

**DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Held on Monday 2 March 2020 at 1930 at The Village Hall, Stowey Road Fivehead**

**Present:** Mrs K Beacham (Chair); Mrs L Howard; Mrs P Brett; Mr R Wynn; Mr J Westworth; County Councillor C Aparicio-Paul; District Councillor M Cavill. Mrs J Wardle (Clerk/RFO).

**3103 Public participation**

Seven members of the Public attended the meeting. With Members' permission, the Chair amended the agenda order to allow the Public to comment and ask questions on two items.

a) New House Farm

MC reported that the Area North Committee on 26 Feb 2020 deferred a decision on the application awaiting further reports. MC read a statement re the planning application and his involvement. MC advised that the application had been taken to the Area North Committee in the interests of transparency. PB asked which further reports have been requested by the Area North Committee. (Post-meeting note: MC has advised that the information to be requested are a Travel Plan; an Ecological Appraisal; and an Environmental Assessment.) Members of the Public asked about the process followed, and the decision made, by the Parish Council to support the application. The Chair reminded the meeting that, whilst supporting the application by a majority, the Parish Council had raised a number of concerns with SDC Planning which were taken into consideration.

Four members of the Public left the meeting.

b) The Crown Inn

Given the potential sale of the Crown Inn and any associated change of use, PB reported that a 'Save Our Crown' Group of parishioners has formed. Their proposal is to hold a two-part meeting (in April? 2020): Part 1 being a Parish Council meeting to discuss the benefits and implications of registering the pub as an Asset of Community Value (ACV); Part 2 being a meeting run by the Group to discuss what parishioners want from the pub premises and what support is available should the community want to consider putting in a bid to buy the premises. The owner of the Crown Inn expressed his concerns about the impact of an ACV on the potential sale, and his disappointment in the lack of ongoing support for the pub from parishioners.

One member of the Public left the meeting.

The Public session finished at 2000; two members of the Public stayed for the remainder of the meeting.

**3104 Councillor's Report**

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. CAP highlighted the following (full report at Annex A):

- a) A second round of Improving Lives Grants will be announced shortly – Members were asked to consider submitting bids. *Action: Clerk to note for Environment Working Group agenda.*
- b) A £1m climate change fund has been created by SCC – this will be available for parish and town councils to bid for green initiatives. *Action: Clerk to note for Environment Working Group agenda.*
- c) SCC Leader David Fothergill has now formally written to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, kickstarting the case for One Somerset – A Unitary Council for Somerset.
- d) Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) has launched a fresh procurement to find new contractors to roll-out superfast broadband across the two counties. See Min 3110.

CAP left the meeting.

**3105 District Councillor's Report**

Nothing further to report.

**3106 Apologies for absence**

Mrs N Cameron; Mr K Male

**3107 Minutes**

- a) The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, previously circulated, held on 3 Feb 2020 were approved. Proposed PB and seconded LH. Carried unan.

**3108 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

JWe declared an interest in the planning application for New House Farm.

**3109 Matters Arising from the Minutes (3 February 2020) and Raised by Members**

a) Cemetery:

- (i) KB reported that KM has identified a potential contractor to move the spoil. Further details including a quote are required from KM.

(ii) The dead tree has been removed and the logs stacked. The potential to use the logs as a wildlife habitat will be considered at the next meeting. *Action: Clerk to note for Environment Working Group agenda.*

(iii) The ICCM advice re Transfer of Exclusive Rights of Burial was noted and Members approved appropriate wording for the Risk Management Policy. The Clerk advised that the Conditions, Fees and all associated documentation for the cemetery are published on the website – all enquiries including those from funeral directors are directed to the website.

b) Assets

(i) Langford Corner – an annotated plan showing the area maintained for many years by the Parish Council has been sent to the owners to enable preparation of a transfer document.

