

STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 9th September 2019 in the Williams Hall

Present – Graham Glead (Chairman), Sara Sollis (Vice-Chair), Nick Sloan, Ann Finn, Heather Venn, Janice Pearce, Peter House, David House, John Hembrow, David Fothergill (County Councillor), Phil Stone (District Councillor)

In Attendance – Kelly de Silva and 3 members of the public

Apologies for absence – Sue Buller (County Councillor)

Public question time – The following issues were raised:

A member of the public wished to discuss the strong unusual smells across the parish that have continued over the summer. There has been here-say as to what may be causing the odour which was referred to as smelling and tasting like ammonia leading to a feeling of a sore throat and/or cough. Another member of the public added that the smell was horrendous at times resulting in them keeping windows closed and unable to dry their washing outside. The odour was likened to a previous rising main burst. The member of the public would like some clarification from the PC as to what it could be that is causing such an odour.

GG recommends that the PC require some quantitative information – considering wind direction, any obvious signs of agricultural movement and pinpointed times that the smell is more pronounced.

GG to draft a questionnaire for publishing to investigate the odour further and draft a letter to Wessex Water to rule out the sewage works. Clerk to add the item for discussion at the next meeting.

2 members of the public were attending to observe item no.3 – Transition zone behind Church Close update.

77. Declarations of Interest and dispensations

HV & JH declared an interest in item no.8 Footpaths – Frog Lane diversion of footpath T25-22

78. Minutes of previous meeting - The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 12th August 2019 were agreed by all to be accurate, and were signed by the Chairman.

79. Planning

36/19/0013/CQ The Barn, The Willows, Curload, Stoke St Gregory – Appealing refusal decision 14-08-1

36/19/0023 Stoke St Gregory Playing Field – SWTC Conditional approval 28-08-19

36/19/0021 Meare Green Farm, Frog Lane, Meare Green – SWTC Conditional approval 29-08-19

36/19/0018 Crossways Farm, Slough Lane, Stoke St Gregory – SWTC Conditional approval 29-08-19

Item not on the agenda

GG would like to make the PC aware that planning applications 36/19/0009 and 36/19/0010 – Erection of an agricultural building for the housing of livestock at Lower Huntham Farm, Huntham Lane, Stoke St Gregory, will be discussed at the Planning Committee meeting on 12-09-19 at 1pm. GG asks whether or not there is a need for PC representation at the meeting. It was felt that there was no need. PS added that there will be a number of people attending this meeting and he felt the PC should attend to gather information. GG asked if any PC member was available to attend independently. NS may go if he is available.

79.1. PC Formal response request from SWTC regarding the link between the Willey Road housing development 36/18/0048 and the new pavilion 36/18/0047.

GG received a request from SWTC for a PC response linking the Willey Road development and the building of the new pavilion. GG asks the PC if they feel it is appropriate to respond. There was a sentiment from some members of the PC that there were still discussions to be had with the developer regarding the financing of the pavilion build and other works on the fields. HV stated she was extremely concerned and felt very strongly about approving a link between the 2 applications as clarification was required on what exactly was proposed and financed by the developer. HV requested the developer attend a PC meeting to discuss the matter further, if necessary, by the means of an extraordinary meeting.

GG proposed to send a response acknowledging the link between planning applications 36/18/0047 & 36/18/0048, seconded by NS and all agreed.

GG to draft a response and circulate. KdS to send agreed response to SWTC.

80. Transition zone behind Church Close update

There was a meeting held on Wednesday 4th September between the developer and the residents affected by the transition zone attended by NS and SS. GG reads the proposal from AL at the meeting;

“The proposal from AL was that the section of the buffer zone abutting each Church Close garden could be sold to the house owner for £1, with the legal fees for the transfer being borne by the purchasers. AL would apply for a change of use for the whole area to domestic gardens.

The only restriction on use is that the new owners would have to either respect the planting scheme that forms part of the original application, or apply to have this varied.”

It was decided that no action was required from the PC at this time until the revised plans had been presented to the residents and they have made their decision.

81. Advisory speed limit on the Willey Road

GG has noted that the current speed signs and school patrol signs are obscured and insufficient, and asks the PC on their views on a advisory 20mph speed limit on the Willey Road. SS suggests that it be in place from the far end of the playing field to the village square. JH asks whether it is a pointless exercise as people should be driving at this speed especially at school times anyway, SS states that drivers do not stick to this speed limit though. DF suggests the PC formally write to him requesting a 20mph advisory speed limit. All members of the PC unanimously agreed.

GG to draft and circulate a formal request that be sent to DF

82. Route 60 + and WI open meeting

The WI will be meeting on the 10th September to discuss hosting the course.

KdS to add to the next agenda and collate any interest.

83. Village Gateways

There was little interest to pursue the village gateways any further at this time. The item will be removed from future agendas.

84. Housing development

GG asks DF about the distribution of CIL money. DF explains that CIL money goes into a central pot for school extensions and alike, there is a national formula that has to be adhered to, which for a development of this size could possibly allocate 3 – 4 primary school places. GG states he refuses to accept this, especially with another development possible in Burrowbridge. There is a specific financial need for Stoke St Gregory Primary School as the resources are already stretched to the limit and it is running at capacity. DF states that the lobbying needs to be done by the school governors. GG asks if there is anything that the PC can do to add any weight to the lobbying?

