

Sampford Brett Parish Council

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Wednesday 04 March 2020

The Annual Parish Meeting of the Council was held in the Village Hall at 6.30pm

Parish Councillors Present: J Swan (Chairman), M Blazey, N Brodrick (Vice-Chairman), D Brooks and S Miles

In Attendance: 7 members of the Public, and Mrs G Yandle and Mrs T-A Biss (Clerks)

The Chairman, Cllr Swan, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr B Doyle.
Apologies also received from District Cllr L Whetlor and District/County Council H Davies.

2. MINUTES OF THE 2019 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 6 March 2019 were presented to the Members for confirmation and approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING

None.

Cllr Miles requested that it was noted that the work undertaken at Black Arch Bridge to alleviate flooding has been very successful.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2019/2020

- 4.1 Cllr Swan welcomed the incoming Clerk, Mrs T-A Biss and thanked Mrs G Yandle for all her hard work during the past 25 years serving as the Parish Clerk.
- 4.2 The Chairman took the opportunity to thank two former Councillors, Mr D Drabble and Mr G Day, both of whom had taken the decision to step down from their duties during the year. Acknowledging all the work they had undertaken for the Parish and also the knowledge they brought to their positions. The Chair also thanked Cllr Brodrick for taking over responsibility for Footpaths from Mr Drabble.
- 4.3 Amendments to District Wards - in May 2019 the District Ward in which Sampford Brett sits changed due to the amalgamation of West Somerset Council and Taunton Deane Council into Somerset West and Taunton Council. The Parish now forms part of the "Williton and Watchet Ward" and is represented at District Level by District Councillors I Aldridge, H Davies and L Whetlor. Cllr H Davies also represents the Ward at County Level. The Chairman confirmed the merger of the two Councils had not run smoothly and had caused disruption to Services. There were also concerns that Somerset County Council proposal for a Unitary Authority would extend the period of disruption and the Parish will respond to consultation request. The Parish Council will also respond to the consultation request received for the key issues to be addressed in the draft local plan for Somerset West and Taunton District Council.
- 4.4 Planning - 11 Planning Applications/Prior Approvals for the Parish of Sampford Brett have been received during the year, resulting in the District Council granting 7 applications, refusal of one and three applications yet to be determined.
- 4.5 Flooding – The Chairman thanked Cllr Blazey for representing the Parish on the West Somerset Flood Group and the work involved with Flood issues. The District Council have undertaken a CCTV inspection of the main storm drain through the main street in Sampford Brett and subsequently cleared

it of debris. This work together with clearance of the drains at the bottom of Capton Lane appears to have reduced standing surface water and flooding. It is anticipated that a further inspection will occur in the Spring of 2020 which will hopefully include stabilisation of the bank at Doniford Stream. The Two Valleys Project has implemented flood prevention works along tributaries to the Doniford and Monksilver streams and has also involved the setting up of “wildlife sampling stations”.

- 4.6 Defibrillator Training – The Parish has a defibrillator located at the entrance to the Village Hall. Three training sessions had been organised by Cllr Miles which were well supported.
- 4.7 Footpaths – Cllr Brodrick has been involved with the work undertaken at Ragland’s Cross to remove the stile which was replaced with a “kissing gate”. Regular monitoring of the Public Rights of Ways is continuing with issues forwarded to Somerset County Council Public Rights of Ways.
- 4.8 Flood Prevention Work on A358 at Black Arch Bridge Sampford Brett - During the road closure at Black Arch Bridge for major drainage work, there had been issues with “rat-runs” through the surrounding minor roads. The result of the work however has successfully prevented flooding around the area of the bridge.
- 4.9 A358 Fatal Road Vehicle Accident July 2019 – The Chairman again raised the concerns of the Parish Council with regards safety along the A358 stretch of road at the Sampford Brett junction. Now that the Inquest has been held the Parish will seek a meeting with the Police and Somerset County Highways to explore options to potentially reduce accidents at this location.
- 4.10 Parish Precept - Cllr Swan informed the meeting that the Parish Precept (*which is the Parish Council contribution shown on council tax bills*), overall total would increase for 2020/2021 by £300 to £3,100. This is due to additional responsibilities being disseminated by the District Council to the Parish Council. The Parish Council has also formalized the management of the Village Website to Sonder Digital at a cost of £24 per month from April 2020 (refer to 5 December 2019 Minutes item 732).
- 4.11 Retirement of Parish Clerk, Mrs G Yandle - Mrs Yandle will be stepping down from the role of Clerk from the 31 March 2020 after 25 years’ service. The Parish Councillors presented Mrs Yandle with flowers and a personalised slate plaque. The Chairman and Councillors thanked her for the tremendous contribution she had made to the Parish Council.

This concluded the Chairman’s report and Members of the Public asked if there were any questions – none received.

5. CLERK’S FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2020

The balance in the Bank as at the start of this financial year 1st April 2019 was £4,720.

The precept of £2,800 was received in April making the Parish Council income for the year £7,520.

PAYMENTS

Village Hall Rent.....	£64.00
Internal Audit	£25.00
Insurance	£286.05
New Clerk – Home Working Insurance	£8.78
Somerset Association of Local Councils	£79.14
Training.....	£190.00
Clerk’s salary	£1,231.05
Flood Group – donation towards expenses	£5.00
IDverde (Emptying of dog bins for the year)	£227.76
PCC Churchyard maintenance.....	£150.00
	TOTAL £2,266.87

No other grants were made this year and the Bank balance as at the end of March will be approximately £4,900. This is approximate in case there is anything else to pay before the end of March 2020. The Councillors will approve the accounts, probably at their meeting in June. The Parish Council have increased the precept by £300 to £3,100 for 2020/2021 this year.

Mrs Yandle informed the meeting that she had decided to retire at the end of March due to Parkinson's becoming more of a problem and so the Parish Council had to advertise for a new Clerk. Mrs T-A Biss has been appointed and Mrs Yandle gave her best wishes to her. The advert for a new Clerk was inserted in the West Somerset Free Press, other newspapers in the group, Pathways and SALC website and the cost amounted to £268.80.

Mrs Yandle thanked Cllr Swan and all Councillors past and present for supporting her over the last 25 years. Paul Hill was the Chairman when she started and there was no interview as such. They wanted someone to go and take the minutes so Mrs Yandle turned up and was told that the Clerk should only speak when asked by the Councillors to do so. Mrs Yandle's son was just starting school so it gave her something to do at the time. Her son is now 30 and he and his wife are expecting their first child next month. Mrs Yandle commented that she "didn't expect to be still doing the job 25 years later!" but is now expecting to be spending a lot of time with her first grandchild.

6. OPEN DISCUSSION

The Chairman opened the meeting up to the Public.

Members of the Public wished it to be recorded that they were very happy that the "storm grates" were regularly checked and cleared and that the "diverter plate" on the stream could now be lifted.

Cllr Blazey informed the meeting that the Parish Council has available 72 "Aqua Sacks" which are reusable and a modern alternative to sandbags. They are stored in the garage and are free to residents when required. Also available are 2 hessian sacks and very large (sofa size) waterproof bags.

Cllr Blazey confirmed that the Emergency Plan was still in draft and requested volunteers for Response Coordinators. Government websites are available to provide information on current river levels and flood alerts. The Wetland Trust is providing funding to monitor water levels.

Discussion took place regarding the Coronavirus and possible implications for the high percent of elderly residents in Sampford Brett Village. The Parish Council believed that the community would work together and be "good neighbours" supporting those who required help. The Parish Council would follow guidance as provided through Government Organisations.

The Chairman thanked all those in attendance and the meeting closed at 7.10pm.

Chairman's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Websites available for further information:

NHS	nhs.uk/coronavirus
River and Seal Levels	https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/river-and-sea-levels
Sign Up to Flood Warning	https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings?
Somerset County Council Public Rights of Way	www.somerset.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/public-rights-of-way/
Somerset West & Taunton Council	www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/
West Somerset Flood Group	www.westsomersetflood.org.uk