(ii) *Action: Clerk to get quotes for legal advice on the process, costs and benefits of establishing ownership of Village Green.* No progress – awaiting resolution of Langford Corner ownership.

c) Historic Rights of Way review – PB reported on the Ramblers' Association website <https://dontloseyourway.ramblers.org.uk/> which can be used to identify and report 'lost' pathways. *Action: Clerk to note for Environment Working Group agenda.*

d) Telephone kiosk restoration and defibrillator briefing – the Clerk reported that BT need to be consulted re power supply when a decision is made on how to use the kiosk. An expert briefing on defibrillators will be given prior to the Parish Council meeting starting at 1930 on 27 April 2020 – parishioners are encouraged to attend. *Action – Clerk to advertise defibrillator briefing.*

e) Website – the Clerk reported that the existing website design and content is in the process of being transferred to a new platform that meets Accessibility requirements and has a commercial support service. Testing is in hand to rectify any immediate issues; further content and design improvements will be made in the future.

f) 75<sup>th</sup> VE Day celebrations (8-10 May 2020) – PB reported that a Working Group will meet on 3 March 2020 to plan the events.

g) Environment Strategy Working Group

(i) RW reported that SSDC had donated over 60 tree saplings; only 7 (Scots Pine) of these remain unallocated after a good response from parishioners asking to plant them on their land.

(ii) As recommended by the Working Group, Members considered the draft Environment Strategy and then approved the accompanying draft **Resolution: Noting that in 2019 the five Somerset Local Authorities passed resolutions to declare or recognise 'Climate Emergencies' and have since agreed to collaborate to produce and deliver a Climate Emergency Strategy for Somerset, Fivehead and Swell Parish Council acknowledges the climate emergency and has agreed an Environmental Strategy structured around, and in support of, the themes in the South Somerset Environment Strategy (October 2019).** Proposed KB and seconded JWe. Carried unan.

*Action: Clerk to include development of an Environmental Action Plan on the agenda for the Working Group.*

(iii) RW reported that the owner of the Old Rectory in Swell has suggested that she might offer her formerly productive and large kitchen garden and orchard area for use by the village as a space for individual or community growing or similar. This could work as a growing, healthy living, wellbeing and community space nexus for the parish. The Clerk also reported that two requests have been received from parishioners recently for allotments. Members were reminded that if six such requests are received by the Parish Council, there is a requirement under the Smallholding and Allotments Act 1908, to address their request (but there is no time scale). *Action: Clerk to note possible community growing area for Environment Working Group agenda.*

h) Blocked drains and gullies in Swell – Highways have advised that there appears to be a mixture of issues: the overgrown ditches are connected into the road gullies and these need to be jetted. The superintendent is aware of this and the jetting will be programmed. Highways will look again into the ditch situation and consider contacting the landowner. *Action: Clerk to check with Highways on progress with ditch/drain clearance.*

i) Waste bin on Langford Corner – KM, KB and the Clerk had reviewed the site and agreed that professional work was required to re-site the waste bin by the telephone kiosk. Concurrently, the new information board would be installed on Langford Corner. Quotes will be sought when requirements are known. LH asked if the unsightly road sign 'Langford Close' could be moved against the wall. *Action: Clerk to contact Highways about repositioning road sign.*

j) Annual Parish Meeting (1900 on Wednesday 29 Apr 2020 in Baptist Chapel) – the Clerk confirmed that Steve Mewes from Somerset Wildlife Trust has agreed to speak.

