

DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL
Held on Monday 5 October 2020 at 1930 - Virtual meeting online using Zoom

Present:

Mrs K Beacham - Chair (KB); Mrs Laura Howard (LH); Mr Ken Male; Mrs P Brett (PB); Mrs N Cameron; (NC); Mr R Wynn (RW); Mrs J Wardle - retiring Clerk/RFO (JW); Mrs J Parsons - new Clerk/RFO (JP); County Cllr C Paul;

Attendees confirmed that they understood remote meeting procedures and etiquette. KB advised that the meeting was being recorded using the Zoom facility and the recording would be deleted after the Minutes were agreed.

3184 Public participation

Seven Members of the Public were welcomed to the public part of the meeting. A request was heard from one of the representatives of a community group formed to try to save the village pub from change of use, for permission to have a link on the Parish Council website to the 'Save our Crown' website. The Chair proposed to look into this outside of the meeting and respond as soon as possible. Two parishioners had emailed comments to the Parish Council about planning matters so the Chair proposed to read those out at the appropriate point in the meeting. The public session was closed at 7.40 pm and the public remained in the meeting.

3185 County Councillor's Report

CP's report had been circulated to Members (see <https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-from-somerset-county-councillor-clare-paul-3/>). She added additional comments: i) to urge Members to put in any bids for the Somerset Climate Emergency grant fund which had opened on 1 October, ii) to reassure everyone that Covid cases in the district were still low and under control, and although there had appeared to have been a surge, this had been due to a technical glitch which had caused a backlog in reporting. Also, to note, cases for students living outside of the county at universities, who are still registered at their home address in Somerset, are counted in Somerset figures. iii) a new weekly update is now available from the Somerset Covid-19 Engagement Board.

3186 District Councillor's Report

No report

3187 Apologies for absence

None

3188 Minutes

The minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, previously circulated, held on 7 September 2020 were approved. Proposed by NC and seconded PB. Carried unan. Hard copies of the Minutes will be signed by the Chair at the next opportunity.

3189 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

PB declared an interest in items 7m and 10a and it was agreed that she would withdraw from the meeting when those items were to be discussed.

3190 Matters arising from the Minutes (7 Sept 2020) and raised by Members

- a) Co-option of one Member to the Council – KB welcomed Lin Elphick to the meeting who was one of the applicants. KB was pleased to have had interest from three applicants to the vacancy advertised in August, although one did not fulfil the criteria. Bruce Ferguson had applied but was unable to attend the meeting. Lin was given an opportunity to speak about her application before a vote was taken. Four Members voted for Bruce Ferguson and two voted for Lin Elphick. Lin was thanked and encouraged to reapply if there should be a vacancy in future. She left the meeting at 7.50 pm.
- b) Churchyard ground clearance and seeding – the Clerk had met with SSDC and the PCC Treasurer to discuss options to reduce costs. An updated quote had been received which proposed that the 6m sq area be rotavated, screened and reseeded, although the result might be patchy. The Treasurer felt it would be an acceptable approach. It was recommended to postpone any work to

the Spring, to give any newly seeded areas the best chance to germinate and grow. The Treasurer also pointed out some areas on the Church wall where the grouting had come away, possibly due to knocks from vehicles. The Clerk proposed to look into when the architect was next due to review the wall and report back at the next meeting. **Action:** Clerk to add ground clearance/seeding to agenda for February 2021 and budget for costs. Church wall repairs to be added to the next agenda.

