

## STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2019

in the Meeting Room, Williams Hall

**Present** , Graham Gleed (Chairman), Sara Sollis (Vice-Chair), Nick Sloan, Ann Finn, Heather Venn, Peter House, David House, John Hembrow, Phil Stone (District Councillor), David Fothergill, arrives later (County Councillor)

**In Attendance** – Kelly de Silva and 4 members of the public

### Public Question time

4 Members of the public were present to discuss the proposed 20 metre transition zone between Church Close and the Willey Road housing development.

A member of the public spoke to the developer at the council planning meeting who suggested a site management agent would be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the transition zone through payments levied on the new house owners.

GG was unaware that the developer had spoken to the resident and the same developer had come back with an informal proposal of the PC maintaining the land with a one off payment of £15K.

GG questions whether the PC would formally want to take on the land. The member of the public had spoken to neighbours about taking responsibility for the land but there was a lack of support, it is mentioned that this would put an obligation onto the households backing onto the transition zone to maintain it.

The member of the public was under the impression, from attending a previous meeting about the development, the PC would not be taking on the transition zone. NS states that there was no previous enthusiasm to take the land on.

GG recommends that letters are posted to residents to officially find out their position on the transition zone. HV questions whether this should be the responsibility of the PC; it should be that of the developers.

The member of the public is concerned that if there is no clear ownership of the transition zone it will become a dumping ground.

A member of the public would like to raise the point of the state of the proposed transition zone at present. Photographic evidence is supplied by the member of the public of excessive overgrowth that is encroaching onto their land and states that it is completely unacceptable.

SS questions who is currently responsible for the land at present. GG informs that it would be the current tenant of the land. The member of the public had contacted the tenant but had a negative response.

GG states that he on behalf of The Allotment association had cut back the overgrowth before as a neighbourly good will gesture, but it was not the obligation of the allotment association. Since a robbery at the allotments the required piece of machinery to be able to do this had been stolen so they were unable to assist at present. There has been a recent donation of an older version of a replacement for the piece of machinery, it may be that once it is restored they may be able to cut the overgrowth down. GG restates that it is unacceptable but the current upkeep should be the responsibility of either the land tenant or warden.

DH raised the point that maybe the PC should be responsible for its present maintenance. SS disagreed.

*A member of the public leaves*

The member of the public suggests that the proposed transition zone would be equivalent to maintaining an area similar to that of the village hall land per sq ft and the PC should consider these figures when discussing the PC possibility of maintaining the transition zone

The member of the public suggests that the person hired to mow the rhynes could clear the present overgrowth at a cost to the PC.

**Apologies for absence** – Sue Buller (District Councillor) David Fothergill (Arriving later)

**36. Declarations of Interest and dispensations** - None received.

**37. Minutes of previous meeting** - The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019 were agreed by all to be accurate, and were signed by the Chairman. HV did raise the point about the phrasing in minute 19. being open to misinterpretation. It was agreed by GG to be discussed in minute 39.2 to clarify this position..

### **38. Planning**

There were no new planning applications or visits this month.

**36/19/0006 Meare Green Farm, Stoke St Gregory** – SWTC Conditional approval 03/06/19

**36/18/0047 The Recreation Ground, Stoke St Gregory** – SWTC Conditional approval 21/06/19

The new pavilion on the playing field has been approved. There will be a second application entered shortly on the floodlights and a slight change on the positioning of the pavilion itself.

### **39. Willey Road housing development update**

Before any ground work can start the maize needs to be harvested so it is anticipated that no work will start until later on in the year.

#### **39.1 Street Lighting on the Willey Road housing development**

After a discussion between PC members considering if lighting was an Health and Safety requirement, the impact of light pollution on the village and the effects street lighting has on climate change as well as the cost of the running the street lights, HV proposed No to street lighting for the new housing development. JH seconded and all PC members voted unanimously against street lights on the new development.

#### **39.2 Parish Council transition zone**

GG suggests that we need to get a formal binary response from the developer with regards to the 20m transition zone. HV requested to know what the chain of communication process had been thus far. GG responds that there have only been informal communications with Andrew Lehner up until now.

JH states that it is up to the developer to communicate the finer details. HV questions whether the PC would want to take on the responsibility of the land and maintain it for a one off payment of £15k. PH also questions the point of has the land been formally offered to the Church Close residents backing onto the development, and if they were to turn it down, would it not be offered to the new residents of the housing development before being offered to the PC. JH points out that home-owners can frequently change, the lands' maintenance would be difficult to enforce in this case.

*DF Arrives*

GG points out that the developer needs to shut this down with an official communication about the land. NS raised the point for consideration of whether the land could be an asset to the village, a possible extension on the community orchard for example. JH expresses that if the PC maintained the land they could prevent it becoming a dumping ground.

HV points out that the PC should not be chasing developers and that there will be other communal areas within the development that will need to be maintained and these would be by a management company, they could include the land.

It was agreed that there was not enough information to make a decision on the transition zone without a formal proposal and for the developer to formalise what they are exactly suggesting.

**GG to contact Andrew Lehner for a formal proposal on the transition zone.**

### **40. Vacancy for a Parish Councillor – Co option process**

It was agreed to defer the co option until the next PC meeting on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August and publicise the vacancy again.

#### **41. Burial ground regulations and table of fees.**

JH supplied the PC with a copy of the current parish church fees. GG will take the church fees as a guide and moderate the fees accordingly.