- k) Wall adjacent to War Memorial Green – the property owners have confirmed that they have made arrangements to get the wall repaired when the weather improves. They have tidied away the rubble and confirmed that the wall is still very sturdy and the damage is superficial.
- l) Crown Inn – see Min 3103b).
- m) St Martin’s Churchyard tree removal – four quotes sought; two were received and considered for best value. **Resolution: to award contract to remove overgrown tree in St Martins Churchyard to Woodland and Garden Tree Services.** Proposed JWe and seconded LH. Carried unan. A Faculty will be required from the Diocese (via the PCC) prior to any work being undertaken. *Action: Clerk to confirm adequacy of £5M Public Liability insurance with BHIB and then to notify the PCC (for Faculty) and the successful/unsuccessful bidders.*
- n) SCC Chair’s Awards for Service to the Community 2020 – deferred to next meeting; deadline is 12 May 2020.
- o) Request to establish a traffic mirror inside St Martins Churchyard wall – noting that the mirror was approved by the PCC and no Faculty is required, Members agreed that the mirror should be fitted on a pole, close to the wall for easy mowing access. The cost is covered privately.
- p) SCC Improving Lives grant – the Clerk reported that a new Parish Map has been painted by an artist in the village. This will be scanned, and then images and text added before the manufacture of a noticeboard. Walks leaflets are being prepared digitally using Parish Online. These will require ground-truthing and detailed descriptions and photographs before publication on the website and in leaflet form. Volunteers to help with this task will be sought in the coming month.
- q) Village Messaging Service (NextDoor [www.nextdoor.co.uk](http://www.nextdoor.co.uk)) – PB reported a successful initial uptake in the village; further subscribers are encouraged. This platform will complement, rather than replace, the existing village email group. *Action: PB to publicise Next Door messaging service.*
- r) Great British Spring Clean – the Clerk reported that the parish’s Litter Champion had not registered for this event as work by our local litter volunteers is continuous through the year. Four volunteers (P&V Fouracre and D&N Cameron) collected fifteen bags of litter on the A378 during the recent road closure – Members expressed their gratitude.

### 3110 Correspondence Received

- a) Complaints from a parishioner in Swell about the lack of superfast broadband were discussed. Over a year ago Gigaclear put in all the cables but since then nothing has happened. Gigaclear is now in receivership and Openreach are not involved. As noted at Min 3104, Connecting Devon and Somerset are progressing with the retendering process with a successful applicant expected to be appointed in November 2020. MC advised that parishioners may also wish to investigate alternative publicly funded schemes such as Gigabit Broadband Vouchers; Rural Broadband Vouchers; or the Broadband Universal Service Obligation due to be launched in March 2020. *Action: Clerk to advise parishioner of broadband schemes.*
- b) A parishioner has offered to host an open garden/house event at Cathanger House in May 2020. LH reported that discussions were ongoing about detailed arrangements.

### 3111 Reports

- a) Playing Field – PB reported that the application to the National Lottery for a grant for a new secure storage container had been unsuccessful. A football team from Taunton has expressed an interest in using the facilities for games.
- b) Highways – the A378 works were completed in two weeks; the extensive verge damage to the Top Road during the A378 closure is being reviewed by Highways.
- c) Environment - free wildflower seeds have been applied for.
- d) No reports from Village Hall, SALC, Cemetery or Rights of Way.
- e) Police report available at <https://www.police.uk/>. One crime reported in January 2020. Lead thefts from local churches – vigilance of any suspicious activity around St Martins Church requested.
- f) Asset/Maintenance Check Report: minor storm debris in cemetery. Report book with KB.

### 3112 Planning - see <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planningsearch/> for details

- a) Application No: 20/00258/HOU and 20/00259/LBC To replace the wood panelled and glazed recessed porch with a cedarwood and blue Lias stone porch in line with the existing stone external wall. North Barn Cathanger Lane Fivehead. No objection noting the requirement for Listed Building Consent will cover any Historic Buildings concerns.
- b) Application No 19/02729/FUL New House Farm, Stowey Road – see Min 3103. The timescale for submission of reports and their further consideration is currently unknown.