- c) Cemetery – removal of spoil/reseeding – two quotes had now been received for the removal of the spoil, a costly exercise if this is to be removed completely. It was recommended that this should also be done in the Spring to help growth of newly seeded areas. Options for redistributing the spoil or removing it completely were discussed. It was agreed to add this to the next meeting agenda for further consideration of quotes for removal of spoil off-site, the preferred option. It was also noted that the War Grave was close to the spoil site and in need of restoration. **Action:** Clerk to add to agenda and circulate quotes for spoil removal.
- d) SCC Improving Lives Grant for Parish Map and Walks – two quotes from local tradesmen had been received for the erection of the new lectern style map and relocation of the waste bin. It was agreed for the work to go ahead and the reworked area should be turfed rather than seeded. **Resolution: to approve quotes for £60 inc VAT and materials for installation of the map and £50 inc VAT and materials for relocation of the waste bin to near the phone kiosk.** Proposed by RW and seconded by PB. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to obtain additional costing for turfing.
- e) Telephone kiosk restoration - Members had been sent some example photos of book kiosks and two quotes had been received for the interior shelving with a range of pricing depending on style of shelving required. It was agreed that KB would do a site visit with JP to look at shelving two sides of the kiosk, ensuring it can be easily adapted to house a defibrillator in future. The volunteer helping to refurbish the kiosk was planning to do some more work when he had time off. The electrician would be replacing the light and power guard on 12 Oct. **Action:** Clerk to meet with KB and contractor to discuss more detailed plans to consider at next meeting.
- f) Langford Corner – i) the formal transfer of ownership was ongoing and there was no further update. ii) SSDC had responded about the street sign for Langford Close being moved as it was confusing drivers. They had suggested adding a further sign on the other side of the entry to the no through road part of the close to help drivers coming from the direction of the Church. They considered the sign on the corner was not in a poor condition and proposed to leave it. It was agreed that the removal of the old sign could be considered again after the new sign is installed. **Action:** Clerk to feed back to SSDC to go ahead with additional sign at entrance of close.
- g) Somerset Climate Emergency Community Fund (CECF)/Environment Working Group (EWG) update – the Council had been approached by Somerset Wildlife Trust, to join in a shared bid with 20 other PCs to fund two posts (a Climate and Nature Networkers Coordinator and a Somerset Local Nature Partnership (SLNP) Coordinator) and had expressed an interest. If the SWT bid is successful, as a Parish we would still have a sum of £71,429 available to bid for other projects. The EWG were also considering a request from Life for a Life Memorial Forest, for a tree planting scheme and RW was to meet with the Centre for Sustainable Energy to discuss possibilities for parish communities around energy initiatives. RW had accepted an invitation from SALC to attend a free half-day online workshop on 24 Oct, to find out more about the grant funding and Somerset initiatives.
- h) Housing Needs Assessment – the draft questions had been submitted to SSDC and a new quote was expected but the department had been busy. A revised quote from CCS was also needed so the Clerk would progress with obtaining these for the next meeting. **Action:** Clerk to ask CCS to update their quote. PB to chase up SSDC quote and pass to the Clerk.

