

## **STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

#### **Held in The Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory.**

**Present** – Graham Glead (Chairman), Sara Sollis (Vice-Chair), Janice Pearce, Ann Finn, Anne Merritt, John Hembrow, Peter House, Simon Dauncey, Sue Buller (District Councillor)

**In Attendance** – Kelly de Silva (Clerk),

**154. Apologies for absence** – Heather Venn, David Fothergill (County Councillor), Barrie Hall (District Councillor),

**Minutes of the previous meeting** – The minutes of the Parish council meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were agreed by all to be accurate and signed by the Chairman.

**Declarations of Interests and Dispensations** – None

**Public Question Time** – No matters were raised.

#### **155. Planning**

**36/21/0029/CQ Holly Farm House. Stoke Road, Meare Green, Stoke St Gregory** – Prior approval for proposed change of use from agricultural building into 2 No. dwellings (use Class C3) and associated building operations

**DECISION** – PRIOR APPROVAL APPROVED (CONDITIONAL) 22-10-21

**36/21/0031 Reeds Barn. Meare Green Court Lane, Meare Green, Stoke St Gregory** – Erection of a detached single storey garage to the front of the dwelling

The following response was agreed:

*“Stoke St Gregory Parish Council support this application.”*

**36/21/0014 Brae Barn. Curload, Stoke St Gregory** – Erection of a first-floor extension to the side and two storey extension to the rear, construction of link sunroom, erection of a double bay carport and alterations to parking arrangements

The following response was agreed:

*“Stoke St Gregory Parish Council object to this planning application due to the implications on the number of cars requiring access and parking issues”*

#### **156. Opening up safely and reconnecting communities fund update**

The Clerk reports the round two submission to the fund - which was for a grant to help erect a mobile classroom incorporating a sensory area, baby room, staff room and office at The Willowset preschool - was successfully awarded £5,000.

The Clerk informs that SALC have stipulated the grant must be used by May 2022, and that SALC will require confirmation that the grant has been used for its intended purpose. Furthermore, all successful first round applications (SSG Scouts Group, Baptist Church, The Stoke Environment Group and SSG Tennis Club - who all received an equal portion of £1,500) must also provide similar confirmation.

GG thanks the Clerk for her work in assisting with the applications to the fund. All requests to the fund were successful with the exception of the Church Rooms application which was refused on the grounds of a legislative prohibition.

**Clerk to include transferral of the £5,000 grant to The Willowset with the monthly online banking**

#### **157. CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)**

GG reports that he has collected the data from the recent CIL survey circulated by SD and he presents a visualisation of the data in the form of a graph to the PC prior to publishing it to the community.

GG reports that Health and Fitness and in particular a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) is the clear leader, followed by Environment (purchase of land/creation of wild spaces) and improvement of footpaths and bridleways (including upkeep, maintaining stiles, and improving accessibility.) GG continues that improving Broadband was popular, although GG cites that Broadband providers should be more proactive in the roll out of sufficient coverage for rural areas, rather than needing to use Parish CIL funding to improve this service. Next was Highways and minor improvements (most notably pothole repairs, but pothole repair requests should be logged by the public via the Somerset County Council website). Also, the installation of another AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) within the village had a degree of support.

*(Potholes and road defects can be reported directly to SCC Highways please visit <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-pothole-or-road-defect/> If you do not have internet access, then contact the Clerk on 07701 053 903 with the location of the pothole and they will report it via the online form.)*

SS suggests a MUGA would be a good investment for the village as it can be used by all age groups for a wide range of activities. AM agrees, stating if facilities for younger and older members of the community were incorporated, it would be a sound investment for the village. SD also agrees stating a MUGA is a sound investment that would have longevity.

JP suggests that with the publication of the results, the next stage of consultation should contain more specific options.

GG asks if the consultation results should take precedence over the expressions of interest that the PC had received prior to the survey. All agree this should be the case, so that the investment is made in areas where the community collectively would like to see the CIL funding allocation made for local infrastructure improvements.

GG agrees to write an accompanying article for the graph and results prior to publication in the winter newsletter and on the website.

JH recommends that the PC retain a portion of the CIL money to cater for as yet unforeseen infrastructure investment needs. This is possible as regulations afford the PC up to five years to allocate the money. All agree.

**GG to write up the report to accompany the results graph and circulate to the PC prior to publication in the winter Stoke Newsletter and online.**

### **158. Budget and Precept planning for 2022-23**

GG reports the Clerk has circulated the projections of income and expenditure for the 2022-23 financial year. The Clerk has noted comments made at the October Meeting (Min 142), and in order to keep the financial impact to the parishioner at a minimum, the Clerk has removed as many historical non-urgent lines as possible.

