**There was a meeting of Chawleigh Parish Council on Wednesday 13th December 2023 at 7.30pm held in the Chawleigh Village Hall.**

**Members Present:** Parish Councillors Steve Godley (Chairman); Daphne Cockram; Henry Martin; Jan Flavin; Roger Ayling; Clive Eginton; Bert Batty.

**Also Present:** District Councillor Steve Keable

**In attendance:** Rob Martin, Clerk

**No members of the general public**.

*.*

**MINUTES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **2324-116** | **APOLOGIES**  Apologies were received from Cllr. Dave Stewart because he was attending a work event. The apologies were accepted by the parish council.  County Cllr. Margaret Squires had also apologized for her absence. |
| **2324-117** | **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)**  The following personal interests were declared:   * The Chairman in relation to anything on the playing field & CCT * Cllr. Cockram in relation to anything on the playing field and the small shed as she was on both of the committees involved. * Cllr. Flavin whose husband was involved with the CCT * Cllr. Martin as a trustee of the Parish Lands Charity |
| **2324-118** | **MINUTES**  On a proposal by Cllr. Martin, seconded by Cllr. Batty, it was **Resolved** to approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 27th September 2023. |
| **2324-119** | **COUNCIL REPORTS** |
|  | 1. **To receive the Clerk’s Report**   The clerk reported that when he had visited the Village Store manager, he had suffered a car accident whilst driving home, followed by an unexpectedly intrusive operation three days later which had left him somewhat unwell for some time following the last meeting. As a result, a number of tasks had not been completed in the interim.   1. **To receive the Chairman’s Report**   The chairman reported that the repair of the bus stop glass would not be done until the new year.  An email had been received from Mr & Mrs Wellman about a potential breach of planning laws, so the clerk would respond to the email and pass the matter on to MDDC enforcement.  He had also seen speed limit stickers on wheelie bins whilst on a visit to Yorkshire which he thought were an effective way of reminding drivers to keep to the speed limit. He would research the availability and cost of providing these for the general public to have.   1. **Other Councillor Reports**  * Cllr. Eginton was concerned about sunken manhole covers in the centre of the village, particularly at the Earl of Portsmouth Crossroads, which he believed were the responsibility of the utility companies. The utilities should be contacted to request that these were rectified. * Cllr. Eginton also expressed concern about contacts, email or letter, from the MDDC Waste and Recycling team to some residents saying that they were not recycling properly. This seemed to be fairly arbitrary, and the message was very blunt. District Cllr. Keable said that he was aware of this and action was being taken to ensure that any future correspondence would be less blunt. * Cllr. Eginton also had concerns that the Moortown properties appeared to be having other peoples rubbish placed on top of their bins late at night or early morning on collection day, which would be a real problem when MDDC stopped collecting ‘side-waste’ in the new year. District Cllr. Keable undertook to have this investigated and to try and identify the culprits. * Cllr. Ayling had reviewed some policy documents which he had sent to the clerk. These would be considered by the clerk and presented for adoption at a future meeting. He had also reported a blocked drain just above his house on the DCC website. * Cllr. Flavin was concerned about the telephone box, which looks a bit scruffy, and its surroundings needed weeding. The telephone box was used as an information kiosk. * Cllr. Cockram reminded the clerk that he was going to write to the Highways team about the appalling state of the A377 at Eggesford Crossroads. She also brought up the issue of dying trees in the Rectory which she might mention when she next goes that way. |
|  | *The Chairman declared the meeting closed.* |
| **2324-120** | **PUBLIC AND OTHER BODIES’ SESSION**  To hear reports from and allow questions to be asked to District and County Councillors and to take any questions from members of the public.   1. **County Councillor**   County Cllr. Squires was not present and had not sent a report.   1. **District Councillor**   District Cllr. Keable reported as follows:  1. The on-going Devolution Deal for Devon aims to ensure fair funding for the entire county, allowing local decision-making on how funds are allocated. Despite Plymouth withdrawing from the deal, the County and Districts are continuing their progress.  2. Following strong representation to oppose the closure of rail ticket offices, the proposal has been abandoned, we were pleased to play our part in this.  3. Efforts to secure the vital mobile library service were unsuccessful, with Devon County Council voting to discontinue the service from February 2024.  4. Recent legal enactments led to the adoption of new policies on Damp and Mould, as well as Recharges. This reflects a commitment to tenant satisfaction and housing standards. Tenant engagement initiatives, including drop-in events, neighbourhood walks, and discussions on planning applications, have proven successful.  