- i) Welcome Pack – requires updating. NC would progress this so it would be ready for newcomers to the village but it was noted that it is a difficult task as there is a state of flux with Covid restrictions changing etc. **Action:** NC to progress the Welcome Pack update.
- j) Parish Support Network – RW’s draft update to the informal Network had been circulated, which proposed to keep in touch on a six-monthly basis and suggested that the group could help identify new residents to the village to receive a Welcome Pack. It was agreed that the email would be sent out as drafted to lead contacts and a shortened version to be sent to all other volunteers to update them. **Action:** Clerk to send out update to the Parish Support Network key contacts, and adapt the update and send to volunteers.
- k) Stronger Somerset – KB had joined the Zoom discussion on the outline proposals from SSDC for reform of local government on 29 September. She gave a flavour of the presentation given by Alex Parmley, CEO of SSDC. Some of the key targets included delivering sustainable transport. The devolvment of projects to community level could see a greater onus on Parish Councils, who remain unsure how this will pan out for them. There would be community and development teams to support the activities. Current planning problems were raised. The system is under strain and a new planning chief had been appointed. There would be two authorities but location of the HQ had not been agreed; Wards had not yet been drawn up. The government is also considering changes to planning laws, which will see decisions coming top down, not local up. Further information can be found on the website: <https://strongersomerset.co.uk>.
- l) Planning White Paper – PB had circulated notes on the Planning White Paper (PC11-20) to all Members, who thanked her for the work she had put in. Comments had been invited by 15 Oct. It was agreed that the Parish Council should respond as if this is passed, the Council is likely to have its voice weakened in future, so it was important to respond whilst it would still be heard. PB also drew attention to Somerset Wildlife Trust who are running activities around opposing the Paper as they feel it will be catastrophic for the environment especially in rural areas. MPs were already pulling together to oppose the Paper. Members were all in agreement to oppose the Paper and the Clerk would submit the answers based on notes supplied by PB. **Action:** Clerk to complete the survey before 15 October, with support from PB.
- m) PB was placed in the Zoom waiting room for the discussion of the next two items.
- n) Crown Inn – the proposal to apply to make The Crown Inn an Asset of Community Value was discussed again, following discussions in Jan 2020. It had been intended to hold a public meeting but this had not been possible with Covid restrictions. Earlier in the year the pub had been for sale as an ongoing business, but more recently the price appeared to have been increased. It didn’t appear to have been valued properly compared to other pubs in this situation. There was now also the issue of the application of change of use which the landlord had submitted, which had made consideration of the ACV urgent. Notes had been reviewed and Members agreed these should form the basis of the application. It was agreed unanimously that the Council should do what it could to help save the pub, as it was clear from comments submitted on the planning portal that the community wanted a pub, if it could be run in a different way. **Resolution: to submit an ACV application to SSDC to help protect The Crown Inn from future change of use.** Proposed RW and seconded LH. Carried unan. It was noted the Save our Crown community group had circulated a survey via the village newsletter and the results of this would be available after 20 October. KB also clarified that Members’ spouses were able to comment on planning matters independently, as they are separate entities.
- a) Application No 20/02475/COU Crown Inn, Ganges Hill, Fivehead, change of use of Public House to residential dwelling – brought forward for consideration at this point. Extension to the deadline for comment had been requested by the PC and a response is awaited from SSDC. It was noted that over 30 public comments had already been submitted, with 28 objecting and 2 supporting and more were expected. KB read out the comments that the PC had received. These comments highlighted the general adverse reaction to the change of use, although it was

believed some people were nervous to publish comments on the website. Members felt it was the Parish Council's role to actively seek out views and ensure that these were properly expressed, therefore it was agreed that, as there is such strong feeling that the village wants to keep its pub, the application for change of use should be opposed. Other organisations/clubs including darts/skittles teams would be encouraged to contribute independently as they use the pub as a hub and their views will carry weight too. **Action:** Members to sift through comments for common themes and let the Clerk know as soon as possible, so the objection response can be submitted before 15 October (pending response from SSDC to request from PC to extend deadline to after next meeting).

PB was re-admitted to the meeting at this point.

- b) Transfer of the Pound – i) Kerseys, the Solicitor recommended by the developer, had been instructed by the Council and the transfer was underway. The transfer costs, estimated to be £500, would be funded by the developer. Scans of Identification Documents had been supplied for the Chair and Clerk, in preparation for signing of the deed. ii) JW had notified DKB Building Services that the Pound restoration work would be on hold until the Glendale development work is complete. iii) It was agreed that a tile from an environment heritage project in the late 1990s, painted by a local artist, would be incorporated into the Pound when the restoration work is done. **Action:** Clerk to update on progress at the next meeting.
- c) Community Transport SW Ltd – Documents had been circulated for the grant request. The Parish uses the hospital car service to travel from Fivehead to Musgrove Park, provided by volunteers in Langport. It was noted that there is a shortage of drivers (who use their own cars) because of Covid, so Members were happy to support a cause in need. JW confirmed that there was a limited amount still available in the s137 account until end March 2021, for grants of this kind. It was agreed that as well as donating £100, help to publicise the service could be given by adding the poster to the village notice board, and advertising in Community Matters and on social media. **Resolution: to grant £100 to Community Transport SW Ltd to support their hospital car services, under s137.** Proposed by NC and seconded by KB. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk and PB to publicise the service via community communications and notice board.
- d) Training for new Clerk and Councillor – SALC online courses in Nov/Dec were considered for providing introductory training for the new Clerk and Councillor. **Resolution: to approve payment of £90 for Part 1-3 for Clerk training and £25 for Councillor Essential training course.** Proposed by KB and seconded by LH. Carried unan.

