

MINUTES OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 6 December 2021 at 1830 at The Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

Present:

Mrs K Beacham– Chair (KB); Mr K Male (KM); Mr R Wynn (RW); Mrs N Cameron (NC); Mrs Laura Howard (LH); County Councillor Clare Paul (CP) and Mrs J Parsons - Clerk/RFO (JP).

4204 County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Paul's latest report had been circulated to Members and made available on the Parish website (<https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-from-county-councillor-clare-paul-3/>). CP added: i) She would be chairing a public Engagement Board meeting on 13 December which could be viewed via Zoom. It was noted that home testing requirements had changed and that lateral flow tests were recommended for everyone, before attending larger parties or visiting more vulnerable relatives to pick up any asymptomatic cases. There was now a gap in transmission being seen within schools. ii) Gritting had started and any pot holes should be reported to Highways. iii) No return to Zoom was anticipated for formal Parish Council meetings. iv) Joint Committee Meetings for the Unitary Council had started, working towards elections in May 2022 of the first 110 Councillors, who would work alongside District Councillors until the Unitary Council would be vested in April 2023.

CP and one member of public left at this point

4205 Apologies for absence

Mrs P Brett; Dr B Ferguson

4206 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, previously circulated, held on 1 November 2021, were approved. Proposed by KM and seconded by NC. Carried unan. Hard copies of the Minutes were signed by the Chair.

4207 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Relating to matters at Min 4209e and Min 4210d, NC, as a property owner neighbouring Glendale, had previously declared an interest, with no dispensation given, so would withdraw from decisions as necessary.

4208 Public participation

The applicant and agent were present for discussions on planning application **21/03384/LBC – 21/03383/HOU – Stowey Farm** and two members of the public. Agenda item 9b was brought forward by the Chair.

Plans for proposed alterations to house and erection of a replacement conservatory were reviewed, along with comments from a briefing prepared by Councillor Brett. The agent answered queries raised, including confirming that no ecology survey had been requested by SSDC, as this was not needed, as no disturbance to wildlife was expected. The building would only take up existing parking area and not pasture land. Members thanked the agent for providing additional information, including advice from the pre-application process which was not required to be made public. A vote was taken (5 for: 0 against). **Action:** Clerk to submit response in favour of the application to SSDC Planning by 14 Dec 21.

The agent and applicant left at this point.

4209 Matters arising from the Minutes (1 Nov 21) and raised by Members

- a) Cemetery – i) following a site visit on 15 Nov with Arbortech, a quote had been received for maintenance to the Cedar, Holm Oak and two branches on Lawson Cypress trees at the front of the Cemetery. A quote had previously been received from SSDC for maintenance of the Holm Oak and a third quote would be sought, for consideration in Feb 22. The work was not urgent and could be funded from remaining Reserves for spoil removal. **Action:** Clerk to obtain additional quote for tree maintenance. ii) Details for the proposed memorial bench had been circulated and the site for the bench had been discussed onsite on 15 Nov. It would be close to the hedge of the Garden of Remembrance at the front of the Cemetery and it would be made of recycled material, in

