

Charmouth Parish Council

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MINUTES OF THE FORESHORE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT 7:30PM ON TUESDAY 26th OCTOBER 2021

In attendance: Cllrs Maralyn Hinxman, Julie Leah, Katie Moore, Peter Noel, Judith Sheppard and the Deputy Clerk, Melissa Kirkby

FS42.21 PUBLIC QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR REPRESENTATIONS

There were none.

FS43.21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

FS44.21 DISPENSATIONS

None were received.

FS45.21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Noel declared an interest in item FS51.21(c).

FS46.21 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Foreshore Committee held on the 31st August 2021 circulated to members, be signed as a correct record.

FS47.21 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

FS48.21 PROGRESS REPORTS

a. Beach Management Plan review

The Deputy Clerk reminded the members that at the last meeting it was agreed that the finer detail was to go in a separate Standard Operating Procedures document which will be agreed at a later date. Cllr Sheppard started to speak about the draft plan that had been circulated but some of the members had not received a copy. Some discussion took place while viewing the document via the projector. It was agreed to resend the document and any comments be sent to the Deputy Clerk and if so a decision could be made on whether the item could go to Full Council or whether it should go back to Foreshore Committee for further discussion.

b. Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons

Cllr Sheppard reported that the Working Group would be meeting in November to discuss plans.

c. Foreshore Clock maintenance

Cllr Sheppard reported that the foreshore clock maintenance was looked into and the service engineer travels from Crediton. The company advised that not having the clock serviced annually would not invalidate the warranty. They also said the clock would be ok this year as it was newly installed and so an eighteen month service has been booked for 11th January 2022.

FS49.21 HAZARD & INCIDENT REPORT

a. Report of a remote controlled boat harassing ducks on the river

An email had been received from a member of the public about the use of a remote controlled boat "racing around the mouth of the Char and frightening the ducks, another man also witnessed this and confronted the speed boat driver and an altercation took place". The Clerk spoke to the lady and to the beach attendant. She established that the incident was on a Saturday after hours. She explained to the lady that there have been no other reports of such incidents and the situation will be monitored. The members noted this incident.

b. Break in at the Beach Café and attempted at Soft Rock Café overnight 13th and 14th October 2021

The incidents have been reported to the Police and the leaseholders advised to do the same.

c. Attempted break in at the Heritage Centre overnight 18th October 2021

No entry was gained but a window was damaged. The police were informed.

Items b. and c. were discussed and also the more recent event of break ins to the beach huts. The options of cameras and night cameras were discussed and the difficulties in where to located these and also the quality of photo needed to make identification of suspect possible. The members discussed the suspicion of the beach staff that the beach hut break ins were being made by a homeless person seeking shelter. Although there had been a number of incidents over the last few weeks if the rate of incidents is looked at over a longer time, then there is very little criminality at the foreshore. The members decided to monitor if this group of break ins was a one off or if there was a general increase in crime. The matter was to brought back to the next meeting to discuss shutters and other deterrents.

FS50.21 NEW ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

a. Budgets/charges for next financial year

The proposed budgets and charges documents had been circulated. The Clerk had wanted the members to be reminded that no increases were agreed for 2021/22 due to Covid. The year before a 3% increase was agreed for beach huts with no increases to any other fees. The members agreed that as covid was still affecting things that the charges should remain the same for the next year. The members also agreed to the proposed budget with the exception of beach huts.

b. Beach hut damp, replacement of some beach huts

The issue of damp in some beach huts was discussed. It was agreed to ask for £4,000 for the beach hut replacement budget for next year. This would result in a total of £21,942 being available for the replacement of a number of the worst affected huts. It was also agreed to try a different supplier to see if the weatherproofing is any better.

c. Composting facility at the Foreshore

Cllr Sheppard explained that the Environment Group had suggested a compost bin made of timber be erected at a discreet location on the foreshore. However, large areas of the foreshore land are covered by the covenant which prohibits structures. The only area suitable being the west green after the Green beach huts. Cllr Sheppard had concerns that as the composter would be filled with only green waste, it would not actually compost down and they would be left with a waste product that still needed disposal off. It would also contain waste matter from undesirable species such as Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed etc. She proposed not to erect a compost bin and that the Environment Group look at alternative ways of disposing of green waste with the possibility of commercial green waste bins being used. The members agreed to this proposal.

d. Reed Bed Fence Repair

Cllr Sheppard reported that during the summer growing period, a number of fence posts were pushed over and broken (ten in total). It is necessary to repair it before planting the new hedge trees. To complete the work timber is required at a cost of £145.98. The members agreed to this expenditure from the Foreshore General Maintenance budget.

FS51.21 CORRESPONDENCE

a. Beach Ramp

An email from P Collins about a possible movable ramp for the beach had been received. The members agreed that this was not an option for Charmouth beach. She had also raised the idea of crowd funding for the beach stepped ramp. The members discussed this idea and Cllr Leah agreed to find out some background information of how this was done and the success or failure of other similar schemes. The members agreed to take this idea to the Full Council meeting.

b. Foreshore Public Toilets

An email was received from P Baldwin about the unsatisfactory state of the foreshore toilets. The members agreed that they were much improved and not that bad for public toilets located at a beach. Cllr Judith enquired whether it would be possible to reinstall the fifth toilet that was taken out and made into a cupboard. The Deputy Clerk would enquire.

c. Fireworks Display

An email had been received from Charmouth Events Committee requesting permission for Fireworks Display 5th November 2021. They would want to use the beach office for power. Cllr Noel had said he can be there to oversee in line with the Beach Office Use policy. Cllr Sheppard explained to the other members about the deterioration of the beach over the last few days before the meeting. The recent storm had washed enormous amounts of shingle away from the retaining wall leaving a six-foot hole and a larger drop on the other side of the wall. She felt that it was dangerous to have large numbers of the public in the area in the dark. The members were saddened that a refusal would mean the public could not enjoy a firework display but they agreed that safety should come first. Therefore, it was agreed that the firework event permission should be refused.

d. Motorhome Storage

An email had been received from Rob Stamp about the winter storage of motorhomes at the foreshore car park. The members all agreed that this was not something that would be possible at the foreshore car park for many reasons, an obvious one being the large quantity of big stones thrown up by the sea into the car park over the winter which would cause substantial damage to any vehicle.

e. Wi-Fi, Dog Rules and Annual Parish Meeting

An email was received from Clive Randall about removing wi-fi and also about the dog rules. He requested to know what the total cost of the wi-fi service had been. The Clerk had replied to him stating that the public wi-fi at the foreshore which was agreed in 2017, had incurred costs of £6347.36 over a three-year contract. The decision had been made not to renew the contract due to the fact that many more people have significant mobile data now than they did four years ago and moving forward it was not considered to be a good use of public money to continue with this service.

He also asked how many fines at Charmouth have been issued under the PSPO. The Clerk had replied that since the introduction of the Dog related Public Space Protection Order in January of this year, it has not been necessary for any actual fine notices to be issued by the Parish Council. Education and the threat of real enforcement has proved sufficient.

Mr Randall also asked if a date been set yet for the Annual General Meeting. The Clerk had replied that the Council had decided, given that Charmouth Annual Parish Meeting is usually so well attended, to wait until next Spring when hopefully larger gatherings will be more easily managed. There is a notice to this effect on our website.

FS52.21 IN COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business in view of the likely disclosure of confidential matters about information relating to an individual, and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

a. Fire Door quotes

It was agreed to accept the quote from MAC Builders for £835 from Factory Maintenance budget.

b. Foreshore steps quotes

It was agreed to accept the quote from C Richards but for the work to be done in the spring. As there might be a small increase in the cost by then the members agreed expenditure of up to £800 from Beach Steps repair budget.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed

Dated

Referred to Full Council

FS51.21(a) Beach Hut Ramp – Proposal to crowd fund the stepped beach ramp.

Proposals to Finance Committee

FS51.21 (a) Charges should remain the same for the next year. The proposed budgets were agreed to except beach huts.

FS51.21 (b) A budget of £4,000 for the beach hut replacement was requested for next year.