3191 Correspondence Received

- a) Village Hall – a request for financial assistance with the VH's monthly insurance payments was considered. Support for running costs had already been given by the PC in this financial year but a significant part of the Hall's income had been lost and was unlikely to resume, due to Covid restrictions. The VH had received a small business grant but intended to use this to pay off its mortgage payments. It was suggested that it might be better to use the grant to pay running costs and instead re-mortgage, whilst lower interest rates were available, or request a mortgage holiday. They might also consult the Community Buildings representative at CCS who might be able to advise how other buildings in this situation were coping. **Action:** Clerk to write to the VH and put proposals forward to help with financial outgoings. Council to re-consider request once greater clarity on finances was available.
- b) Playing Fields had asked for their request for support with repairs to the children's play area fencing to be discussed at the next meeting as they were still waiting for quotes for the work to come in. **Action:** Clerk to add to the agenda for the next meeting.
- c) One Somerset – it was noted that an invitation to attend online discussions for One Somerset's vision for local government re-organisation had been received.

- d) Life for Life Memorial Trust – an invitation to support the charity through a bid for the Somerset Climate Emergency fund had been received and was being considered by the Environment Working Group. (See item Min 3190.)
- e) Plymouth University student survey – a request had been received for help with a survey on public perception of the increased risk of flooding on Somerset Levels. It was agreed that the link would be advertised on the Council website and via social media messaging to encourage responses from the parish. **Action:** Clerk and PB to publicise via village communication channels.
- f) Somerset Wildlife Trust – information had been passed to the Environment Working Group on reversing the risk of extinction of insects in Somerset. It was noted that this might make an interesting newsletter article for a future issue.

3192 Reports

- a) Playing Field – i) PB reported that the PF Secretary was in the process of updating all the policies. ii) Parking issues raised at the last meeting were due to increased numbers of vehicles as people were currently unable to share transport. On some occasions the football matches coincided with when the Hall was in use by the dance group increasing traffic further. These two activities were bringing in important income to both the Hall and the Playing Fields so it was hoped that if an explanation was given via the newsletter, people might be able to bear with this, as it is due to social distancing. iii) The planning officer for the planning application for the dug-outs had changed and had been in touch to suggest the pitch be rotated so the dug-outs would be on the western side, which will have less impact. The application is in the process of being resubmitted/changed.
- b) Village Hall – it was noted next meeting is on Wednesday 7 Oct.
- c) Cemetery – JW confirmed that the cemetery books had been passed to the new Clerk; the digital map is being finalised along with issues around the copyright which may need to come to the Council for approval. The Clerk will then have access to keep this updated.
- d) Highways – JW reported a traffic recording device had been on a 30mph sign on Ganges Hill for approx one week but there had been no official notification of this. It was not known whether this was a private device.
- e) Environment – an update from RW had been received earlier in the meeting – see 3190 h)
- f) Police – PB had had an encounter with a man in the village, who was seen acting suspiciously. He is aggressive and should not be approached. Police have been informed.
- g) Asset/Maintenance Check Report - PB requested to keep the report until next month.
- h) No reports from SALC, Highways and Rights of Way.

3193 Planning - see <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planningsearch/> for details. The applications below, and any received between the date of the agenda being issued and the meeting, were considered:

- a) Application No 20/01894/HOU Ganges House, Fivehead, approved STC. Noted.
- b) Application No 20/00716/OUT White Cottage, Fivehead, environmental condition requested to protect hedgerow and dormice, following publication of environmental survey. Noted.
- c) Glendale update – a response to Members queries on construction traffic management plan, tree cutting, provision for bats and communication to public had been received from Clive Miller Planning and circulated. Issues with cutting back of verges and blocked drains on Butcher's Hill were raised again. The hedges around Glendale had been cut back so the drains were now accessible so it was agreed that Highways would be contacted again to see if this could be done as soon as possible, as the recent heavy rain was causing problems for neighbouring properties and pedestrians. **Action:** Clerk to liaise with Highways on cutting back verges and rodding drains on Butcher's Hill.
- d) Planning application details on village website, email and Nextdoor – PB had published an update of all current applications on the village website under the Planning heading.

