groups are encouraged to use the facility. She added that North Somerset have given money for bunting which was successfully used and she gave her thanks. She made a plea for more users and volunteers but need more children to come through the doors. She made observations about IT not being fit for purpose and a problem with passwords.

Cllr Burd thanked the questioner and suggested the use of the Nextdoor app. The IT password issue was being looked into by the parish council.

5 A resident raised a matter of personal concern which he alleged was in relation to the parish council. He explained this matter had resulted in police attendance at his home which had left him in disbelief. The resident stated such a complaint was malicious and requested to be provided with specific details.

Cllr Burd explained she felt that this was not the appropriate forum for this discussion and offered a meeting to discuss the matter privately. The resident expressed his disappointment at this response. Cllr Burd repeated again that she felt this this was not the appropriate forum. A member of the public at the meeting raised the point that he had attended a great many council meetings for many years and always accepted that the Chairs ruling should be where the matter rested.

6 Cllr Hill raised the matter of a recent burglary that had taken place in the village and gave details of an incident he felt may have been connected. Matters had been reported to the police and they had arrived within 15 minutes although no offenders had been arrested and enquiries are continuing.

Cllr Burd stated she was sorry this had happened and highlighted a recent meeting with the police where crime and disorder had been discussed the previous evening. A plan was in place for increased patrols.

7 Residents raised parking issues on Pauls Causeway and Broad Street. Allegations of damage were made having been caused to the pathway from Broad St to past the refectory paddock. A number of breaches of planning were alleged to have happened over a long period of time which has left the pathway in a poor state of repair.

Cllr Neve stated that enforcement department should be spoken to in respect of this. Further the state of the pathway which is believed to be owned by the Church, should be included in the next parish meeting.

8 A resident raised the on-going issue of the parking situation in Broad Street describing the situation as chaos. A further resident added he was concerned about ambulances getting through and minor accidents.

Cllr Burd asked the clerk to give an update on the progress of the Broad Street parking issue. The Clerk Carolyn Crocker had sought an update from David Bailey of North Somerset Council who said that there is a three year rota for highways matters split into three areas, WSM, Portishead and Parishes then Nailsea and Clevedon. Covid has caused all of this work to be delayed and the staff have had to be redeployed to other projects. The changes in Broad Street (as per the correspondence between the Parish council and David with one disabled bay on the Chemist side) have all been agreed and are in the programme of works. He stressed they have not been removed from the planned works, just delayed in line with all other projects in the County. This programme of works is now picking up again. Plans are in place for the Parish Council to be updated in June and the formal Traffic Order Process to take place in July which has to take place before the works can commence. This involves further consultation with the public. It is anticipated that the works may commence around September 2022 time. The Clerk added that she had been in contact with the Beat Team for some enforcement activity regarding the issues with parking in the area and this had been agreed.

9 Councillor Neve gave an update on Mulberry Road and stated he was working on a local plan for other sites.

Cllr Burd thanked everyone for attended and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

Signed: Date: