

DRAFT MINUTES OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on Monday 4 April 2022 at 1830 at The Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

Present:

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

4255 County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Paul's latest report had been circulated to Members and was available on the Parish website (<https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-from-county-councillor-clare-paul-7/>). Business was continuing as usual in the pre-election period, with managing Covid still the biggest topic, as it continued to impact key settings, such as schools.

4256 District Councillor's Report

District Councillor Stanton's report had been circulated to Members. CP confirmed that Malcom Cavill was well and hoping to return to meetings gradually, starting with the Area North Committee meetings. District Councillors would remain in position for a further year, following the election of the new Unitary Councillors.

4257 Public participation

Two members of the public were in attendance.

4258 Apologies for absence

District Councillor Mike Stanton (MS)

4259 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, previously circulated, held on 7 March 2022, were approved. Proposed by LH and seconded by NC. Carried unan. Hard copies of the Minutes were signed by the Chair.

4260 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None

4261 Matters arising from the Minutes (7 March 21) and raised by Members

- a) Bradon Fruit Farm – i) KB had attended the site visit on 9 March, along with CP, MS and other Parish councillors and reported that it was a very well-run operation. (The farm can be viewed on a recent episode of Countryfile). Full assurance was given that the necessary black-out blinds would be in place for the next growing season. A visit report, prepared by a councillor from Curry Rivel Parish Council, had been circulated to Members and was available on the village website (<https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-on-lighting-at-bradon-fruit-farm/>). ii) KB had received a gift of two punnets of strawberries after the meeting; she had checked the threshold for declaration with SSDC Democratic services and this was only necessary over £25.
- b) Churchyard maintenance – i) Branches of the conifer in the corner of St Martin's churchyard, near the road, had been removed, as they were obstructing the HGV sign and making visibility difficult for tractors pulling out. The PCC Treasurer and his gardener had kindly organised this and would also arrange to trim back the other conifers over the next few months. KM offered to help removed the clippings if available; otherwise, Mr Troutt would be approached for help. ii) The Clerk would obtain three quotes from masons identified for the Pound stonework repairs, so that work on the most urgent section of the wall could start when the weather was right for lime mortar work. **Action:** Clerk to obtain quotes from three local masons for consideration.
- c) Defibrillators/book exchange – i) Both defibrillators had been installed on 30 March and were operational – one in Fivehead's old phone box and the other at Sue Atwell's shop. They were in the process of being registered with the emergency services. Members extended heartfelt thanks to the small group responsible for organising the project. They would be arranging training soon and monitoring the equipment on a weekly basis. Further details to follow. ii) Shelving from the book exchange had been removed to make space for the equipment. The volunteers running the exchange were thanked for their work to keep everything immaculate and well-organised. However, after large quantities of books had been left regularly, they had decided to restrict the

system to one book in, one book out. Although it had been well-used since it was started in June 2021, there were concerns that the books might hinder access to the equipment, which should have priority, so it was agreed that KB and the Clerk would look at the shelving requirements and report back at the next meeting. **Action:** KB and Clerk to assess shelving and add to May 22 meeting agenda.

- d) Highways meeting update – i) KB and the Clerk had met with SSDC Highways on 15 March to discuss options for traffic calming and issues with HGVs using Swell Lane. Despite the sign for no access for HGVs, it was not weight-restricted, so was only advisory. Concerns that speeding through the village, particularly on Butcher’s Hill, was on the increase had been raised, but mechanisms such as speed humps would require street lighting so were not considered viable. It might be possible to involve the Police in future to carry out speed checks, but it was agreed that the first line of approach would be to request a visit from the Traffic Engineer at SCC to look at options. Highways had offered to put this forward, for the Clerk to follow up. **Action:** Clerk to contact SCC Traffic Engineer to request a visit after the elections. ii) KB and the Clerk were also present for a discussion between Highways and the developer about the plans for cutting back the verges outside the Glendale site to help with drainage. This would be scheduled by Highways for the new financial year, once the development work was complete. The remaining plot had been sold to a local developer in 2021, who had decided not to build themselves and was in the process of selling this on. Work on the private road on the site would be going ahead soon and it would be necessary to lose a further tree at the site entrance to achieve the required visibility splay.
- e) Meeting update with Playing Fields and Village Hall Committees – KB reported that she and BF had attended a meeting at the Village Hall on 15 March, to discuss the two committees working together in future. A follow-up meeting in May/June was planned. KB hoped to include an expert on running village hall amenities from CCS, to offer specialist advice. **Action:** KB to liaise with the VH and PF committees and CCS representative for a follow-up meeting.
- f) Handover of Councillor Brett’s duties – with the elections coming up, it was agreed that this would be discussed with the new Council in May. A resident had kindly volunteered to take over the maintenance of the War Memorial on the village green, which was gratefully accepted. **Action:** Clerk to write to the resident to accept their kind offer and confirm what was required.
- g) Internal auditor – an initial approach to a resident had not been successful due to timescales and commitments, so the Clerk would move forward with asking another resident who might be able to help. **Action:** Clerk to email resident with further details.
- h) Jubilee celebrations – plans were progressing and the event had been advertised in the Village newsletter. A small budget would be needed to give the event a nostalgic feel with decorations and bunting. **Resolution: to make funds available of up to £300 for decorations from the ‘Grants Other’ budget line (including s111/s145) or s137.** Proposed by KB and seconded by KM. Carried unan. **Action:** KB to report back after next meeting on 12 April.
- i) Debris at Lower Swell – the build-up of commercial waste, including disused cars, fridges etc, opposite Western Farm had been reported to SSDC Environmental Health and Pollution but it was not a matter within their remit. There were no signs of the debris being removed, as promised to a resident, so CP offered to look into how to take this further. **Action:** Clerk to pass details to CP for further advice and action.
- j) Parish meeting – the provisional date of Thursday 26 May 2022 was agreed. The Clerk would reserve the large room at the Village Hall and contact the RSPB to take up the offer to come and give a talk on Swell Nature Reserve. The list of contributors of annual reports would be reviewed by KB and the Clerk. **Action:** Clerk to book meeting room, guest speaker and liaise with KB on reports.
- k) Bin maintenance/bus shelter – i) NC kindly volunteered to undertake another clean of the bus shelter with her husband. ii) Streetscene had reported that the bin next to the shelter had been re-set so it is now upright again.
- l) Local support for Ukrainian refugees – a proposal from the Village Hall Committee to consider how best to welcome and offer support to people arriving in the local community was discussed. It was felt that the Parish Council may be able to have a role in helping to facilitate a meeting point and RW and BF volunteered to meet with Rob Leighton to discuss how support could be co-ordinated across the community.

Members felt St Martin's Close Community Hall might be another possible venue in the village. KB offered to find out more about its availability. CP referred Members to the resettlement page for Somerset (<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/Ukraine/>) for further information. **Action:** RW to liaise with BF and Rob Leighton to discuss possibilities for helping refugees locally. KB to find out about St Martin's Community Hall availability.

- m) Elections/councillor vacancies – Four councillors had submitted forms for re-election. KM and NC would not be re-standing. Members were sad to lose two long-standing members and thanked them for their outstanding commitment and valued contribution. KM would remain available for help and local knowledge when needed. One new submission had been made (and it was subsequently confirmed that Fivehead would not be having a contested election); the new Council would be quorate and able to consider filling the other vacancies via co-option in May. The banking mandate would need to be updated and a new signatory added. **Action:** Clerk to add vacancies for co-option to May 22 agenda. Clerk and Chair to update Banking Mandate.

CP and members of the public left the meeting at this point.

4262 Correspondence Received

- a) A briefing on Ukraine and Councils' role had been received from NALC via SALC.
- b) A request for suggestions from small Parish Councils on what support the Smaller Councils' Committee might be able to offer them and it was agreed that the Clerk would respond to consultation with suggested topics of planning and high-speed broadband by 30 April 22.
- c) Thanks had been received from Harry Price (editor) for the honorarium received for newsletter services in 2021.
- d) Thanks had been received from the Village Hall Committee for confirmation of the grant support to be provided for FY22/23.
- e) A request had been received from a resident to consider restoration of four village fingerposts from CIL funding. This would be added to the CIL project list for consideration post-election. A recent article on renovation of local signposts had been circulated and it was noted that the cost was very high. The Clerk was asked to contact SCC to see if a self-help guidance kit might be available for this work. **Action:** Clerk to contact SCC for guidance on repair of metal signposts. Clerk to add CIL projects to June 2022 agenda.
- f) It was noted that 2021/22 AGAR instructions had been received from the external auditor.
- g) Information on Make a Difference Awards had been received from BBC Radio Somerset and publicised on social media, with a request for nominations by 29 April 22.

4263 Reports

- a) Playing Field – a meeting had taken place at the end of March and it was good to see Graham Land had returned to the Committee. No financial report was available yet; a replacement bench and cradle swing, which had now been fitted, would be purchased from the sinking fund. BF fed back that the Committee were unsure what support the PF would need to provide for the Jubilee event. It was confirmed that the marquee would be needed, to set up as an extension from the Village Hall rear entrance.
- b) Village Hall – the Village Hall were considering several fundraising events including a barn dance, summer quiz and village open gardens. It was felt that it would be good to make use of the venue for fundraising events, where possible.
- c) SALC – nothing to report
- d) Cemetery – plans to trim back the trees in the Cemetery would to be taken forward and a further quote obtained. **Action:** Clerk to obtain additional quote for tree work.
- e) Highways – see Min 4248d
- f) Environment – the Environment working group would be re-starting on 14 April. Initial projects for consideration were a project in conjunction with Westcountry Rivers Trust, to look at sampling river quality at spots on Fivehead River on a monthly basis and map the results, which would be engaging for the community and provide useful information. New members joining the group were Rob Leighton and Dave and Mary Braddock. Formal proposals would be brought to future Parish Council meetings for decisions.

- g) Rights of Way – Mary Braddock had provided a detailed update on the substantial progress with footpaths: i) SCC had replaced the sign on the south side of A378 and made steps at the top of the footpath from Cathanger to A378; on the north side, the dangerous stile had been replaced with a gate and the steps had been cleaned up. ii) Both stiles on the path from Silver Street to A378 had been reported to SCC for attention. iii) Recent storm damage had been cleared from all footpaths and most village footpaths had had some new directional waymarkers to help walkers and most of the roadside fingerposts in need of repair had been replaced. It was noted that some were still to be replaced in Swell. iv) The footpath opposite the Village Hall is waiting for a gate to be installed. v) From Marshway to Iberry Lane, the fingerpost in the middle of the field to direct walkers over the ditch had been replaced and a handrail erected by SCC to make the crossing safer. vi) Thanks had been received from a member of the public for the new gates which made making the footpaths much easier to use than with the old stiles.
- h) Police – latest Police report had been circulated and posted on Parish website (<https://fivehead-village.org.uk/neighbourhood-policing-news-and-contacts-4/>).
- i) Asset/Maintenance Check Report – RW would retain for a further month and hand over at the May meeting.

4264 Planning - see <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planningsearch/> for details. The applications below were considered:

- a) **21/00135/FUL** – Land opposite Old Manse, Stillbrook Road, Fivehead – there had been no update from SSDC Enforcement on the suspected unauthorised removal of hedging and copse in land adjacent to the development site. However, an officer would be checking the fencing on the development site in the next few days. A detailed email from Planning had been circulated about the planning history and discharge of the ecology conditions in 2019, but the discharge document was not available on the portal. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact Natural England with regards to monitoring the current ecology licence. **Action:** Clerk to write to Natural England for further advice.
- b) **To note - 22/00516/COL – withdrawn 31/3/22** - Land opposite Old Manse, Stillbrook Road, Fivehead – application for a Lawful Development Certification for the proposed erection of 2 x single garages to serve plot 3 and 4, Fivehead Court.
- c) **To note - 21/03844/S73A** - Land OS 6790 Lower Swell - application to vary condition 02 of planning permission ref 19/01900/FUL – **approved STC**

4265 Finance

- a) Payments authorised and unrecorded during the previous month: None
- b) Payments to be authorised:
 - (i) SSDC – Annual grass maintenance for FY21/22 - £1126.32 (inc VAT)
 - (ii) Village Hall – Small meeting room fees (Mar) - £16
 - (iii) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Salary (Mar) - £489.60
 - (iv) J Parsons – Homeworking allowance (Mar) - £26
- c) Income received:
 - (i) NatWest Interest (Feb) - £0.39
 - (ii) Isle Valley Vets – Newsletter advert - £55
 - (iii) Vine Wine Ltd – Newsletter advert - £55
 - (iv) Greenshutters – Newsletter advert - £55
 - (v) Beehive Self Storage – Newsletter advert £55
 - (vi) Ashgate Grooming – Newsletter advert - £55
 - (vii) Kev's Cleaning Service – Newsletter advert - £27.50
 - (viii) Fivehead Baptist Church – Newsletter advert - £60
- d) Internal control – review 3 of 4 would be carried out by LH. **Action:** LH to sign off control
- e) Review of spend against budget at end of FY21/22 – the Clerk was still working on the year end summary and would provide this for sign off at the May meeting. The total income and expenditure were both under £25k, so it would be possible to apply for exemption from an external review, as there had been no advisory points from the FY20/21 external audit. **Action:** Clerk to provide year end accounts analysis for approval at May 22 meeting.

4266 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

- a) Chair – i) Works were taking place on the land North of Ganges to lay cabling underground as part of the approved application. ii) Protective fencing and vegetation along the buffer zone around the Glendale site had now been removed. The Tree Officer would be contacted to verify if this was compliant with the discharge of planning conditions. iii) Cyclists and walkers had noted a stream of effluent on Isle Abbots Lane. The Clerk would write to the nearby residents to ask if they could look into this.

4267 Date for Next Meeting

Monday 9 May 2022 at 6.30pm, Village Hall/Playing Field, Stowey Road, Fivehead

The meeting closed at 8.23pm.

Chairman.....

Dated.....