- black or dark brown. Members were happy with the design/location and thanked the resident for organising and funding this, including installation. **Action:** Clerk to extend Members' thanks and go-ahead to the resident. iii) Cemetery rates for 2022 would be reviewed in Jan 22. **Action:** Clerk to circulate rates with a minimal increase for inflation for consideration at Jan 22 meeting.
- b) Newsletter/website advertising – i) the editor's suggestions for future plans had been circulated and he joined Members for the discussion. The publication was considered an important way of promoting events and communicating news and information within the Parish. Print prices had increased in 2021, mainly due to materials, but service from the printer was outstanding. A few advertisers had retired during the year and a few new ones had joined; by the end of the financial year, it was expected to break-even. The print run and future costs were expected to increase, due to new housing. Members wanted to continue to offer a printed magazine to every household free of charge. ii) A proposal to add a new A-Z searchable business directory to the website, as an add-on option for newsletter advertisers in 2022 was discussed. This was considered essential for maintaining future advertising revenue. The cost for setting up the directory would be £80-£120, depending on the format chosen, and could be funded from the website budget line. **Resolution: to approve up to £120 + VAT for the directory setup costs, by the web provider.** Proposed by RW and seconded by NC. Carried unan. iii) Advertising rates would be finalised in Jan 2021 and a review of print costs would be undertaken to ensure best value. **Action:** Clerk to look into the best format in the New Year with project action plan/timescales and add advertising rates to Jan 22 agenda. Clerk to organise review of print costs for Mar 22. Members thanked the editor for his excellent work, as always, and he left at this point.
- c) Village Green maintenance – Members thanked Dave Braddock (DB) for work completed to tidy the shrubs and roses on the Green and KM for removing all the cuttings. DB had volunteered for further projects and Members agreed that his help would be very much appreciated to cut back the brambles at the back of the Cemetery, to avoid the use of chemicals. DB had advised that this could be done twice yearly with a brush cutter, to keep brambles under control without interfering with wildlife. **Action:** Clerk to thank DB and ask him to do a first cut of brambles in the Cemetery in Jan 22.
- d) Defibrillator project – an update from BF has been circulated. Plans to provide two defibrillators for the Parish were progressing well and it had been agreed that the project in the short-term would be sited under the Village Hall Charity umbrella. The equipment would be leased from the Community Heartbeat Trust with separate funds raised for this project to be ring-fenced by the Village Hall Committee. **Action:** BF to update as project progresses.
- e) SSDC complaint – draft wording had been circulated for comment and Members were happy for the Clerk to send off the final draft. **Action:** Clerk to submit complaint via the SSDC portal.
- f) Traffic/Speedwatch update – suggestions for traffic calming measures had been received from a member of the public. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Highways for advice. **Action:** Clerk to ask Highways for advice on traffic calming measures.
- g) Flooding on Cemetery Hill – with the recent storms, surface water had been building up again at the bottom of Cemetery Hill. This was noted but it would not be easy to remedy without a culvert being added, as water drains naturally from the higher areas of the village.
- h) Waste pipe – effluent from a waste pipe at the bottom of Sunnyside Park was an ongoing issue and would be reported again to SSDC Environmental Health as the matter had not been resolved. **Action:** Clerk to follow up with SSDC.
- i) SERC portal – **Resolution: to appoint Dave Braddock as agent of Parish Council for the purposes of adding wildlife survey data directly to the SERC record system via a portal, to save time and ensure availability of information for consultees on planning applications.** Proposed by NC and seconded by RW. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to pass on approval to Dave Braddock.
- j) The Pound – the registered owner of the Pound (Tollbridge) had put matters in hand with their accountant to enable completion of the transfer of the Pound title to the Parish Council. An email detailing anticipated costs had been passed on from the owner and an invoice for the accountant's fees was expected for £500 + VAT. The owner had agreed to cover other costs related to the business. **Resolution: to vary the resolution passed in Min 4197c to agree to pay the cost of £500 + VAT from reserves (legal) ahead of the transfer being completed, as the most cost-effective and practical option to achieve ownership of the Pound.** Proposed by KB and

- seconded by RW. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to inform the owner that the upfront payment of the accountant fees (only) would be possible.
- k) Welcome pack – NC offered to update the pack again and the Crown, Greenshutters and The Stable would be asked if they might like to submit a voucher for new residents (with no obligation). **Action:** NC to update the pack and Clerk to send an invitation to the local businesses.
- l) Meeting dates for 2022 – dates for 2022 were approved, including an additional Finance meeting to approve the budget on 24 Jan 22, if required.
- m) Emergency plan – **Action:** Clerk to add to Feb 22 agenda
- n) Internal auditor – It was noted that the Village Hall was also looking for an auditor. **Action:** Clerk to contact SALC for recommendations.
- o) Housing Needs Survey – Members wished to thank the researcher with a gift or voucher, for completing the survey in June 21 on a voluntary basis. An excellent piece of work had been achieved with a considerable saving for the Parish Council. **Resolution: to arrange a gift/voucher of up to £50 for the Housing Needs Survey volunteer researcher.** Proposed by LH and seconded by KM. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to liaise with PB to organise the gift/voucher.
- p) Village newsletter – Members recognised the excellent work carried out by the parish magazine editor in 2021. **Resolution: to pay an Honorarium of £200 to the newsletter editor for services in 2021.** Proposed by KM and seconded by KB. Carried unan.
- q) CIL report – the year end statement for CIL funds received and spent during 2021 had been circulated by the Clerk and was approved for submission to SSDC and to be put on the parish website on the financial information page. **Resolution: to approve the CIL statement for the period ending 31 Dec 21.** Proposed by KB and seconded by NC. **Action:** Clerk to send statement to SSDC CIL Officer and post on Parish website by 31 Dec 21.
- r) Xmas tree – the tree would be delivered on Thurs 9 Dec, donated and delivered courtesy of Greenshutters Nurseries. The PCC Treasurer and LH had kindly offered to organise the installation in St Martin's churchyard and the decoration of the tree. A big thank you would be extended to Greenshutters in the next issue of the newsletter. **Action:** Clerk to include thanks from the PC in the Feb newsletter article.
- s) Land Registry search fee – it was agreed that it may be necessary to pay the search fee to obtain details of the land owner, so that a potential project to install steps on a steep part of the L11/42 footpath could be considered. **Resolution: to approve £6 fee for Land Registry title search.** Proposed by NC and seconded by LH. Carried unan. **Action:** PB to progress with search if the owner did not come to light after the article in the December newsletter article.

4210 Correspondence Received

- a) Video clips had been received of HGVs using Swell Lane despite restricted access signage. Residents had suggested that a bollard might discourage this. It was agreed that Highways should be asked to visit and advise on this and also Hazeldene Lane/Miller's Orchard where similar problems had been reported. **Action:** Clerk to contact Highways for site visit and advice.
- b) A letter had been received by residents regarding a recent planning decision, which required a full Council discussion. This had been postponed to the next meeting, but it was agreed that the Clerk would request an extension for the decision to be made after the residents had had an opportunity to put forward their information, should the Council need to put in any additional response. **Action:** Clerk to contact SSDC Planning for an extension.
- c) A Stable Coffee Shop sign attached to Highways' signage on the A378 had been identified as obscuring visibility. Highways had been in touch to arrange a site visit to find a safer position for this and the sign had been removed.
- d) A recent progress update on the Glendale site work had been received and the developer was in attendance. The Chair thanked the developer for the helpful information and the developer left at this point.
- e) NC provided an update after attending the first forum at Edgar Hall, organised by Somerton Town Council, on Tues 30 Nov, for setting up a Local Community Network. Slides had been circulated and a further meeting would be held in February 22. The meeting was attended by over 30 Councils. NC felt that it was important to be involved from the beginning and that the geography of this group, to be named 'Heart of the Levels' and centred around Somerton, would represent our area well.

- f) An invitation from SSDC to apply for free wild seeds had been received. Members felt that there may be areas in the Parish that would benefit from this, including possibly a border area of the Playing Field, but the Cemetery already had its own wild flowers, including rare orchids, and would not want to destroy these. RW suggested taking this to the Environmental Group for their thoughts for suitable locations. **Action:** RW to take forward this potential project with the Environmental Group.

4211 Reports

- a) Playing Field – no report.
- b) Village Hall – BF had passed on a written update. A list of projects and funding needed had been received, including details of a WIFI grant application. Members of the VH committee would be available to meet for a discussion with the Parish Council about their grant application for FY22/23. It was agreed that KB, PB and the Clerk would take this forward, as BF, as VH trustee, needed to remain independent from financial decisions. **Action:** Clerk to set up a Zoom meeting with KB and PB to plan and take this forward and add grant application to Jan 21 agenda.
- c) Cemetery – see 4209a and c
- d) Highways – see Min 4209f and Min 4210a and c
- e) Environment – DB had provided an update. All bat survey information had now been uploaded to Parish Online. His newsletter articles were generating lots of positive feedback and involvement showing that the village really cares about the environment. Being able to input rare species records to SERC directly would be very helpful, as 200 had been submitted in April which had still not appeared, due to a massive backlog.
- f) Police – the latest newsletter had been published on the Parish website.
- g) Asset/Maintenance Check Report – BF had reported water in the grit bin at the bottom of Butcher's Hill and that a branch had been brought down by the recent storm in the Cemetery. As a quote had already been received for this branch to be removed, Members agreed that this could go ahead as an emergency. **Resolution: to approve Arbortech to remove a Lawson Cypress branch that had come down, for £45 + VAT from Cemetery spoil reserves.** Proposed by LH and seconded by NC. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to contact Arbortech to carry out the work. KM to drill holes in the grit bin and drain water.
- h) Rights of Way and SALC – nothing to report

4212 Planning - see <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planningsearch/> for details. The applications below were considered:

- a) **21/01760/HOU** – Erection of an outbuilding, Squirrelsmead Cottage, South Drove, Fivehead – the deadline for consultation on amended plans had been extended to 8 Dec 21. Members remained concerned about the position of the outbuilding in relation to the large oak tree. Although the plan submitted shows the tree canopy is not close, a Google Earth image shows the true width of the canopy which will still be impacted by the build as the roots of oak trees spread 3-7 times wider than the canopy. It was agreed that this would be highlighted again to Planning, with the Google image and a photo showing how close the existing garage is to the tree and a copy of previous concerns with the build; the new garage will be virtually the same distance away.
- b) **21/03384/LBC – 21/03383/HOU - Stowey Farm** – proposed alterations to house and erection of a replacement conservatory. Comments required by 14 Dec 21. Please see Min 4208.