5. A detailed report by the Waste Team highlights that 50% of residual waste could be recycled by residents at no extra cost. Efforts to educate the public and attend strategic waste committee’  s aim to increase recycling rates.  6. The Bin It 123 initiative has positively impacted recycling rates, and there is new guidance in relation to the collection of side waste. The Net Zero Advisory Group has been reinstated to support sustainability goals, and collaborations with various organizations aim to address environmental concerns.  7. Updates on projects under 3 Rivers Development Limited showcase progress. Plans for the closure of 3 Rivers Development Limited are underway, targeting a cessation of trading by March 31, 2024.  8. The Quarter 2 Outturn Budget Performance shows a significant improvement, with a  forecast General Fund overspend of £196k, a remarkable £800k underspend against the approved budget.  9. There is ongoing work in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the  2024/25 budget process, including proposed savings and tax base approval. There is an  emphasis on reducing the deficit and encouraging member input for revenue growth.  10. The launch of the Customer Portal (My Mid Devon) has seen over 1000 registrations, with waste collection being a popular service. The annual Residents Survey is live, providing an opportunity for community input until December 13th.  11. We are continuing to collaborate with 3 other local authorities on a Joint Strategy, focused on developments such as Culm Garden Village, Cullompton Station, High Street Relief Road, and M5 Junction 28. Draft Masterplans for Crediton and upcoming plans for Tiverton signal future developments. As a sub-regional strategy this document will be used to the case for Government investment into Mid Devon.  12. Initiatives to increase car park usage include tariff adjustments and incentivising permits. A working group with local community representatives has been established as a consultative and policy recommending group.  13. Mid Devon Leisure has implemented sustainable initiatives, discontinuing single-use plastic shoe covers, removing large vending machines, and installing recycling bins for sports drink bottles. Challenges in swimming pool chemical supply were addressed by eliminating single use packaging and opting for containers made from at least 30% recycled polymer.  14. Our Leisure Centres supports low-income members through concessionary discounting and introduces services for younger demographics including affordable access for young people has been prioritised, with efforts to counter inflationary impacts. Care leavers up to age 25 now enjoy a 100% discount on leisure memberships. Strategic pricing absorbs inflationary increases, reinvesting in services. There are ambitious plans for further improvements are underway and will be announced through the local media.  **Chawleigh**  15. Butts Close tree: Parish Council may proceed at their own risk to light the tree for festive seasons.  *This was noted.*  16. Butts Close Green: Request is being considered by Mid Devon for gates to be installed and the area to be used for dog walking – Parish Council views sought.  *Chawleigh Parish councillors did not actively support this proposal and local views would be sought from all houses in Butts Close.*  17. Road rainwater run-off while there are localised concerns within the village the A377 at Eggesford junction is of major concern. Reports have been submitted and followed through.  *The parish council will be making its own representations on this.*  18. Fly-tipping in Rougemont’s Lane have been reported earlier in October – does the Parish Council view this as a problem.  *The parish council was not aware of this, so it is not a general problem here, maybe just a one-off incident.*  19. Waste Collection – are there any issues reported through Parish Councillors.  *Dealt with under councillors reports above.*   1. **Members of the public**   There were no members of the public present. |
|  | *The Chairman reconvened the meeting.* |
| **2324-121** | **FOOTPATH WORKS**  Cllr. Batty reported that there was a pothole at Stone Mill which had turned into more of a trench than a hole. This had been reported but was unlikely to be progressed until the new year. |
| **2324-122** | **ROAD SIGNS**  The chevron sign at the bottom of Chawleigh Hill had been repaired. There was another finger sign that was broken and the chairman undertook to see whether all the parts were there so he could repair it. |
| **2324-123** | **BUS SHELTER**  As mentioned in the chairman’s report above, the repairs would now have to wait until the new year. |
| **2324-124** | **MUD ON ROAD**  This had been caused by the removal of a hedge which had not been fully cleared. The chairman would look to discuss the situation with the owners of the property and ask what long term plan there was to rectify this. |
| **2324-125** | **SHED LEASE**  Still no progress on this, but the clerk would attempt to get the solicitor to push harder to finalise the document. |
| **2324-126** | **BANK RECONCILIATION**  The 30th November 2023 Bank Reconciliation statement was approved. |