*(The proposed draft budget income and expenditure is discussed line by line)*

JH suggests a 10% increase in the precept to align with the 10% increase on households in the village due to Broomfield Park.

GG informs that for a long time there have been many requests to support the provision of activities for young people, and that this should be considered for investment with the planned increase of the precept.

SS emphasises that increasing the precept even by £1 per household will make a difference to those facing financial hardship as living and energy costs rise.

SS also expresses concern over a £4,000 investment in a Youth project in case if - like the Creech St Michael project - it was not successful. GG informs that the Creech St Michael Youth Project suffered as two neighbouring Parishes that were involved in the project withdrew their funding.

GG recommends the increase of £1,600 is allocated to support youth services with grants and CIL funding options to be explored in due course.

The Clerk offers an overview that with a 10% increase this would take the precept from £16,000 - £17,600.

Precept for 2022-23 = £17,600

Other income (predominantly from the burial ground, which is taken from a 5-year median and VAT reclaim) = £1,508

Total forecasted income for 2022-23 = £19,108

Carry over of funds from 2021-22 = £31,000

Total projected amount in PC treasurers account for 2022-23 = £50,108

Budgeted spend for 2022-23 = £24,800.34

Earmarked Project fund for speed limit reduction work in Meare Green = £10,000

Earmarked reserves for running costs = £10,000

Unmarked reserves for 2022-23 = £5,308 (This is inline with the NALC JPAG guidance)

JH proposes increasing the Parish Precept by 10% from £16,000 - £17,600 for the 2022-23 financial year, PH seconds the motion, all were in favour.

**Clerk to finalise the budget and circulate. Clerk to complete the SWT Precept form and return to the SWT Finance Case Manager.**

#### **159. Phone Box at the Playing Fields.**

GG reports the phone box has now been cleaned and painted. GG expresses many thanks to Trevor Hooper and Karen Housego for their work, stating it is a huge improvement right down to the gold detailing on the crown.

The Clerk informs that KH will be meeting with the Headteacher at the school to discuss using the kiosk as a gallery for children's art work until a permanent purpose has been decided.

**Clerk to include reimbursement to KH for materials used on payments to be authorised**  
**Clerk to remove the item from the agenda**

#### **160. Replacement bench at Polkesfield bus stop update**

GG reports there has been no progress on the request to replace the bench via the HRA fund at SWT by Cllr, Barrie Hall. SB suggests the bench may be included on the SWT asset register, and therefore SWT would pay for a replacement. GG asks that if the PC secures a replacement, would SWT reimburse the PC. SB agrees to investigate this further.

**SB to contact SWT case manager for an update on asset register and replacement**  
**GG to contact BH for an update**  
**AM to collect costings for a suitable replacement**

#### **161. Donation to The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal**

GG proposes a donation of £100 is made from the PC on behalf of the people of Stoke St Gregory to The Royal British Legion Appeal. All were in favour.

**Clerk to arrange signatures for the £100 cheque donation and send to the Poppy Appeal co-ordinator**

GG informs a wreath will be laid on behalf of the people of Stoke St Gregory in The Baptist Church at the remembrance service on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November at 10.45am – all are welcome. The wreath will then be moved to the memorial in the Playing Fields.

#### **162. Young People; First steps**

GG reports initial enquiries have been made to set up a meeting with the Community Youth Project (CYP) to discuss first steps. GG informs this preliminary meeting will cost £186.00. AM suggests that as Schools will be involved in extra activities around the festive period, the meeting should be postponed until the New Year when it will be easier to get young people on board with the project and time can be invested in the work required.

GG requests that he, AM, and SS work together to promote the message of the initiative to the young people of SSG. GG informs there are sufficient numbers of 11–18-year-olds in SSG to warrant the project without the involvement of neighbouring Parishes.

**Clerk to add the item to the January agenda**

#### **163. Covid 19**

In the absence of Cllr. David Fothergill there will be no Covid report this evening.

GG reports that the SWT district is now on Amber alert as of this evening (08-11-21) with 376 per 100,000 cases in the district.

#### **164. Unitarian Authority**

GG reports he has circulated the minutes of the LGR T&PC conference he attended on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 to the PC, and we now await the next steps in the process. GG asks SB if there is any update from SWT.

SB responds there is conflicting information about the process. Currently structural wards are being discussed with the transfer of districts to SCC effective from April 2023. SB continues that decisions on elections being in 2022 or 2023 have not yet been decided. It is expected to initially have 110 Councillors, but at present, this is not confirmed. SB suggests it would be preferable to have executive teams in place moving forward with the transition to Unitary.