3194 Finance

The financial position of the Council was received. A bank reconciliation has been checked and signed remotely by the Chairman. The invoices for the payments below have been checked and authorised by KB and NC.

a) Payments authorised and unrecorded during the previous month:

(i) None

b) Payments to be authorised:

(i) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO salary Sept 2020 - £360

(ii) J Parsons – Homeworking allowance _ £26

(iii) J Parsons – Monthly Zoom licence (Oct) £14.30 (inc VAT)

(iv) J Parsons – Powerguard - £126 (inc VAT and delivery)

(v) J Wardle – Clerk/RFO salary Sept 2020 - £288

(vi) J Wardle – Homeworking allowance - £18

(vii) HMRC – PAYE for J Wardle - £72

c) Income received:

(i) NatWest - Interest (Aug) - £0.33

(ii) SSDC – Business Support Grant - £10,000

(iii) Hamar Fencing – Newsletter Advert - £27.50

(iv) J L Guthrie – ERoB and Interment fees - £332

d) Internal review – LH confirmed satisfactory completion of internal review covering a six-month period due to Covid 19 restrictions.

e) Noting Financial Regulation 4, Members reviewed spend and forecast by budget line and the need to move funds between budget lines to cover overspends. Overspends requiring adjustment were noted in 9 lines totalling £2641.06. All overspends were previously approved in Minutes.

Underspends on 4 lines totalling £401.42. The increase in the expenditure budget is therefore £2239.64.

Income to date was £10,754.64 above budget, primarily as a result of the £10,000 Business Support Grant from SSDC.

Resolution: to transfer excess income of £10,754.64 INTO Reserves and transfer total sum of £2239.64 OUT OF Reserve to cover the forecast and actual overspends. This will result in a NET INCREASE IN RESERVES OF £8515. Proposed by RW and seconded PB. Carried unan.

f) Banking and new signatories

The retiring clerk would continue to make payments until new signatories were approved. It was agreed that Jill Wardle and Jack Westworth would be removed as signatories and Rob Wynn and Jayne Parsons would be added. **Action:** JW would look into what was required from NatWest and discuss with KB when it would be best to implement this.

3195 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

a) Chairman

(i) An email had been received from SALC about budgeting training and KB would like the new Clerk to attend. The Clerk had agreed to attend and be reimbursed retrospectively.

b) Clerk

(i) JW had given an excellent handover of the clerk duties and handover of the financial side had begun. The Clerk requested that the handover of the finances and budgeting continue until end of October. Items for preparation would include grass maintenance contracts, newsletter advert rates, risk report and preliminary discussion of future projects for budgeting. **Action:** JW agreed to continue handover of RFO duties.

c) Councillors

i) A request from AMG Fitness had been received to advertise on the Fivehead website. Four businesses now have a page on the website, some of whom also pay for advertising in the newsletter. It was agreed this would be discussed at the next meeting and the editor's views would be sought.

ii) A query was raised on the policy for field hedge trimming on the drove side, as opposed to the inside of farmers' fields, as the hedges near Langford Manor and Swell were getting overgrown and the ditches may also need clearing. JW suggested that the Rights of Way officer could be consulted on this and they might make the necessary contact with the landowners. Action: Clerk to contact the Rights of Way officer with a map of hedges of concern.

iii) Concerns have been made over a new metal structure on a private parking area on Ganges Hill, which has been erected as a car shelter. In the interests of safety, it was agreed that Highways should be consulted for consent, as it is adjacent to the highway. Action: Clerk to report to SSDC Highways.

iv) Further complaints had been raised about the parking on pavements on Stowey Road and parishioners had been directed to the guidance in the newsletter, which was to contact 101. Reports could also be put on the Avon and Somerset website, under 'Contacting my team'. To report anonymously, you can report through Crimestoppers, but this will take longer to process.

3196 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 2 November 2020 at 1930 via Zoom

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Chairman.....

Dated.....