

DRAFT MINUTES OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 5 December 2022, at 1830, at The Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

Present:

Mrs K Beacham – Chair (KB); Mrs L Howard (LH); Mrs C Munday (CM); Mr R Wynn (RW); Mr D Braddock (DB); County Councillor R Wilkins (CRW), County Councillor M Stanton (MS) and Mrs J Parsons - Clerk/RFO (JP)

No members of public in attendance.

4361 County Councillors' Report

The latest report from the County Councillors had been circulated to Members and was available on the Parish website (<https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-from-county-councillors-dec-22/>). MS highlighted that Landmark, Langport was looking for new trustees. Anyone with a little spare time available and an interest in heritage buildings was invited to apply. (Residents outside of Langport welcomed.) The Independent Remuneration Panel for Somerset County Council was also seeking members. Applicants would need financial knowledge and not to be connected to anyone on the Council. For further details, please see the report (link above). KB offered to advertise the opportunities through the parish messaging systems.

MS had checked the wastepipe south of Sunnyside Park; the discharge itself seemed satisfactory, as concluded by the SSDC Environment Officer, although it was of course unlikely to smell on a cold winter's day. There appeared also to be a problem with the flowing away of the discharge in the ditch, as the ditch looked blocked at the lower end where there should be a culvert. MS would report this to the Environment Agency, but the issue may need to be referred to other parties to find out who would be responsible for resolving this.

4362 District Councillor's Report

None

4363 Apologies for absence

Dr B Ferguson (BF); Mr J Benton (JB)

4364 Minutes

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

4365 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None

4366 Matters arising from the Minutes (7 Nov 2022) and raised by Members

- a) SERC records – DB thanked Councillor Wilkins for his help to liaise with Councillor Dyke and SERC, to check if the rare species records from studies in 2021 had been uploaded. It was confirmed that over 3,000 records had not reached the system, but the Head of SERC had said he would personally ensure that the records would be uploaded, following DB resending his data spreadsheet. He would also add the latest records from 2022 studies and waiver the £60 fee for an updated download of the report, which would show the new records. In future, it was hoped that Parish Online might offer a platform for all parish councils to access this information free of charge, which would assist with reviewing planning applications. DB would be given personal access to upload records to SERC and future downloads would be free.
- b) Effluent from wastepipe south of Sunnyside Park - see Min 4361
- c) Village Hall/Playing Field merger update – the first joint meeting had taken place on 8 Nov and the base document prepared by Graham Land and BF had been agreed. Robert Horne, the village hall constitution expert, had made some suggestions and it was hoped that he would visit again in the new year.

- d) Matters arising from Green Group meeting (1 Dec) – i) Swift boxes – ten boxes had been donated by a former Fivehead resident (Paul Cleary) to help encourage a swift colony in Fivehead, following the article in the October newsletter by Mary Braddock. (Please see further update in December newsletter.) The Council thanked Paul for his kind donation. ii) Grant application – the first submission for grant funding for future bat/butterfly walks had been unsuccessful. DB and Pip Brett would review the feedback and consider whether a second attempt should be made. **Action:** DB to review grant application with Pip Brett. iii) Budget request for FY23/24 – more strips for river quality sampling would be needed. **Resolution: to donate under s137 up to £25 to WestCountry Rivers Trust for sampling strips.** Proposed by KB and seconded by LH. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to order replacement strips for 2023. More help to deal with litter on our footpaths was needed. DB hoped that some of the Fivehead Fixers might volunteer and would need to obtain litter pickers and other equipment. It may be possible to apply for this free of charge from CPRE. Rings to hold the bags open to make the process more hygienic for the volunteers may need to be purchased. **Action:** DB to look into availability of free litter picking equipment. Clerk to add to Jan 23 agenda. iv) AOB – a) offers to donate plants for the Pound had been received from two residents for the Spring. b) Insurance cover for volunteers was a limiting factor. DB and the Clerk were looking at options for covering low maintenance work. A risk assessment with volunteers named for each project was advisable. **Action:** Clerk to contact BHIB for further advice and add to Jan 23 agenda.
- e) Fingerpost course (10 Nov) – DB, LH, Mary Braddock and a further volunteer had attended the course run by SCC in Bridgwater. They were now logged with SCC for insurance cover for future work. One person (DB) would download the app for surveying and upload pictures of the signposts that needed attention. An expert from SCC would then advise on what could be done. There were 4-5 posts in need of work. An offer from a resident to supply the paint and tools needed would be gratefully received once the work could go ahead next year. **Action:** DB to download app and upload photos of signposts and report on progress in Feb 23. Clerk to add to Feb 23 agenda.
- f) Speed Indicator Device – the Clerk had obtained three quotes from suppliers, with detailed options. It was agreed that a small working group of KB, RW and the Clerk would meet in January to review the systems, and requirements for the Memorandum of Understanding with SCC and training. At least two volunteers would be needed to move the device regularly between 2-3 locations. DB had asked SCC about training courses and a full day road safety course would be needed costing approx £220 per person. Advice would also be sought from other councils with experience of SIDs (such as Somerton TC and Kingsbury, Hambridge and South Petherton PCs). **Action:** KB, RW and Clerk to meet in January to plan next steps. Clerk to add to Feb 22 agenda.
- g) Xmas tree – LH had organised a working group to help with decorating the tree in St Martin's churchyard, generously donated again by Greenshutters Nurseries. Roger had kindly delivered and installed it that day. A big thank you from the Parish Council would be included in the next newsletter to Roger, Ellen and Gordon Balmer and Stuart Clayton. **Action:** Clerk to include thanks for the tree donation and decoration in the Feb 23 newsletter.
- h) Drainage issues – i) Highways had booked in the work to cut back the verges on Butcher's Hill to help with drainage and road safety, but the date was still to be confirmed. ii) A resident had reported a blocked drain on Swell Lane near the entrance of L11/52 which was causing water to run down the footpath. Issues on the badly drained road at Isle Brewers Lane were also affecting the footpath network and the ditch on the east side was unable to take the volume of water from the fields, so the road was frequently covered in water. Highways had been informed but were unable to schedule any work, unless property was in danger of flooding, due to no further budget being available this late in the year. iii) A raised drain cover had been reported as a potential hazard to cyclists on the bend on Isle Brewer's Lane. (Highways had dealt with this within 24 hours).