4213 FY22/23 Finances/Budget

- a) Village Hall grant application – see Min 4211a.
- b) Playing Field grant application – as the Playing Field currently had no means of income, grant support had been requested for maintenance and upkeep of the area. Members would require further information on the current financial position and clarification of priorities. As the new secretary had not been involved in previous grant submissions, the Clerk would send a copy of last year's application, so that a similar format might be followed as there appeared to be some overlap with last year's grant request. **Action:** Clerk to request additional information in similar format to previous years and add to agenda for Jan 21.
- c) Outline budget discussion – an informal working group had met on Zoom on Mon 22 Nov and Thurs 25 Nov to assist with budgeting. Notes had been circulated and KB ran through the project list. The following was agreed:
 - i. Church wall maintenance (divided into 3 sections) – section 1 (behind bench and corner) would be prioritised and quotes sought in Jan/Feb 22 for work to be carried out potentially in Mar/Apr 22 or Sept/Oct 22. Sections 2 and 3 would be added to Nov 22 agenda for consideration for FY23/24 budget. Advice would be sought from a Arbortec on the root damage from the tree on the corner.
 - ii. Village Green maintenance – to be deferred to FY23/24 budget discussions
 - iii. Pound repairs/maintenance – to consider budgeting £1500 for FY22/23 repairs for work to start in Spring 22
 - iv. Replacement printer for Clerk – to authorise £100 and for clerk to seek quotes, as the current printer was no longer working
 - v. Wildlife boxes - £250 budgeted in FY21/22 would be carried over to earmarked reserves for FY22/23
 - vi. Legal fees - £1K would be added to budget for FY22/23
 - vii. Queen's Jubilee event – budget for potential event to discussed at Jan 21 meeting
 - viii. Cemetery spoil reserves – to be used for tree maintenance work in Feb/Mar 21
 - ix. Reserves would be reviewed again after budget has been compiled and precept figure is discussed
- d) Asset Register, Risk Report and Insurance cover – Members reviewed the latest versions circulated and, subject to adding the recent Cemetery consultation as a risk to the Risk Report, approved the updates. **Resolution: to approve the Asset Register, Risk Report and Insurance cover updated to 31 October 2021.** Proposed by LH and seconded by KB. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to update Risk Report to include reference to Cemetery consultation.

4214 Finance

- a) Payments authorised and unrecorded during the previous month:
 - (i) Land Registry – Langford Corner registration - £40 (by cheque)
- b) Payments to be authorised:
 - (i) Mary Cramp – Housing Needs Survey printing - £595.27
 - (ii) Royal British Legion – Wreath for Remembrance Day - £17 (by cheque). Approved under s137, Min 4170c
 - (iii) Village Hall – Small meeting room fees (Oct/Nov) - £32
 - (iv) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Overtime and backpay - (Oct – 10hrs + salary point increase from Sept 21) - £122.40 + £16.80
 - (v) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Salary (Nov – 40hrs @ £12.24) - £489.60
 - (vi) J Parsons – Homeworking allowance (Nov) - £26
 - (vii) J Parsons – Registered post costs – Langford Corner/Pound correspondence - £4.94
- c) Income received:
 - (i) SSDC - CIL from Glendale development - £2317.38
 - (ii) NatWest Interest (Oct) - £0.40
 - (iii) Madge/WC Firewood – Advertising - £55
 - (iv) Quest Cars – Advertising - £55
 - (v) G Bailey – Advertising - £55 (by cheque)
 - (vi) C Stuart – Advertising - £27.50
- d) Control 2 of 4 for FY21/22 – completed by LH on 15 Nov 21

4215 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

- a) Clerk – FY22/23 budget and precept to be approved before Friday 28 January 2022. (Additional Finance meeting may be required on Monday 24 January 2022.)

4216 Date for Next Meeting

Monday 10 January 2022 at 6.30pm, Village Hall/Playing Field, Stowey Road, Fivehead

The meeting closed at 9.22 pm.

Chairman.....

Dated.....