- c) Pre-planning application visit to Dog Club – no official report. A member of the Public who attended the visit gave a short debrief with the Chair's permission. No further action until an application is submitted.
- d) Glendale site – the Clerk reported that the Agent had advised that a Traffic Management Plan will be submitted to SSDC as part of the discharge of conditions application. This should be viewable on the SSDC website although it is not normally subject to a formal consultation process. A copy will be sent direct to the Parish Council. Further work on site clearance was conducted during February - SSDC Planning are aware of the scope and date of these works.
- e) Neighbourhood Plan Seminar (25 Feb 2020) – PB debriefed on the process, pros/cons, and funding opportunities. Members agreed that a Neighbourhood Plan is not suitable at this time but that the situation would be kept under review noting that a Housing Needs Survey (see item 3112f below) is key evidence for a Neighbourhood Plan.
- f) Housing Needs Survey – the Clerk reported that, despite best endeavours, it had been impossible to obtain any further quotes for this work. Despite requests by MC, no reply had been received from SSDC re the need for multiple quotes in a grant application. Members agreed that the quote from CCS is probably the only option but that the further requests for information should be made to SSDC. See also item 3112g) below.
- g) Potential development on the paddock above Ganges Close. Members noted the developer's proposal to organise a consultation event to show different possible solutions to develop the site, the constraints the site has, and possible types and styles of housing. Members asked the Clerk to ask the developer if they would be willing to fund a Housing Needs Survey as it should provide an independent, informed, and up-to-date view of what our parishioners' housing needs are. *Action: Clerk to contact developer re funding of independent Housing Needs Survey.*

### 3113 Finance

The financial position of the Council was received. Two bank reconciliations were signed off by the Chairman. An interim statement was scrutinised: **Resolution: to approve £25 overspend on office costs (meeting materials and Norton subscription).** Proposed KB and seconded PB. Carried unan.

- a) Payments authorised during the previous month:
  - (i) Parish Magazine Printing – newsletter print – £250.58
  - (ii) J Wardle – Norton Security (1 year; 1 device) - £9.99 (inc VAT)
- b) Payments to be authorised:
  - (i) J Wardle - Clerk/RFO Salary (Dec) - £269.20
  - (ii) J Wardle - Homeworking allowance - £18
  - (iii) HMRC - Clerk/RFO PAYE - £67.40
  - (iv) J Wardle – stationery - £20.96 (inc VAT)
  - (v) Woodland & Garden Tree Services – cemetery tree removal - £528 (inc VAT)
- c) Income received during the previous month:
  - (i) NatWest - Interest (Jan) - £5.84
  - (ii) Woodlouse Conservation - newsletter advert - £27.50

### 3114 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

- a) Chairman – apologies for next meeting; LH will Chair.
- b) Clerk - an invitation from SSDC to respond to a Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) - Call for Development Sites 2020 was received too late for the 2 March 2020 agenda and has a deadline prior to the next Parish Council meeting. Noting that no sites in the parish are included in the 2018 HELAA, Members agreed that a reply was not required at this time.
- c) Councillors - PB reported complaints about a small brown dog running loose and fouling on Stowey Road. Members confirmed that this is a recurring problem that poses a potential danger to pedestrians and road users. Anyone with concerns about a dog's behaviour in a public space can report it at: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/services/environmental-health/dog-related-issues/report-a-dog-attack-or-dangerous-dog/>

### 3115 Date of Next Meeting

1930 on Monday 30 March 2020 in the Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

The meeting closed at 2145.

Chairman.....

Dated.....

## Annex A – County Councillor’s Briefing Sheet - March 2020

**SCC Budget:** SCC Councillors have approved a £338m budget for its services with robust financial plans in place across the next three years. No cuts to frontline services are planned and the Council has improved its financial resilience by increasing its levels of reserves. The ambitious budget included:

- £1.5m to be spent installing 20mph advisory zones outside around half of all Somerset’s schools with the remainder to follow in 2021.
- £133.5m to fund infrastructure projects, including new schools and school expansions, as well as highways and engineering.
- a significant £6.3m investment into social care providers to help fund the increased national minimum wage for care staff, as well as ensuring high quality provision
- £4.5m to introduce a Family Safeguarding model to better protect vulnerable Children in the County.
- £2m to provide better access to bus services for residents living in rural areas including three new Slinky buses, a further nine peak time bus services and faster, more direct services from West Somerset to colleges in Taunton.
- an undertaking to maintain the authority’s General Fund reserves, vital to financial stability, at the projected end-of-year figure of £19.69m across 21/22 and 22/23.