SS states that the PC has recently made a large donation to the school and asks how many pupils attend from the Burrowbridge Parish and whether or not the school could approach Burrowbridge Parish Council for grants as well.

GG will contact Liz Moorsom to discuss

Naming of the housing development site

SS suggests holding a competition within the school for the naming of the Willey Road housing development. This was received as a good idea, the PC would make the final decision and have the right of refusal if there are no suitable suggestions.

GG to discuss if there would be any interest within the school with LM

85. Footpaths

Frog Lane proposed diversion of footpath T25-22

The Parish Council agreed there would be no comment.

86. Highways

The broken finger post has been cast and is ready for collection. NS had made an attempt to collect it, but was unable to as the person was on holiday. SS has agreed to make another attempt to collect it.

AF reported that there was an increase in the yellow markings on the roads in the village signifying possible future road repairs. AF also reports that some of the speed signs have been cleaned and some even replaced. GG thanks DF for his assistance with this.

87. Allotments

Nothing to report.

88. Playing Field

Nothing to report.

89. The Heart of the Village

GG reports that uptake on the share offer has been slower than anticipated with only 45 investors at this time. By the end of September, when the offer closes, this could lead to some very difficult questions being asked. SS adds that they had expected an influx of investment after a successful meeting was held on the 2nd September, yet the uptake had been disappointing. The option of a PC contribution to be deferred until the next meeting.

KdS to add to the next agenda

90. Village website

Nothing to report.

91. Broadband

NS reports he had spoken to RBS wireless networks about the current insufficient coverage and they appeared to be interested. A few more customers would be required to make it a viable option, as Gigaclear could still be another year.

NS to upload the information onto the website

92. Flood

Nothing to report

93. Consultations and Surveys

Electric vehicle community charge point fund application – Item deferred until the next meeting.

KdS to add to the next agenda

Somerset West and Taunton Statement of Community Involvement – The following response was agreed;

“ Local Plans should represent the default view, but more weight should be given, by both planning officers and committee, to local circumstances that may have a major bearing on the desirability of a development. The views of a parish council, speaking on behalf of their community, should be given far more weight than currently appears to be the case.

The preparation of a neighbourhood plan is an onerous and expensive procedure which many smaller parish councils find difficult to justify. Involvement in the preparation of local plans likewise requires specialist expertise which parish council may feel they do not possess. The one area in which they are experts however is in knowing their local community: they will usually have a deeper understanding than the district planning department of how individual applications are likely to affect it, for good or ill.

We feel that better planning decisions would be made if the Department was more willing to tap this resource.”

94. Police

AF reports that as the speed signage has been cleaned and replaced, she will now contact the police to commence forward with the progression of speedwatch.

(2 members of the public leave)

95. VE Day celebrations

GG reports that there will be a village breakfast at the hall and a Glenn Miller style band has been booked to play later in the day. SS adds that she is pulling together a committee to organise the event for the village. GG thanks SS for her participation with this.

(DF leaves)

96. Financial

Authorisation of payments

G Wagen James - Invoice 2089 – Strim & mow burial ground	£77.00
Outstanding Invoices for G Wagen James	
Invoice 1931 – 11-Apr-19	£33.00
Invoice 1979 - 09-May-19	£33.00
SLCC Annual membership renewal	£89.00
(Cheque no 1033)	
Clerks expenses – Printer ink – colour & toner	£49.99

Standing order

Clerks Salary for August 2019	£283.33
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Received

SWTC Parish Grant 19/20	£230.00
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It was agreed unanimously that all the above payments be paid.

97. Other items for discussion

KdS suggested to GG and SS that as she was 6 months into the role of Clerk, it would be good practice to carry out an internal audit, to make sure all was in order before AGAR in May. It was agreed that this would be good practice.

GG to contact LH to request a half year audit review

Overgrowth of the hedge in the burial ground – It was agreed that G Wagen James could trim the inside of the hedge, Pattens would be doing the top in the near future.

KdS to communicate to G Wagen James

The Parish Church will sponsor the Autumn newsletter – KdS to deliver the printing receipt from Rockwell to the PCC secretary.

Dates to be confirmed for 2020 PC meetings and the meeting room booked – this item was deferred until the October meeting.

KdS to circulate proposed dates to PC members

Clerk CiLCA course – It was agreed that the Clerk enrol onto the CiLCA course in January.

AF would like to bring to the attention of the PC the overgrowth of weeds and moss on the footpath at the bottom of Dark Lane, opposite the village hall, stating that it was looking rather tatty.

GG to contact Highways

A member of the public would like to raise that the overgrowth of weeds behind their house on Church Close was still unacceptable.

GG to speak to the allotment association for a possible resolve

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.31pm.

The next meeting will be held on Monday 14th October at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room at the Williams Hall. Please email any items for the agenda to the clerk (ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk) and the chairman (grahiamgleed@gmail.com) by 4th October if possible.