- i) Cemetery – i) A request for an inscription to be added to an existing memorial had been received, via the stonemason, ahead of the interment application. The Clerk would write to the applicant and explain that a transfer of rights may be needed before the inscription could be approved and provide a copy of the interment notice information, which had also been sent to the funeral director. **Action:** Clerk to write to applicant regarding rights to add to a memorial. ii) Members reviewed the Cemetery fees for 2023. It was agreed that the equivalent increase to the grass maintenance contract increase (2%) would be applied to non-parishioner rates only, given the severe cost of living crisis that residents were facing. **Resolution: to increase Cemetery fees by 2% (rounded to nearest £5) for non-parishioners only from 1 January 2023.** Proposed by KB and seconded by CM. Carried unan.
- j) Village newsletter – Members recognised the excellent contribution that the editor had made in 2022 to produce the newsletter and manage the advertising contributions. KB and the Clerk would meet with the editor in January to discuss future plans, including launching the new business directory, price increases and rising print costs. **Resolution: to pay an Honorarium of £200 to the newsletter editor for services in 2022.** Proposed by LH and seconded by RW. Carried unan. **Action:** KB and the Clerk to meet with newsletter editor in January 23 and add to Feb 23 agenda.
- k) Meeting dates for 2023 – dates for 2023 were approved, including an additional Finance meeting to approve the budget/precept request on Mon 16 Jan, if required.
- l) CIL report – the year end statement for CIL funds received and spent during 2022 was approved for submission to SSDC by 31 Dec 22 and would be added to the parish website on the financial information page. **Resolution: to approve the CIL statement for the period ending 31 Dec 22.** Proposed by KB and seconded by DB. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to send statement to SSDC CIL officer and post on parish website by 31 Dec 2022. It was noted that CIL for the Stillbrook Lane development was still outstanding. The Clerk had followed this up with the CIL officer, but was still waiting for an update. The team was very stretched, but if no reply had been received by end of Dec, MS offered to follow this up to ensure it had not been missed. **Action:** Clerk to add to Jan 23 agenda.
- m) Grass maintenance contract renewal – the Clerk had sent a follow-up note with feedback about the service quality, for assurance that the frequency of cuts would be re-established for the new season. There had been no response so it was agreed that approval for the final year of the fixed contract would be considered in January 2023, to allow SSDC more time to respond. **Action:** Clerk to follow up for response and add to Jan 23 agenda.

MS and CRW left at this point.

4367 Correspondence Received

- a) A request was considered for grant funding for the Taunton Crisis Fund, organised by the Community Council for Somerset. Due to the late stage in the financial year, funds were limited and Members felt, to make a difference, a small grant would have more benefit to the immediate local community. A new venture had recently been started to help with social isolation. This was being run bi-weekly in St Martin's community hall by the local village agents. Members asked the Clerk to respond to the applicant for further details of any local projects which the parish grant contribution could be ear-marked for, eg, for the St Martin's Hall initiative, so this could be considered in January 2023 as part of the budget decisions. **Action:** Clerk to contact CCS for further information on local projects and add to Jan 23 agenda.
- b) A request from SALC had been received, to complete a questionnaire by the end of December, to help CALC legal services user group survey legal spend. **Action:** Clerk to complete survey by 31 Dec.

4368 Reports

- a) Playing Field / Village Hall – the first meeting with joint agenda and minutes had taken place on 8 November- see Min 4366c
- b) SALC – the latest e-bulletin had been circulated.
- c) Highways – see Min 4366h
- d) Environment – see Min 4366d
- e) Rights of Way – MB's report had been circulated, with photos of the improvements to the surface on L11/6 Green Lane organised by the Ranger at SCC. It is still muddy in places but the standing water has drained away, making the footpath now passable down to Stowey Road.
- f) Cemetery – see Min 4355i
- g) Police – no further update had been received on speed monitoring in the village but the Clerk would follow up again.
- h) Asset/Maintenance Check Report – JB had reported via email. Several posts were in need of repair on the village green, which would be considered when budgeting for FY23/24. All three dog bins were in worn condition and parts would need replacing in approximately one year. The bus shelter needed minor repairs but was generally in acceptable condition.

