



Coffinswell Parish Council

Serving the Communities of
Coffinswell & Dacombe

The Cirl Bunting is the UK's rarest farmland bird. The entire breeding population is found between Exeter and Plymouth.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING TUESDAY 19th APRIL 2022 7PM AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH

Present: Cllr A Parkes (Chair), Cllr S Avery, Cllr V Flower, Cllr N Orchard
In attendance: Cllr A Dewhirst, Mrs J Thompson (Clerk)
Twenty-five plus members of the public

1. The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:15 pm.
Apologies were received from Cllr A Brent, Cllr M Haines and M Berry.

2. **Chairman's Report**
Introduction

Again, this last year has been affected by the Pandemic with our meetings in the early part of the year being online via Zoom.

However, as the year has progressed with restrictions being lifted in stages we have gradually reverted to "in person meetings"

One of our first face to face meetings was held in the church grounds which was different to say the least, sun shades and sun glasses!!

However, one of the things that we observed during the lockdown meetings was that the public attendance increased during the winter months. Maybe because you didn't have to come out on those cold nights to sit in an even colder church! And that you could enjoy a nice cuppa or a glass of wine!!

As a result, we as a Parish joined a lobby of other Parish Councils requesting the ability to hold meeting in the style / venues we feel appropriate. We are still awaiting the government's response.

Personnel

This last year has seen our membership remaining unchanged.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally thank my colleagues for their hard work and dedication throughout the year.

We have made a formal request to Teignbridge Council to increase councillor numbers and I am pleased to advise that this request is currently being considered (Community Governance Review) and we will advise you of the outcome in due course.

Parish Strategic Plan and Action Plan

This plan was introduced on the Parish Website this last year and has proved an excellent tool for the Council to programme work and monitor achievements.

Even though our work has been curtailed this year I believe we have achieved a great deal.

For the coming year/s this plan has been modified to extend it from a single year plan to that of a three year plan. Other changes have involved a colour coding system which clearly identifies at a glance the achievements within this year and subsequent years.

Again I would recommend that you take the opportunity to view this plan as you can clearly see the work of the Parish Council whilst allowing yourselves the option of providing feedback

Parish Budget

As I stated in last year's Chairmans report it was envisaged that the 2021/2022 financial year would be challenging with our need to comply with legal requirements to hold sufficient reserves for emergencies.

The Parish Clerk is currently finalising the accounts for this year and they will be published on the website once approved.

The budget setting process for 2022/2023 has been no less difficult with all the current inflationary pressures and further guidance advising the Parish to further increase its reserve to that of twelve months expenditure. As well as building into the budget election reserves!!

After a great deal of discussion, we the Parish Council felt that we had to make every effort to provide the most prudent budget possible. To this end this year's budget itemises every envisaged expenditure, whilst we also took the decision not to provide an election reserve but to cover this possibility with the general reserves, we also took the decision not to increase this reserve from six times monthly expenditure to twelve within this financial year.

As a result, we managed to keep our precept this year to within 24 pence a month of last years. Again, this Budget / Precept is available on the Parish Website as well as our expenditure records throughout the year.

Parish Meetings

This last year the Parish Council held eleven meetings. This coming year we have agreed to reduce the planned number of meetings to seven.

Parish Councillors

We have formally started the process with Teignbridge Council for approval to increase the number of councillors from 5 to 6. This has recently been publicised and we will hear shortly.

Church Grant

We had to cease the Church Grant due to guidance from NALC This grant was £450.

We have undertaken and budgeted for 2022/2023 to increase meeting costs by £450 to allow community use funded by Parish Council.

This will increase Church revenue and hopefully increase Church community usage.

Thanks

As always, I have many people to thank.

Sheenagh and Sue for their work on the well.

Jed for his assistance in removing garden waste from the well site and taking to the tip.

Roger Wills for wood chips etc.

Our litter picking team organised by Vince.

Sally Spokes for all the work she undertakes on our behalf, on Footpath 2.

Sheenagh for her work as Neighbourhood Watch coordinator.

Vince as our Police Liaison coordinator.

Mike Haines and Alistair Dewhirst for their help and assistance throughout the year.

Juliette for her hard work and commitment.

My fellow councillors for all their hard work throughout the year.

And anybody I have forgotten.

Grants received

We have been fortunate this year to receive a number of grants to assist in our Parish work:

£500 from the pathway partnership towards our aim to replace petrol grass cutting equipment with electric rechargeable.

£300 from Alistair from his localities budget to support this also.

£300 approximately from Tidy Teignbridge project to purchase litter picking equipment.

£100 from Mike Haines localities budget towards the Jubilee Party.

CIL expenditure

£1400 will go towards the cost of rechargeable equipment.

2022/23 plans:

Possible £1500 as part funding of lengths man which is still being investigated.

Improvements to footpath 1.

Possible funding for signage etc re possible additional permissive footpath from No 4 to Blackenway Lane.

Planning Applications

Another busy year with the need for two additional meeting solely for planning purposes and approximately 18 applications.

Current applications for discussion

Solar farm proposal.

With a Working Party formed to discuss the plans with the developers.

A further community meeting is planned to view the proposal and discuss.

It is our understanding that the land owner will attend.

Plea for help in 2022/2023

As I am sure that you are aware our footpaths etc take a lot of maintenance and our volunteers have dwindled in recent years.

We have come up with plan to try to address the issue in combination:

1. We would look to undertake community clearing mornings footpath by footpath (bacon sandwiches and coffee provided)
2. We would look to recruiting volunteers
3. We have budgeted limited funds to provide external assistance

We will be publishing plans shortly however any volunteers please contact Juliette to express an interest. Thank you to those who have also mentioned to myself that they are willing to support this community effort.

3. Informal Public Session:

The churchwarden reported on the church's declining funds and the worry that it may have to close if the situation didn't improve.

It was suggested that new benches be purchased for Footpath number one and Dacombe Cross, using CIL money.

A working group has been formed to deal with the proposed Solar Farm, with updates being posted on the parish council website. A public consultation is planned, which the landowner hopes to attend.

It was suggested that the parish council look at ways to encourage younger members to join.

Cllr V Flower spoke about producing a Local Neighbourhood Plan, a community led process, which the parish council would like to see commence this coming year.

The meeting ended informally, with groups staying on to chat and enjoy the refreshments provided.

Signed:
Chairman of Coffinswell Parish Council

Dated: