

STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

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

Present – Graham Gleed (Chairman), Nick Sloan, Heather Venn, David House, Peter House, John Hembrow, David Fothergill (County Councillor) arrives later

In Attendance – Kelly de Silva and 13 members of the public

145. Apologies for absence – Ann Finn, Janice Pearce, Sara Sollis, Phil Stone, Sue Buller David Fothergill (late arrival)

Minutes of the previous meeting – The minutes of the Parish council meeting held on Monday 11th November had one amendment to minute 132 from the draft copy. The minutes were agreed to be accurate, and were signed by the chairman.

Declarations of interests - None

145.2 Resolve – that the council delegates the power to grant dispensations to the Clerk. The power rests with the relevant authority under section 31 (4) of the Localism Act 2011 and the basis set out under section 33 (2) of the Localism Act 2011.

145.3 Dispensations – The Clerk grants dispensations for the written request forms received, under section 31 (4) of the Localism Act 2011 for councillors;

a) to participate or participate further in any discussions of the matter of the HOTV project at meetings

b) to participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter of the HOTV project at meetings

Without the dispensations, the number of councillors unable to participate in the transaction of business would be so great to impede the transaction of the business.

The dispensations were granted for Parish Councillors Graham Gleed, Sara Sollis, Nick Sloan, Heather Venn, Peter House and David House.

The period of the dispensation will be for 12 months, with immediate effect.

GG reports that the dispensation process followed by the Clerk was in line with the spirit of the relevant legislation and clarification of the process was sought from Justin Robinson SALC County Executive Officer.

Public question time – A member of the public raised the issue of noise from the Willey Road housing development. They reported that the cement mixer was active and gravel movement was commencing before 8am.

GG informs that he has been made aware of this, including the traffic disruption on the Willey Road, and had written to the developer reporting the issues.

Also present was group of residents who are affected by the planning application resubmissions at Lower Huntham Farm (for the erection of a agricultural building to house livestock). A member of the group spoke about the inconsistencies and contradictions within the applications; that there was no mention of the storage of slurry and effluent within the applications, and that the building is only one building and as such should be dealt with as one application, not multiple applications.

A member of the public questioned why the building had been applied for in 4 applications and not as one. JH explains that this is a common and cost effective way of applying for this type of building. NS states that these types of applications have always been dealt with in this manner - which is annoying as there is not enough information at the start due to the fact that the applications are often submitted at different times.

A member of the public expresses concerns of the impact - not only on the landscape - but also the unique and fragile environment within the area. The residents request that the council opposes all four applications and request to SWTC they be drawn as one application.

A member of the public representing the Willowset was attending to discuss CIL monies and CIL funding for local infrastructure. RP had obtained information claiming the CIL money due to the PC would be £64K and would be paid to the PC in instalments. RP asked if this money had been allocated. RP further stated that the Willowset preschool needs an extension to increase capacity. RP reminded that the Willowset has always participated in village events with raising £10k for the park equipment on the playing fields. GG reports that the CIL total for the development is anticipated to be over £600K. The PC would receive 15% of this total from SWTC amounting to £95K. On the understanding that the PC receives the £95K as expected, the PC had previously agreed to contribute to the infrastructure and equipment stores surrounding the pavilion up to the sum of £70K.

A member of the public questions why the old pavilion could not be restored as an equipment store, and requested the money being allocated to the school instead. GG reports that the existing pavilion is far too dilapidated for renovation. The PC portion of CIL money cannot be allocated to the school as it is centrally funded, but the PC is working very hard with SCC and SWTC with regards to extra school funding and addressing the big issue of disconnect between SCC and SWTC funding thus far.

The portion of the allocation of the CIL money to the pavilion was questioned. A breakdown of the costs for the allocated money was requested. HV states that for an item to be discussed it must be on the agenda. It was agreed to add the item to the agenda for the next PC meeting. **Clerk to add CIL money and allocation to the next agenda.**

146. Planning

36/19/0025/CQ Huntham Farm. Stoke St Gregory – Prior approval for a proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to a dwelling house (Class C3), and associated building operations.

DECISION – Prior Approval Refusal 12-11-19

36/19/0027 Higher House Farm. Huntham, Stoke St Gregory – Variation of condition No. 03 (of application 36/07/0016) to modify the wording of the holiday let condition to make the holiday use more flexible.

DECISION – Conditional Approval 06-11-19

36/19/0030 Ravensbourne. 3 Huntham Close, Stoke St Gregory – Erection of a conservatory to the rear

The PC agreed the following response;

“ The Parish Council supports this application as it will have no adverse impact ”

36/19/0032 Lower Huntham Farm. Huntham Lane, Stoke St Gregory – Erection of an agricultural building for the housing of livestock (resubmission of 36/19/0010)(retention of part works already undertaken)

36/19/0033 Lower Huntham Farm. Huntham Lane, Stoke St Gregory – Erection of an agricultural building for the housing of livestock (resubmission of 36/19/0009)(retention of part works already undertaken)

36/19/0034 Lower Huntham Farm. Huntham Lane, Stoke St Gregory – Erection of an agricultural building for the housing of livestock (resubmission of 36/18/0017)(retention of part works already undertaken)

36/19/0035 Lower Huntham Farm. Huntham Lane, Stoke St Gregory – Erection of an agricultural building for the housing of livestock (resubmission of 36/18/0016)(retention of part works already undertaken)

The PC agreed the following one response to all four applications;

“The Parish Council offers no comment on this application as the information provided is incomplete and in some instances, contradictory. The Parish Council believe it is appropriate that this application along with others for this contiguous building should be put before the planning committee. It would also recommend that these four applications along with the permitted development contained therein be considered as a single application.”

DH advises the members of the public that the current consultation period is the time to raise their objections with SWTC planning.
(12 Members of the public leave. DF arrives.)

147. Financial Prudence

GG reports that the PC has committed to some significant expenditure over the coming months. AL has requested an invoice from the PC for the £12K contribution made to the tennis court resurfacing so that the money may be recouped by the PC in January. Although the PC are financially solvent, with the planned large expenditures GG advises financial prudence.

148. Footpaths

Public path diversion order for footpath T25/22 has been noted.

Clerk to display in the village noticeboard

149. Shop in a Box

GG reports that the container to house the shop in a box should be delivered on 12/12/2019. Two invoices have been received with payment expected from the £5K grant agreed to be made by the PC at the extraordinary meeting held on 25-11-19. The payments required to be authorised immediately to ensure the delivery of the container are;

Phil Space – Delivery/ Collection/ 1 week rent	£1,321.92
Broughton Community Shop (Hampshire) Ltd – Fittings	£2,520.00

It was agreed unanimously that both payments be made.

GG informs the PC that the insurance payment would be required in the coming days from the funds allocated to the project

150. 2020-21 Precept and budget planning

GG reports that with the exception of the significant number of grants the PC has made over the past 8 months, the 2019-2020 PC expenditure is in line with the budget.

The finalised budget expenditure total agreed for 2020/21 (Minute 128) is £19,070.

JH recommends that with any precept increase it should happen in small increments rather than large jumps, but there are a lot of financial unknowns at present. JH also states that the precept has remained the same for the past 2 years. HV reports that the precept decreased in 2018-19. HV also states that the planned income should be between £14K and the £19K of planned expenditure.

JH proposes a 9.5% increase in the precept from £14,062 to £16,000. PH seconds, all in favour.

Clerk and Chairman sign the precept form from SWTC

Clerk to post precept form to Louise Henderson at SWTC.

151. Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club grant application

GG reads a grant request made by the chairman of Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club for a financial contribution to cover a funding shortfall pertaining to the resurfacing of the tennis courts.

JH states that in a time of financial uncertainty, it may be unwise to offer the grant. HV adds that the PC has already assisted with the £12K contribution to be recovered from AL, if the tennis club has the ability to cover the shortfall by their own means, then they should.

It was agreed that at the present the PC would not offer a grant.

GG to write to inform the tennis club.

152. Allocation of social housing for local people on the Willey Road development.

GG reports that the allocation process was circulated via email from Jo Humble and requests PC members to read the documentation.

153. Review of the PC policy on grants for local groups and charities

It was agreed that this would not be applicable until the new financial year. Item deferred until March 2020.

154. PC Objectives

Item deferred until the next PC meeting

155. Willey Road housing development

Noise & traffic disruption

GG reports that the concerns around noise and traffic disruption have been noted. GG has communicated these concerns to the developer.

156. School improvements

DF reports that TDBC was the only council in Somerset to move away from Section 106 and to introduce CIL. By not including education provision there are no means or mechanisms for SCC to apply for CIL funds, SWTC are now able to use this pot of funds as they see fit.

