

STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 14th March 2022

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

Present – Graham Gleed (Chairman), Sara Sollis (Vice-Chair), Janice Pearce, John Hembrow, Peter House, Anne Merritt, David Fothergill (County Councillor), Sue Buller (District Councillor).

In Attendance – Kelly de Silva (Clerk), and 3 members of the public

228. Apologies for absence – Heather Venn, Ann Finn, and Simon Dauncey

Minutes of the previous meeting – PH questions Minute 209 - *GG responds currently they are zero as neither are used as there is sufficient water in holding tanks*- PH states the electric and water metre would not be zero due to standing charges and Minute 206 - *There were originally intentions to use Section 106 to fund a MUGA, but Section 106 has been superseded by CIL*. PH states CIL did not supersede S106 citing they are a correct version of what was said; but are factually incorrect. The minutes of the Parish council meeting held on Monday 14th February 2022 were agreed by all to be an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

Declarations of Interests and Dispensations – None received.

Public Question Time – A member of the footpath group wishes to express thanks to AF and SCC for the remedial works on the steps on footpath T25/15 citing there had been a considerable number of positive comments made about the works on social media.

The member of the footpath group would like to request the permission of the PC to carry out works on the footpath running along the allotment to cut back the blackthorn hedge. They inform dialogue has been held with the allotment manager who maintains the grassed area of the footpath. The use of wood chippings is not practical as the footpath is mowed and more than often it is muddy so wood chipping would cause more of a hinderance with the maintenance.

The PC approves of the footpath group to carry out works to maintain the blackthorn hedge running along the allotments.

SS informs there is a gate for installation on this footpath. IU offers to install the gate with the assistance of another member of the community.

GG to liaise with IU to arrange collection of the gate for installation.

A member of the public wishes to raise that the election dates in the February minutes were incorrect. The Clerk informs that these dates were written as described in the meeting; but the Clerk received a full brief with confirmed timeline dates on 4th March 2022 from the SWT Electoral Officer. The Clerk states the confirmed timeline will be published within the March minutes and displayed with the Election Notices between 18th March and 21st March as per the instruction from the Electoral Officer. The member of the public refers to Minute 206 - *PC to prompt local groups and the CYP meeting for further discussions into CIL investment* and asks if the PC has made any progress with this. They enquire if the PC require assistance with this.

GG responds no discussions have been prompted with a motion passed (Min 206) not to pursue any CIL expenditure until after a new Parish Council is formed following the May elections.

GG asks the member of the public if any conclusions have been drawn upon that may require further emphasis since they requested the information and distribution of ticks within the completed surveys. The member of the public states there is still confusion around CIL funding and suggests a separate meeting should be arranged with more posters displayed to open up the subject to the community.

SS states the topic of CIL and expenditure should be left until a new Parish Council. SS informs it is important to continue to establish and recognise what the priorities are for the members of the community.

A member of the public refers to a correspondence was sent to the PC regarding Minute 229 and hopes their comments will be considered during discussions.

229. Planning

36/21/0028 Sunnycroft. Stoke Road, Meare Green, Stoke St Gregory - Removal of conservatory and erection of single storey extensions to both sides and the rear of dwelling
APPLICATION WITHDRAWN 13-02-2022

36/22/0002 Deane Cottage. Meare Green, Stoke St Gregory - Erection of a two-storey extension to the rear (E 06-02-22)

The following response was agreed;

“Stoke St Gregory Parish unanimously agree to support planning application 36/22/0002.”

36/21/0034 17 Church Close, Stoke St Gregory - Installation of frosted windows to the first floor (retention of works already undertaken)

The following response was agreed;

“Stoke St Gregory Parish Council object to planning application 36/21/0034 as it breaches the conditions stipulated in the original planning application submitted 14/03/2008 – Reference Number 36/08/0005.”

230. CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)

GG informs there is no new information to report on CIL; with no immediate time pressures any further CIL communications and investment should be for the Parish Council post elections on May 5th, 2022.

231. Transfer of Allotments to the PC.

GG reports AS Solicitors have agreed to act on behalf of the PC with transferring the allotments from the developer of Broomfield Park to the PC. The solicitor has been in contact with the developers' solicitors with regards to the transferral.

PH enquires if the transferral will include the electric and water meters stating he is not in favour of the PC paying the standing charge for the meters. GG responds it was agreed Minute 209 that the meters and any billing would be transferred to the Allotment Association. GG informs the location of the meters is on the estate side of the allotment fence.

SS enquires as to who is responsible for the allotment parking area; citing it should be the responsibility of the Broomfield Park Management Company as this is not what the residents pay their annual surcharge for.

GG to ascertain who is responsible for the maintenance of the Allotment parking area

232. Purchase of Footpath Maintenance Equipment

The Clerk thanks SE for a clear and comprehensive list of the equipment requirements for the Footpath Group.

