

DRAFT MINUTES OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on Monday 7 March 2022 at 1830 at The Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

Present:

Mrs K Beacham – Chair (KB); Mrs N Cameron (NC); Mrs L Howard (LH); Dr B Ferguson; District Councillor M Stanton (MS); and Mrs J Parsons - Clerk/RFO (JP).

Two members of the public were in attendance.

4242 County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Paul's latest report had been circulated to Members and would be made available on the Parish website (<https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-from-county-councillor-clare-paul-6/>).

4243 District Councillor's Report

District Councillor Stanton's (MS) report had been circulated to Members. MS introduced Richard Wilkins, a Councillor from Curry Rivel Parish Council. They would both be standing to be the Somerset Councillors for Curry Rivel and Langport in the local election on 5 May 2022. MS reported that District Councillor Cavill was still recovering from his illness but was keeping in touch and hoped to return in a couple of months' time.

4244 Public participation

Agenda items 10a and b were brought forward by the Chair.

- a) Further information and plans for application **21/03844/S73A** - Land OS 6790 Lower Swell - to vary condition 02 of planning permission ref 19/01900/FUL – had been requested from Planning and an extension had been granted to comment by 9 March 2022.

Concerns from a resident that the S73 application did not cover changes to the height of the first floor levels and windows were considered, along with information and photos from a recent site visit by Planning. Planning had advised that no further plans would be made available and that as the dwelling was now built, a judgement should be made in light of how the built property looks, rather than based on the plans. Small changes to the roof pitch had been made; visual amenity could not be taken into consideration, as there are no neighbours within 20m.

Members were unanimous in wanting to express their concerns and frustration about the widespread problems in the Parish with planning regulations not being followed and the inadequate resourcing and lack of building inspectors and processes to prevent developers deviating from approved plans. This development had been fraught with problems from the outset, which had been reported at various stages to Planning Enforcement. Complaints had been received from residents and the Council had first reported concerns about the floor levels in March 2021, requesting a site visit to verify. Post determination plans had not been made available to check controls required.

It was strongly felt that there was a need for more robustness at a local level, with financial penalties applied for not following approved plans and processes. More resources for planning enforcement were desperately needed, otherwise developers would continue to build without regard to approved plans.

It was agreed that a full landscaping proposal for this site would be requested, as this might help to mitigate the perceived increased bulk to the property. There were also extensive ecological obligations to be fulfilled and currently there was only a depiction of the proposed orchard in the ecologist's report, although this was a condition referred to in the permission document. **Action:** Clerk to circulate and submit the Members comments in response to the planning consultation.

- b) **21/00135/FUL** – Land opposite Old Manse, Stillbrook Road, Fivehead – the Clerk had sent a further request for an update, but no reply had not been received; it was agreed that it would be necessary to write again to request action as groundworks were now progressing at a pace on the strip of land owned by the developer behind the approved site, where it was suspected that no planning approval had yet to be received. **Action:** Clerk to prepare a follow-up report and circulate to Members before sending to the Enforcement Officer.

4245 Apologies for absence

Mr R Wynn; Mr K Male

4246 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, previously circulated, held on 21 February 2022, were approved. Proposed by LH and seconded by NC. Carried unan. Hard copies of the Minutes were signed by the Chair.

4247 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None

4248 Matters arising from the Minutes (21 Feb 22) and raised by Members

- a) Bradon's Fruit Farm – MS had contacted the company and the MD had extended an invitation for a representative from each of the surrounding Parish Councils to visit the site to explain what they were doing to address the light pollution complaints received. The MD had previously only briefed the immediate Councils. He had now written to the other Councils and also to the resident in Fivehead who runs the international astronomical imaging and research observatory, explaining that steps had been taken to minimise the impact in the night sky by running the lights less, not using the full amount of lights, not installing the remaining lights, reducing the running hours, and having blackout plastics on the side of the glasshouse, until the delayed black out blinds could be installed. He wanted to give reassurance that the blinds will be fitted before the 2022/23 growing season which will eliminate all of the light. KB had accepted the invitation for a tour of the business and would report back. **Action:** KB to visit Bradon's with MS, Clare Paul and other Parish Council representatives on 9 March 22 and to report at the April 22 meeting.
- b) Cemetery matters – i) KB had visited the Cemetery with Dave Braddock to look at pruning the shrubs. These were generally tidy and only required minor trimming back. ii) She reported that the gate hangings were not currently in need of maintenance and a replacement chain was not necessary. iii) There was very little spoil from the recent burial but this would be reviewed regularly following burials.
- c) Conifer in Churchyard – branches of the conifer in the corner near the road were now obstructing the HGV sign and also making it difficult for tractors to pull out. It was agreed that LH would speak to the PCC Treasurer about trimming these back. **Action:** LH to speak to the PCC Treasurer who may be able to find a professional to help.
- d) Problems in Lower Swell – a build-up of disused cars, fridges, white goods and kitchen oil in an orchard opposite Western Farm could now be seen from the A378. As well as being unsightly, Members were concerned about environmental pollution. Although a resident had spoken with the owner, there were no signs of the debris being removed, so it was agreed that the matter would be reported to SSDC Environmental Health and Pollution. **Action:** Clerk to report build-up of debris to SSDC EH.
- e) Handover of Councillor Brett's remaining duties – details had been circulated to Members and would be added to April 22 agenda
- f) Internal auditor – a resident who is a qualified accountant was happy to help in principle but had requested further details to enable them to decide if this would fit in with other commitments. **Action:** Clerk to email resident with further details.

- g) Traffic issues – KB and the Clerk were to meet SSDC Highways on 15 March, when they were planned to review cutting back the verges with the Glendale developer. This would be an opportunity to discuss HGVs using Swell Lane and Hazeldene Lane, and traffic calming measures on Butcher’s Hill. A resident had suggested looking into speed bumps but this would require street lighting, which it was felt would not be acceptable to residents. It may be possible to contact the Police to request for speed cameras. **Action:** KB/Clerk to report back following the meeting with Highways/Glendale developer
- h) Grant funding – the application made on behalf of the Village Hall (VH) for £471 from Stage 3 of the SCC Parish Fund, for the installation of Wi-Fi to help support future business opportunities, had been successful. This would need to be spent by August 2022, with a report supplied to SALC on how the funds had been used. Members agreed to funding a further six months’ usage, which was estimated to be £126. **Resolution: to award a grant of £126 to Fivehead Village Hall Committee towards the estimated cost for six month’s Wi-Fi from Oct 22 - Mar 23 from FY22/23 Precept, to help support future business and need for CCTV.** Proposed by LH and seconded by NC. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to notify VH of successful grant from SCC and grant award from the Precept, with a request for an update in Sept 22 for the SCC grant and regular updates to the PC on other grant-funding and projects.
- i) Meeting with VH and Playing Field (PF) Committees – it was agreed that KB and BF would represent the Parish Council at a meeting requested with two representatives from the VH and PF Committees, to discuss the two Committees working together for future sustainability. **Action:** KB to liaise with other Chairs for a meeting to take place at the VH as soon as possible.
- j) Jubilee celebrations – KB and LH would meet with a small group of volunteers from the village on 10 March and would discuss bringing together other suggestions from groups, including the Crown Inn. KB had made some enquiries into borrowing trestle tables, but this was proving difficult as they were in use for other events. It might be necessary to use a mix of round and rectangular tables available from the VH. **Action:** KB to report back at April 22 meeting.
- k) Business directory for website – the Clerk had looked into two options for adding the business directory to the Parish website. It was agreed that the option which enabled the use of pictures, including logos, would be best to be able to offer businesses in future. The Clerk confirmed that this would be £120 + VAT. (Resolution passed at Min 4209b to cover this). It would take approx one week to build the page and then the Clerk would be able to add business details. This would become part of the newsletter advertising package to be agreed for FY22/23, once it was available. **Action:** Clerk to progress with the web provider to build the business directory tool.
- l) Defibrillator update – the VH sub-committee had placed the order to lease the equipment from the Community Heartbeat Trust charity and an installation date was expected this month. The Clerk would update the book exchange volunteers once the date was known, as the books would need to be removed for 48hrs. Defibrillator signs would also be added to the phone box and at The Crown. Signs for other areas would be discussed. Marketing and training to use the equipment once in place would be organised. The Parish meeting might provide an opportunity to raise awareness about how this equipment could offer basic life support. The equipment would also be registered online so first responders would be aware of its location and availability.
- m) Parish newsletter – due to new households being added to the distribution list, it would be necessary to order five additional copies from April onwards, requiring a small overspend on the newsletter budget. **Resolution: to approve an overspend to cover the cost of five additional copies for new households (c£6), from April 22.** Proposed by KB and seconded by NC. Carried unan.
- n) Parish meeting – this would be held in the large meeting room of the VH after the end of April (and before 1 June 22), with reports being delivered in person this year from local organisations (or by KB where required). Members would consider possible dates for the next meeting and the Clerk would contact the RSPB who had offered to speak at a future meeting once a date was decided. **Action:** Members to let the Clerk know preferred dates from May onwards. Date and further arrangements to be decided at April 22 meeting.
- o) Norton virus software update for 2022 – **Resolution – to approve the annual renewal of virus protection software for the laptop (c£10).** Proposed by KB and seconded by NC. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to order the software update and install.

The remaining member of the public left at this point.

4249 Correspondence Received

- a) Nomination papers and completion guide, along with an election poster had been received from SSDC. The response window for nominations was Tuesday 22 March to Tuesday 5 April 2022.
- b) It was noted that the Great British Spring Clean campaign would be taking place from 25 March – 10 April 2022. The Clerk had received a report from the Parish Litter Champion. Although the litter situation had improved since lockdown, around 20 bags had been collected and work was ongoing. The A378 had yet to be tackled. No one in the village had signed up yet to the CPRE Somerset group, who would give out free kits to anyone interested, so the Clerk would include a short update in the next issue of the Parish newsletter with a link for this, as a reminder. Help would be very much appreciated. (<https://www.cpresomerset.org.uk/news/join-our-2minute-litterpick-project/>)

4250 Reports

- a) Playing Field and Village Hall – no meetings had taken place since the last report.
- b) SALC – nothing to report
- c) Cemetery – see Min 4248b
- d) Highways – see Min 4248g
- e) Environment – Dave Braddock would be carrying out further spring maintenance work in the Cemetery and Langford Corner. Members were grateful for his ongoing support.
- f) Rights of Way – a few issues with stiles had been reported and dealt with by Mary Braddock. One of the ROW team had slipped on a stile, so chicken wire had been added to help give better grip. The work and materials had kindly been provided free of charge by Steve Cutts. A small gate to replace a stile had been agreed in principle with a local farmer. The Clerk would request an update on way markers for the next meeting.
- g) Police – the Clerk had logged the Jubilee event with the local team who were collating a list of events.
- h) Asset/Maintenance Check Report – RW would retain until April meeting. NC volunteered to give the bus shelter another clean. It was noted that the bin next to the shelter was still leaning. This was owned by SSDC and had been reported, so the Clerk would follow up with another request.
Action: Clerk to contact SSDC to request maintenance of the bin as soon as possible.

4251 Planning - see <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planningsearch/> for details. The applications below were considered:

- a) See Min 4244a
- b) See Min 4244b

4252 Finance

- a) Payments authorised and unrecorded during the previous month: None
- b) Payments to be authorised:
 - (i) Village Hall – Small meeting room fees (Jan/Feb) - £32
 - (ii) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Salary (Feb) - £489.60
 - (iii) J Parsons – Homeworking allowance (Feb) - £26
- c) Income received:
 - (i) NatWest Interest (Jan) - £0.43
 - (ii) L Talmage – Burial plot fee (B72A) - £140
 - (iii) Killens - Newsletter advert - £110
 - (iv) The Crown Inn – Newsletter advert - £110 (transfer from H Price)
 - (v) Woodlouse Ltd – Newsletter advert - £27.50
 - (vi) S Minty – Newsletter advert - £27.50

4253 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

- a) Clerk – advertisement of Councillor vacancy – the Clerk would contact Roger Quantock for advice on next steps required.

4254 Date for Next Meeting

Monday 4 April 2022 at 6.30pm, Village Hall/Playing Field, Stowey Road, Fivehead

The meeting closed at 8pm.

Chairman.....

Dated.....