| **2324-127** | **RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS COMPARED TO BUDGET**  The statement of Receipts and Payments compared to Budgets for the period from 1st April 2023 to 30th November 2023 was received and noted. |
| **2324-128** | **RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS SCHEDULE**  On a proposal by Cllr. Eginton, seconded by Cllr. Batty, it was **Resolved** to approve the payment of the invoices on the schedule below for the period since the last meeting: |
|  | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **PAYMENTS** |  |  |  | | **Payment to** | **Services** | **Amount**  **£** | **Payment No.** | | **2023/2024** |  |  |  | | Lilian Jones | Caretaker – December 2023 | 152.08 | SO | | RJ Martin | Salary December 2023 | 332.92 | 2324-24 | | HMRC | Tax Deduction December 2023 | 83.20 | 2324-24 | | IONOS | Website Domain – Dec 2023 | 4.80 | Card | | IONOS | Email Access – Dec 2023 | 7.20 | Card | | MDDC | Verge Cutting | 656.28 | 2324-27 | | Lapford Parish Council | Training | 100.00 | 2324-28 | | Chawleigh Village Store | Two instalments of subsidy | 3,000.00 | Transfer | |  |  |  |  | | **RECEIPTS** |  |  |  | | **Receipt from** | **Services** | **Amount**  **£** | **Method** | | **2023/2024** |  |  |  | | Jane Hall | Shop Rental | 213.45 | BAC | | NatWest Bank | Interest | 4.86 | BAC |   In addition, payments will be made for invoices received since the agenda was set. |
| **2324-129** | **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**  To consider the following Planning Applications and to agree comments: |
|  | 1. **Planning Applications made since the last meeting** |
|  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Reference** | **Location** | **Proposal** | | None |  |  |  1. **Decisions made by Mid Devon District Council since the last meeting**  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Reference** | **Location** | **Proposal** | **Decision** | | 23/01540/HOUSE | Oak Barn  Chawleigh  Chulmleigh  Devon | Erection of double garage with games room above | Full Permission Granted |  1. **Other Planning Matters**   None |
| **2324-130** | **2024/2025 BUDGET AND PRECEPT**  A revised set of budget papers had been circulated by the clerk, taking into account actual spending up to and including 6th December 2023 in order to have a solid starting point for the consideration of budgets and reserves.  The decisions required were to adopt the detailed budget, review the reserves and to set the precept for the coming year.  On a proposal by the Chairman, seconded Cllr. Batty, the following were **Resolved:**   1. The detailed **Budget** was adopted as presented (see Appendix A) 2. The **Earmarked Reserves** would be adjusted so that a balance could be built up in order to replace the dilapidated playground unit which had an estimated cost of £18,000 but was likely to be up to £20,000 given the time that had elapsed since a quotation had been sought. The adjustments were that the reserve shown as ‘Chawleigh Playing Field Event 2019’ (£1,076.88) would be reallocated to the Equipment Reserve and that £5,000 would be taken from the General Reserve and also used to enhance the equipment funds. Alongside the £2,000 already earmarked this means that £8,076.88 would go towards the equipment. The clerk would contact County Cllr. Squires to see if a further £1,000 could be obtained from her Community Grant fund. 3. The **Precept** for 2024/2025 would be set at **£15,000**, an increase of £830 over the current year. The Band D charge would rise from its current £54.23 to £57.11 (5.3%), a difference of £2.88 for the year, or just 24 pence a month.   The clerk noted that, if everything goes to plan, the **General Reserve** balance by 31st March 2025 would stand at just over **£10,000** or 67% of the precept, well within the advised range for this size of parish council. |
| **2324-131** | **MEETING DATES 2024**  It was agreed that, subject to the clerk’s other commitments the schedule of meeting dates would be as follows:  31st January 2024, 27th March 2024, 15th May 2024, 26th June 2024, 31st July 2024, 18th September 2024, 30th October 2024, 11th December 2024. |
| **2324-132** | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  The next meeting of Chawleigh Parish Council is scheduled to be Wednesday 31st January 2024, in Chawleigh Village Hall at 7.30pm. |
| **2324-133** | **CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS**  On a proposal by the chairman, seconded by Cllr. Cockram, it was **Resolved** to close the meeting to the public and press on the basis of confidential business and personal details that needed to be considered. |
| **2324-134** | **CHAWLEIGH VILLAGE STORE AND POST OFFICE**  The effect on the village store of providing the stock subsidy, currently amounting to £3,000, had been remarkable with the shelves full and many more lines being available. It was unanimously agreed that the clerk, with assistance from Cllr. Batty, would be delegated to manage the remaining possible subsidy to ensure that the vast improvement continues. |
| **2324-135** | **MEETING CLOSURE**  The meeting closed at 9.15pm |

Signed:…………………………………

Date:……………………………………

**ALL DOCUMENTS ARE AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT BY REQUEST**