4369 Planning - see <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planningsearch/> for details. The applications below were considered:

- a) **22/02430/COL - Homeacre, Stowey Road, Fivehead, TA3 6PP** - Certificate of Lawfulness made to confirm that the existing use, granted full permission 760368 dated 30 April 1976, does not have an agricultural tying condition attached to it – **granted**.
- b) **22/02543/HOU - Stowey Barn, Stowey Lane, Fivehead, TA3 6PR** – application submitted for the erection of a porch extension – **approved STC**.

4370 FY23/24 Finances/budget

- a) Grant requests for Fivehead Village Hall/Playing Field – the separate requests from both organisations had been delayed due to various complications. It was agreed that information would need to be received by 31 December 2022, for the final budget discussions at the next meeting, to enable this to be included in the precept request.
Action: Clerk to send out reminder to both VH/PF treasurers for grant requests to be submitted by 31 December 2022.
- b) Outline budget discussion – an informal working group (KB, CM, RW, DB and Clerk) had met on Zoom on Wed 30 Nov to assist with budgeting. After further discussion, the following was agreed:
 - i) St Martin's churchyard – removal of the ivy and vegetation growing in the walls and mortar repairs had been identified as urgent in the recent quinquennial review by the church architect. Pressure of the roots on the walls in the SW corner should also be checked by a tree surgeon. DB was organising a working party to tackle the vegetation and the Clerk would arrange for Woodland and Garden Tree Services to assess the tree roots. It was agreed the remaining sections of the wall should be completed once the conditions were right for lime mortar work in the Spring and that a provisional date should be pencilled in with the stonemason. The cost of the remaining work was estimated at £3850. It may be possible to obtain grant funding for part of the work. KB and the Clerk would look into options in January 2023, with the remainder funded from ear-marked reserves. **Action:** KB/Clerk to look at grant-funding options and add to Feb 23 agenda.
 - ii) Pound repairs – the Pound was now in desperate need of structural repair in Spring 2023. Quotes for the damage repairs and other maintenance had been obtained. It may be possible to make cost savings if the work was planned in at the same time as the church walls. It was currently estimated at £4550. **Action:** Clerk to pencil in work (i and ii) with stonemason for Spring 2023 and add to Feb 23 agenda.

- iii) Village Green posts – it was agreed that £500 would be budgeted for replacement posts. DB would make safe the rotten posts until the work could be planned in.
- iv) Coronation celebrations May 2023 – a budget of up to £400 was proposed to organise a similar event to the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee lunch at the Village Hall. (The actual cost of this was £125.35 but some costs had been covered by residents.)
- v) Dog bins – a larger bin for Swell Lane would be costed as part of the budget discussion for January 2023. Funding this from CIL monies was another option.
Action: Clerk to add costing to budget calculations for Jan 23. DB would look at replacement posts for the existing bins.

4371 Finance

- a) Payments authorised and unrecorded during the previous month: None
- b) Payments to be authorised:
 - (i) SALC - Councillor training – Part 2 for JB (28/10/22) - £25
 - (ii) Village Hall – small meeting room fee (Nov) - £16
 - (iii) J Parsons – Heart Internet Ltd – 2-yr domain name renewal - £23.98
 - (iv) J Parsons – Stationery House – condolence book/stationery - £10.91
 - (v) J Parsons – Tiger – black note book for asset report - £3
 - (vi) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Salary (Oct overtime) - £137 (10hrs)
 - (vii) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Salary (Nov) - £548
 - (viii) J Parsons – Homeworking allowance (Nov) - £26
- c) Income received:
 - (i) NatWest – Interest (Oct) - £17.86
 - (ii) G Bailey – Newsletter advertising - £55
 - (iii) Willow Blossom – Newsletter advertising - £55
 - (iv) Local Expert Directory – Newsletter advertising - £55
 - (v) W C Firewood – Newsletter advertising - £55
 - (vi) Quest Cars Ltd – Newsletter advertising - £55
 - (vii) D Green – Newsletter advertising - £55

4372 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

- a) Clerk – i) 23/24 Precept to be submitted by Friday 20 January 2023; ii) A survey had been circulated by ICCM on cemetery fees which the Clerk would complete by end of December. iii) A reminder to nominate contact/s for Somerset Emergency Community Contacts database had been received. As the parish did not current have an Emergency Plan, the Clerk would write to SCC and let them know that the voluntary role would need to be advertised in the next parish newsletter, to see if anyone would be willing to undertake this for the community, then this would be added to the March agenda for a response to SCC.
- b) Councillors – DB proposed that the annual tidy-up of the bus shelter might be carried out by some of the Fivehead Fixers in Spring 23 and would look into this. It had last been cleaned by Nina and Dave Cameron in Spring 2022.

4378 Date for Next Meeting

Monday 9 January 2023 at 1830 at Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Chairman.....Dated.....