Item Request	Cost (inc. VAT)
Greenworks pole hedge trimmer	£259.98
Rigger Gloves	£2.60
Telescopic anvil lopping shears	£14.98
Folding pruning saw	£10.98
Safety glasses	£2.78
Bowsaw and blades	£6.98
Total	£298.30

GG proposes the PC allocate a maximum of £400 for the purchase of equipment for the Footpath Group, SS seconds the motion; All were in favour.

The Clerk requests that she purchases the equipment as there is no facility on the PC account to purchase items online and then the Clerk will submit the invoices made payable to SSGPC with an

invoice for re-imbursement. PH questions the VAT implications of this.

It is agreed the Clerk may purchase the items and supply invoices from the suppliers made out to Stoke St Gregory Parish Council for re-imbursement.

Clerk to purchase the items, record on the asset register and contact the Footpath Group representative for a suitable time and location to deliver the tools.

233. Queens Jubilee Celebrations

GG reports plans are underway with a Village Breakfast being held at the Village Hall on the Friday 3rd June, a cream tea held at the Baptist Church on Saturday 4th June and a Jubilee Lunch on the playing fields on Sunday 5th June.

GG reports there has been no response as yet from the School, Willow-set, or the Church.

SS offers to contact representatives of the PCC and Willowset to ascertain their plans

SS to contact PCC and Willowset regarding Jubilee celebrations

GG reports the Blacksmith has offered to make a commemorative bench at no cost to the PC in lieu of playing field gates.

SS expresses there are already issues with people parking at the playing fields overnight and for days on end – when all cars should be removed by 10pm.

GG to discuss the options with the PFMC

Clerk to add the item to the next agenda

GG reports the Royal Oak will be holding a beer festival to celebrate the Jubilee weekend.

AM suggests that historically the PC has gifted the children with something. SS responds this option was explored during the last Jubilee celebrations but there was little enthusiasm for this, and it would be cost prohibitive.

IU recommends that an environmental initiative could be explored with trees planted at the playing fields as part of the Queens Canopy with the trees gifted to the children. IU agrees to explore this option.

IU to explore the possibility of acquiring trees as part of the Queens Canopy.

SS enquires if there is any possibility of having the Beacon lit for the event and suggests somewhere visible such as the ridge behind the Willows and Wetlands.

GG to contact Jonathon Coates to explore this option

234. Unitary Authority / Local Government Reorganisation

GG reports that One Somerset have tentatively booked the Village Hall for a meeting on LGR on Thursday 17th March, but there have been queries over the Broadband coverage and this is yet to be confirmed.

DF reports the statutory order for the Unitary Authority was before the House of Commons this evening (14-03-22) to be voted on.

235. Elections May 2022

The Clerk reports the timescales were confirmed by the Electoral Officer at SWT 04-03-22.

These are included on the following page.

If you are interested in standing as a Parish Councillor for Stoke St Gregory in the elections to be held on 5th May 2022, more information can be found at;

The Village Website - <https://www.stokestgregory.org/>

SWTC Website - <https://www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/elections-and-voting/elections-2022/>

Paper nomination packs can be obtained directly from the Parish Clerk on 07701 053 903 or by emailing ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk with your full postal address.

Publication of notice of election	Not later than 25 days	Monday 21 March
Delivery of nomination papers	From the day after the publication of notice of election until 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the election (10am to 4pm)	Between 10am and 4pm on any working day after publication of the notice of election until 4pm on Tuesday 5 April
Deadline for withdrawals of nomination	19 days (4pm)	4pm on Tuesday 5 April
Making objections to nomination papers	On 19 days (10am to 5pm), subject to the following: Between 10am and 12noon objections can be made to all delivered nominations Between 12 noon and 5pm objections can only be made to nominations delivered after 4pm, 20 days before the poll	Between 10am and 12 noon on Tuesday 5 April objections can be made to all delivered nominations Between 12 noon and 5pm on Tuesday 5 April objections can only be made to nominations delivered after 4pm on Monday 4 April
Publication of statement of persons nominated	Not later than 18 days (4pm)	Not later than 4pm on Wednesday 6 April
Deadline for receiving applications for registration	12 days	Thursday 14 April
Deadline for receiving new postal vote and postal proxy applications, and for changes to existing postal or proxy votes	11 days (5pm)	5pm on Tuesday 19 April
Deadline for receiving new applications to vote by proxy (not postal proxy or emergency proxies)	6 days (5pm)	5pm on Tuesday 26 April
Publication of notice of poll	Not later than 6 days	Not later than Tuesday 26 April
Deadline for notification of appointment of polling and counting agents	5 days	Wednesday 27 April
First date that electors can apply for a replacement for lost postal votes	4 days	Thursday 28 April
Polling day	0 (7am to 10pm)	7am to 10pm on Thursday 5 May
Last time that electors can apply for a replacement for spoilt or lost postal votes	0 (5pm)	5pm on Thursday 5 May
Deadline for emergency proxy applications	0 (5pm)	5pm on Thursday 5 May
Last time to alter the register due to clerical error or court appeal	0 (9pm)	9pm on Thursday 5 May
Delivery of return as to election expenses (parish council elections only)	Not later than 28 calendar days after the date of the election	Monday 6 June

236. Young people; first steps

SS reports the recent meeting held at the Royal Oak with the young people of SSG was a huge success and attended by 32 young people aged between 10-14 years old. SS informs it was an eye-opening experience with the young people being engaged in discussions. The outcomes of the meeting should be available around the 25th March 2022.