The budget plans will see more than £775 million spent on services in the coming year and a 1.99 per cent increase in the County Council’s element of the Council Tax. The government allows a further 2 per cent increase for Councils to provide Adult Social Care.

**Climate Change Fund for Towns and Parishes:** A massive £1m climate change fund has been created by SCC –the biggest single investment of its kind in the country. The £1m pot will be available for parish and town councils to bid for green initiatives in their own patch as SCC acts on its decision to sign the national Climate Change Emergency Declaration which aims to make Somerset carbon neutral by 2030 – with a commitment to find significantly more funding in the following years. More details will be published in the next few months with clear guidelines and governance.

**Covid-19:** Every winter our SCC’s Public Health and care professionals gear up for a busy winter in preparation for flu and norovirus, and now there’s a new virus – Coronavirus (or officially COVID-19). There are no positive COVID-19 cases in the South West, but SCC’s health and care services are well prepared with well-rehearsed plans in place to deal with any potential outbreaks. Covid-19 is believed to be spread from person to person through cough droplets. Simple basic hygiene measures (which we should be doing regularly anyway) can help prevent its spread. This includes washing your hands regularly with soap and water and using a tissue when sneezing or coughing and throwing it away – the familiar ‘catch it, bin it, kill it’. Without a tissue, then use the crook of your arm rather than your hand. For the latest information, advice and guidance, check out [www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public)

**One Somerset:** Following his announcement in January, Somerset County Council Leader David Fothergill has now formally written to Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, kickstarting the case for One Somerset – A Unitary Council for Somerset. This follows an independent report commissioned by SCC and all four District councils which was published earlier this year and outlines clear benefits of switching to unitary. It is expected that around £25 million every year can be made available to reinvest and improve vital services by cutting waste and reducing duplication.

**Brain in Hand:** A digital helping hand is about to be trialled in Somerset to provide tailored support for people with mental health issues or learning disabilities. Brain in Hand is a personalised app that links the user with their carers and support teams. It provides people with their own specific ways to cope, with extra help on tap when needed. The app aims to increase a user’s independence by providing them with ways to manage their everyday life and negotiate a path that’s safe for them. It can give prompts and reminders and links to verbal responders or people’s own circle of support, who can intervene when asked, offering reassurance and the help needed to get back on track.

**Children’s Mental Health:** Somerset County Council is deploying two new teams to boost children’s mental health as part of its programme of support for children and schools available in the county. The initiative which has won £400,000 in Government trailblazer funding through the Fit for my Future partnership sees the Teams working in the Taunton and Mendip areas offering direct support to children and young people with mild to moderate mental health issues. The County Council, in partnership with Somerset CCG is now bidding for Government money to fund a wider roll-out of teams in Somerset. A decision is expected by September this year.

**Utility Company prosecutions:** Two utility firms have received significant fines after pleading guilty to roadwork’s offences. Somerset County Council brought action against Verizon UK Ltd and Western Power Distribution as part of its commitment to minimising disruption and keeping the public safe. Verizon UK Ltd pleaded guilty to one offence relating to unauthorised roadwork’s that led to substantial disruption on Taunton Road, Bridgwater and were fined £30,000 with £1,841 in costs. Western Power Distribution pleaded guilty to one offence relating to works in Kingstone, Ilminster which posed a real risk to the safety of the public and site operatives. They were fined £20,000 and ordered to pay £1,730 in costs.

**Connecting Devon and Somerset:** CDS has launched a fresh procurement to find new contractors to roll-out superfast broadband across the two counties. Working closely with Building Digital UK (BDUK) agency it follows confirmation of the Government’s funding extension for the programme– helping to provide a £38 million public investment in the region’s broadband.