#### **165. Willey Road housing development**

GG reports there has been no progress on a decision from SWT planning department regarding planning application 36/21/0015.

GG informs that SCC Highways advised the developer that it is not necessary to provide a footpath on the Willey Road and as such, the developer should not provide one. This decision was taken 18 months ago.

SS informs that the PFMC have installed steps from the playing fields to address the safety concerns. The steps provide safer access to the playing fields from the development.

AF states this is an outrageous decision made by people who do not have to safely navigate the road.

#### **166. Highways**

The Clerk reports the Traffic Engineer for SCC Highways has visited the proposed site again with a colleague and they are now working on the works order and design. The Traffic Regulations Order (TRO) is in draft and should be ready to advertise soon. The TMO sends apologies for the long delays that have occurred due to staff shortages - but is hopeful things are now moving forward.

GG informs the Curload Road has been closed for 5 days for Wessex Water works. The Clerk responds that the PC received no advance notice of the impending closure.

*For more information on up-to-date road closures please visit <https://one.network/uk/somerset>*

#### **167. Footpaths**

AF reports that she has received no response from the correspondence sent to SCC Rights of Way regarding the unsafe steps on footpath T25/15. AF informs the Rights of Way Officer that was dealing with the case has left the post resulting in the department being short staffed and covering a vast area. AF recommends obtaining a quote from Simon Holly to remedy the issue with the PC applying for joint funding from SCC to fix the hazardous steps.

**AF to investigate the possibility of joint funding from SCC to resolve the issue**

#### **168. Climate / Environment issues**

JP reports she attended the COP26 conference at Edgar Hall in Somerton recently. In attendance were representatives from 26 other Parish Councils from the area.

JP continues that a pledge was made by representatives to introduce 'The Green Charter' which can be adapted to each individual PC.

**Clerk to add the item to the next agenda**

**Clerk to obtain the Charter from Langport Town Council and circulate**

JP informs that a number of Parish Councils have set up Environmental Groups similar to that of the work being achieved by the Stoke Environment Group (SEG).

JP reports the SEG Envirofair on 16-10-21 was a huge success to launch the group. There have been no meetings since the fair, but there are next steps in place to involve more younger people.

JP continues that reducing carbon emissions and carbon footprints should be a primary focus, with only Bruton Town Council having an independent auditor visiting sites to advise on action that can be taken. However, this comes at a significant cost and to consider appointment of such a role would require PC's networking and joining together to provide such a service.

### 169. Floods

GG reports that although the Hook Bridge Spillway was running and Cuts Road briefly closed, water levels have since subsided.

### 170. Playing Field

SS reports the football season has now commenced with games being played at the Playing Fields. The Village Bonfire was a great success and planning is well underway for the Stoke Stampede on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2022. All 450 places for the stampede were filled within 3 hours of going live.

### 171. Heart of the Village

Nothing to report

### 172. Village Website

GG informs that due to the technical issues that have recently occurred and time constraints on training availability, Nick Sloan will continue administration of the website until further notice.

### 173. Broadband

The Clerk reports the Airband Broadband representative was due to attend the November meeting, but no communication has been received about re-scheduling a date since the representative left their post.

### 174. Consultations and Surveys

**NALC Environmental permitting regulations consultation – deadline 26-11-21**

**Clerk to contact SALC for clarification regarding some of the ambiguous content of the consultation.**

### 175. Financial Matters

#### Standing Order

01-11-21 K de Silva – Clerks Salary	£377.00
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#### Payments for authorisation

Karen Housego – reimbursement for equipment to refurbish the phone box	£115.68
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G Wagen and James – Strim / Mow Burial Ground	£72.00
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Williams Hall – Hire of the hall for PC meetings	£100.00
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J Williams – Sunrise Horticultural Services – Strim / mow	£90.00
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N Sloan – Website Administration	£120.00
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The Willowset – Transferral of SALC grant (Min. 156)	£5,000
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#### Payments received

SWT Sup 11-10-21	£230.00
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SWT CIL 25-10-21	£32,195.35
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GG proposes that all payments are made, AF seconded the motion, all were in favour.

#### Other financial items

Monthly Bank reconciliation was completed by GG.

### 176. Other Items for discussion

AF and SS both request the Queens Jubilee next year is added to the next agenda.

**Clerk to add the item to the next agenda.**

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.10pm

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held in the main hall at The Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm.**

**Face Masks and Social Distancing are advised.**

**Please email any items for the agenda to the clerk ([ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk)) or the Chairman ([grahamgleed@gmail.com](mailto:grahamgleed@gmail.com)) by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021.**

DRAFT