Consequently, SCC have borrowed £120 million to build new schools.

SCC do not control CIL, so any lobbying needs to be done at District level with Cllr. Sue Buller, Cllr. Phil Stone and SWTC.

DF continues, stating that Stoke St Gregory Primary school has admission numbers approval of 82, with provision to take local children up to 86 with some flex. SCC expect admission numbers to decline due to the demography within the area.

DF states that in the last 10 years the school has seen significant investment with a £250K extension and £250K in repairs. At present, there are certain investments that must happen, fixing the hole in the roof and re-roofing are a priority.

There are 2 allocations of funds for the refurbishment of the toilets and disability access that need to be agreed, so there is considerable investment already happening.

DF mentions that - contrary to the understanding of the PC - the school may be able to apply to the PC for CIL funding, despite the school being centrally funded by SCC.

DF informs that he attended a meeting with the school headteacher, Governors and County Officers. It was apparent there has been a fundamental process breakdown and a feeling of frustration around funding.

GG expresses concerns surrounding the lack of continuity with regards to communication, the challenges obtaining consistent information, and the challenge unravelling the conundrum of CIL money.

HV states there is a pressing need to know what the allocation of CIL money. Also; what is the portion of CIL money for SWTC? What are the plans of SWTC with received CIL money and if it is in a general pot, and can the PC apply for it? If we are to have constructive discussions surrounding CIL then there is a need to know all of the facts and how the money can be accessed if the money is not going to SCC as expected.

GG asks DF if the Willowset is operating on premises that are in fact owned by the SCC and whether capital funding could be allocated to both the Willowset and school as a single project which considers the needs of both the school and the preschool. DF reports that whilst SCC have an obligation to provide primary school places, this is not the case for pre-school admissions.

GG to seek clarification on CIL, Item to be added to the next agenda.

157. Highways

GG reports that the previous road markings for defects to be fixed have now been washed

away with no work undertaken. DF reports that these defects are still logged and he will contact Highways for an update.

158. Allotments

Nothing to report

159. Playing Fields

GG notifies that there will be an application for floodlighting on the tennis courts in the imminent future

160. Heart of the Village

GG reports that there have been several exciting developments with the HOTV project. There will be a 30% social investment tax relief on investments. Dependent on raising the £200K investment, the Plunkett Foundation could award £100K to the project as 50% loan and 50% grant, as well as a possible £150K blended grant loan from the Somerset community fund. The total of community investment is over the £140K mark.

GG asks if the PC wish to invest in the project and nominate a formal representative for the HOTV.

HV expresses concerns for the original £10K request as the PC has already invested £5K into the shop in a box. GG agrees with HV as with the PC funding, the HOTV did not have to provide the funds to offer the continuity of the village shop for the community.

NS adds that the PC should make the £10K investment as it could make the difference between the project being fulfilled.

HV suggests a £5K investment and another request may be made further down the line if the project requires the further investment.

JH proposes a £5K investment from the PC to the HOTV with another investment made if appropriate or required at a later date. HV seconds - all in favour.

161. Village website

Nothing to report

162. Broadband

Nothing to report

163. Flood / Winter warden

GG has contacted the chair of the flood group with regards to the winter warden role and is awaiting a response.

164. Police

Nothing to report

165. Consultations and Surveys

Consultation on strengthening powers to tackle unauthorised encampments

Item deferred until the next meeting

Clerk to add the item to next agenda

166. Financial Matters

Authorisation of payments.

SALC The essential Clerk course part 3 60-11-19	£30.00
SALC Councillor essentials training 13-11-19	£25.00
John Musgrove – Strim and cut around signs and Dark Lane APR-OCT	£275.75
Courtstall interim payment (revised invoice received 22-11-19)	£3,340.58
Courtstall final payment 26-11-19	£7,459.42
Clerks expenses – Printer toner and ink	£39.98
T. McKenzie – Clerk cover for the extraordinary meeting 25-11-19	£25.00

Standing Orders

01-12-19 K de Silva – Clerks Salary for November	£283.33
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Received

None

GG proposed that all payments be authorised. JH seconded and all agreed unanimously.

Other financial items

Bank reconciliation to the end of November 2019 checked by GG.

167. Other items for discussion

No Items were discussed

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.37pm.

The next meeting will be held on Monday 13th January 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 3rd January if possible.