**GG to amend the burial ground fees and bring the proposal to the next meeting.**

#### **42. Dog waste bin**

The clerk will be meeting Martin Davies at 11am on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July to discuss the positioning of the bin, the bin should then be installed within a week of the meeting. It was agreed that the dog waste bin will be placed by the electricity pole near the village hall with a sign near the general waste bin at the bus stop prompting people to use the new dog waste bin provided.

**Kds to follow through installation and devise a sign for the bus stop**

#### **43. Footpaths**

AF has reported to the head of service at rights of way a list of the defective stiles accompanied with photographic evidence of stiles that have been reported and then shown as resolved on the rights of way map. They responded “ That if there are adjacent field gates that aren't locked then there is no need to repair the stile, which may in itself not be the lawful limitation. Many stiles have been added next to gates for landowner convenience, whereas in many cases the route of the RoW is through the field gate.”

HV states that it is the landowners responsibility to maintain the stiles and claim 25% of the cost back. JH questions DF if the council has installed Bristol gates or kissing gates then who is responsible? DF responded that the council pay for the gate, then it is up to the landowner to maintain it.

The e mail has been forwarded to the land warden but AF has yet to receive a response.

#### **44. Highways**

AF refers to the speed-watch noting that all the speed signs in North Curry had been cleaned and were made visibly clearer. DF states that this has been a small improvement scheme as part of the Greenway work. AF had contacted Highways with regards to the state of the speed signs in SSG as speed watch can not progress until they have been maintained. AF was refused the telephone number of the person to progress things forward. DF advises that the interface is required via e mail.

**AF to e mail DF the speed sign issues with photographs to forward on to the appropriate person.**

*3 members of the public leave*

SS questions why there is no 20 mph speed limit by the school. There are notable issues arising with parking and the speed some vehicles are travelling.

**KdS to add Willey Road advisory speed limit to the next PC agenda.**

NS reports that the Huntham Road sign has now been re-cast and will be collected later this month. He will then arrange for it to be painted.

The pot holes are still an issue on the Huntham Lane.

**AF to report to highways.**

#### **45. Allotments**

GG reports that an allen sythe has been donated to the Allotment Association and will require some restoration. They will endeavour to use it to take back the overgrowth at the back of Church Close as an act of good will.

The Allotment Association has consulted with the school and its users and will be introducing a beehive in the community orchard from a local bee keeper.

#### **46. Playing Field**

SS reports that there has been some debate over some of the proposals. There has been recent discussion over the naming of the new pavilion.

#### **47. Heart of the village**

DH reports that full planning permission is required to move the shop into the Royal Oak. DH informs that when he applied for the permission for the flagpole he did so in his own name. If he had done this on behalf of the PC they would have had a discount of rates. DH asks that any other planning permissions should be considered and all be filed at the same time.

DH proposes, seconded by NS that DH will make the application acting as an agent for the PC to change the use so the current pub could house a retail outlet for the village shop.

SS reports that GG and NS have been working tirelessly on the share offer and it is almost ready. It will now be standard marked potentially making more funds available to the project. The HOTV representatives will have a stall at the upcoming school fete to answer any questions residents may have about the project, next steps and recruitment.

#### **48. Village website**

NS reports that the hotvssg.org domain name has been obtained. AF notes that the PC members page needs updating.

**NS to update PC member page.**

**49. Broadband** – Nothing to report.

**50. Flood** – Nothing to report.

#### **51. Consultations and surveys**

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue service. Delivery operating model proposal – it was agreed that the consultation was aimed at individuals rather than a body. It is a public consultation and individuals may take part if they wish.

SLCC Nominations for election of SLCC directors – No Nominations

#### **52. Police**

AF had reported the speed watch issues and an update on the cleaning and clearing of speed signs within minute 44. Highways.

#### **53. VE Day May 2020**

It was discussed that there was great scope for this on the back of previous events including the queens jubilee and the world war 1 centenary. Also, there are a number of ex-service people in the village and residents who will remember VE day first hand. It was agreed discuss on upcoming agendas.

**KdS to include on next agenda.**

#### **54. Financial**

##### **Authorisation of payments**

G Wagen James / Strim/mow cemetery and dispose of cuttings (01-05-19 & 20-05-19)	£55.00
Cheque donation of £500 for The willow-set preschool	£500.00
The internal auditor fee donated to The Allotment Association	£25.00
Clerk expenses - Printer toner and stationary	£23.62
The Allotment Association insurance contribution	£163.17

It was agreed to pay all.

HV questioned how long the PC was expected to continue to pay the allotment association insurance as it should now be reaching a financial equilibrium. GG informs that with decreased rental costs and grants being applied for, it may not be a requirement of the PC in the future. JH states that the PC should support the allotment association.

## **Standing Orders**

1-6-2019 K de Silva – Clerk Salary for July

£283.33

## **Other Financial items**

Notification of receipt of AGAR and exemption certificate received 24-06-19 – no further action required.

ICO data protection certificate received – no further action required.

Financial regulations update and completion – GG amended the financial regulations to take into account of an audit trail for online payments. A new 5.5 has been added to cover record keeping of approved signatories for on line payments. No other amendments were made. All agreed with the amendment.

**Bank reconciliation to the end of May 2019** – Checked by SS

## **Other items for discussion**

GG to write PC report

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:59 pm.

**The next meeting will be held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2019 at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room at the Williams Hall. Please email any items for the agenda to the clerk and the Chairman by 1<sup>st</sup> August if possible.**