

Minutes of the Castle Cary Annual Town Forum
Held on Wednesday 14th May 2025 in Caryford Hall 7pm

Present: Chair of Town Council: Trevor Oats
Town Councillors: Frances Alden, David Gill, Judi Morison, Pek Peppin
Somerset Councillors: Cllr Henry Hobhouse
Town Clerk: Lisa Davis
Deputy Clerk: Terena Isaacs
Youth Connect Southwest: Rob Rumming-Pain
Millbrook Surgery: Helen Littell
Toybox Pre-School: Laura Tilling

16 Local clubs' societies & organisations & their representatives attended the meeting bringing their display stands from 6.15pm onwards.

Approximately 42 members of the community attended the meeting

1.	Welcome Judi Morison welcomed everyone and all Town Councillors introduced themselves
2.	Apologies: Linda Ball, Margaret Bebbington, Philippa Biddlecombe, Gavin Crisp, Angela Piggott, Tom Trouton Cllr Kevin Messenger
3.	Approval of the 2024 Annual Town Meeting Minutes The 2024 Minutes been circulated prior o the meeting and were accepted.
4.	Chairs Report Judi Morison presented her report and introduced Trevor Oats as the new Chair of Castle Cary Town Council (CCTC). Judi thanked the Scouts for attending the Volunteer celebration with the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset and also thanked Ansford School for releasing the young people for the day – they did everyone proud! Trevor Oats thanked Judi Morison for coaching him to be Chair and reminded everyone that all CCTC meetings are open and people are encouraged to attend. The Neighbourhood Development Plan is due to be reviewed and volunteers are needed to be part of the team to complete the review. Trevor thanked Judi for all her hard work and commended her for doing a great job over the last seven years.

5.	Presentation from Somerset Councillors Cllr Henry Hobhouse reported that Abri have submitted an appeal against the decision relating to the TRO for Foxes Run. A decision has been taken by Somerset Council to go out to tender for the design and build for the collapsed culvert on Station Road and this should be completed by September. Somerset Council have set their budget for 2025/26 and Henry reported that the budget for 2024/25 was £20million underspent, which means that reserves can be doubled. In response to a query regarding the bank on the A371, Henry reported that three quotes are being sought and it is hoped that works would start in July and are likely to take six months to complete. Judi Morrison thanked Henry Hobhouse and Kevin Messenger for all their support during the year.
6.	Market House project update Pek Peppin gave an update on the Market House project and advised that informal tours of the building can be arranged for those who are interested. Please contact Pek if you are interested pek.peppin@castle-cary.co.uk
7.	Youth provision update Rob Rumming-Pain from Youth Connect Southwest gave an update. He reported that they were really lucky to be able to use the Pavilion for the weekly sessions and also that they had secured additional funding to be able to offer summer holiday trips and activities for the young people. Numbers are increasing and the wide range of activities include issue based activities. Youth Connect Southwest work with Ansford School and will be offering a golden ticket for an exclusive event for the current Year 6 children at the Primary School who will be able to join in September. In response to a query from a resident regarding how young people find out about the youth provision, Rob confirmed that the sessions and activities are promoted on social media, noticeboards and through the schools. A member of the public asked if the Pavilion would continue to be used once the works were completed. Rob confirmed that they will continue to use the Pavilion and are looking forward to the improved facilities and equipment.
8.	Millbrook Surgery Helen Littell reported on how Millbrook Surgery is adapting to the recent and ongoing growth in their patient population. A resident thanked the surgery for their co-ordination of vaccinations.

9.	Toybox Pre-School Laura Tilling gave an update on Toybox Pre-School and explained how important the facility is for the whole community. A 25 year lease for the building is now in place which means that funding can now be applied for. A Good Ofsted report has been received but there is a need for an outdoor play area to be able to improve further. There has been an increase in children requiring additional support/facilities since COVID but the government funding only just covers the basic staffing levels. Laura thanked Lyn Norman who manages the pre-school.
10.	Budget presentation Judi Morison reported on the finances and budget for CCTC. Trevor confirmed that CCTC would do everything they could to retain free parking in Castle Cary.
11.	Questions and other matters for discussion A member of the public spoke about how privileged they feel to live in a very special place where community is everything and how they were blown away at the volunteer event that was held at the Market House. They thanked Judi and fellow Councillors for all the work that they do for everyone in the community and for all the volunteer work that is undertaken. A resident reported that they were very saddened at the situation between CCTC and Ansford Parish Council (APC) and asked if there was anything that could be done by the community to help. Trevor Oats confirmed that CCTC will endeavor to breakdown the barriers and will continue to work with APC. Rev'd Elizabeth Isted pleaded that the Annual Joint meeting is re-instated next year. It was noted that 11 Ansford residents were in attendance at this meeting. A resident reported that during a discussion with BT regarding an issue with a landline, they had confirmed that they are moving to digital voice.
	Judi Morison thanked everyone for coming and the meeting closed at 8.18pm Next meeting 2026 to be agreed.