AM reports the young people like the village and feel safe here but require more things to do.

SS reports their input was very interesting. A number of young people wanted to know why they had to pay for access to the Tennis Courts, they also requested a youth café or club, new play equipment at the park with better swings, new goal posts and a basketball court. Some older children stated they cycled to North Curry to use the MUGA there as the facilities in SSG were outdated and inadequate. 12 young people had expressed an interest in coming to a PC meeting to address Parish Councillors.

AM agrees the evening was encouraging.

GG responds this will be an important input for the future and the initiative must now maintain momentum.

SS agrees stating small wins such as replacing goal posts can be done by applying for grants through the PFMC.

237. Royal Mail Post Collection Times

The Clerk refers to a correspondence received by the PC from a member of the public regarding a complaint they had sent to Royal Mail regarding the revised postal collection times. The response was very similar to the one received by the PC 14-02-22 which was deemed inadequate.

GG reports the mail collection times are varying with post boxes not being emptied until the afternoon

in some cases. GG advises removing the item from the agenda as we have expressed the views of the PC to Royal Mail, and it will not impact the revised collection times.

Clerk to remove the item from the next agenda

238. Annual Parish Meeting

GG reports he and the Clerk have attempted to engage with the Local Government Reorganisation working group to acquire a guest speaker for the APM, but this has not yet been successful. DF offers to be the guest speaker to deliver a non-political speech on Unitary Authority – where we are going and what it will mean for SSG. The PC agree and thank DF.

A list of community groups to contact for reports will be devised by the Clerk with the possibility of a presentation from SEG, the PC report and the Young Peoples initiative.

Please note – Since the PC meeting (14-03-22) the decision has been made to POSTPONE the Annual Parish Meeting until after the elections. This is due to the pre-election period between 21st March – 5th May that would affect the content of the meeting. An amended date will be agreed at the April meeting for the APM to be held in May – post election.

239. Community Land Trust

GG reports there has been little support received from the suggestion of a Community Land Trust Project. GG informs this type of initiative would be a long-term project and should be considered in the future by a newly formed PC post elections.

Clerk to remove the item from the agenda until June/July

240. SALC Opening up safely and reconnecting communities Stage 3

The Clerk reports the application on behalf of the HOTV to the Stage 3 of the SALC fund to build on the success of the community hub to provide local services, activities, and a safe space for all members of the community and to provide seed funding to initiate a project for the younger people of our community has been successful for the full amount requested of £1,500 being awarded.

The Clerk informs SALC will transfer the funding to the PC by the end of March. Once received the Clerk will arrange immediate transferral to the HOTV.

241. Willey Road Housing Development

GG reports the hedge on the Willey road has now been cut before the fledging season and thanks GV for undertaking this.

SS asks SB if there is any update on planning application;

36/21/0015 Variation of Condition 02 (approved plans) and condition Nos No's 1, 2, 3, 5, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21 and 22 of approval 36/18/0035 (Erection of 34 dwellings with associated works) to allow change of use of landscape buffer to southern boundary to private gardens, re positioning of pumping station and associated infrastructure, changes to boundary treatment and landscaping and removal of conditions 4 (Access), 9 (surface water on highway), 11 (visibility), 14 (electric charging points) and 16 (wheel wash) (part retrospective).

SS reports the land behind Church Close is becoming increasingly waterlogged and with the works yard now being cleared, the application requires approval for the finishing to be done. SS expresses there has been concerns raised about this with the residents as this application was submitted 05/05/2021 with a scheduled decision expected by August 2021.

SB responds there are ongoing issues within the SWT Planning department and will contact them for an update on when the application will be considered.

SB to contact SWT Planning for an update

242. Highways

Speed Limit in Meare Green

The Clerk reports a communication from the TMO 15-02-22 had suggested there was hope for the works to commence in March 2022, but this has been delayed due to the SCC contractors dealing with potholes and safety defects. The TMO has communicated with the Clerk(04-03-22) citing the contractor has now re-programmed these works to start in early May.

Speedwatch

Nothing to report

243. Footpaths

Update on steps Footpath T25/15

GG reports that in AF's absence there will be no update on this, but as highlighted during the Public Question Time, the remedial works have now been carried out making the step access much safer to use.

Step Access from Willey Road/Broomfield Park to the Playing Fields – Approval for expenditure

GG reports that in response to Minute 217 a revised quote has been obtained to include the safety rail features omitted from the original quote from SH to install step access from the Willey Road/Broomfield Park to the playing field gate which is currently a steep and dangerous exit and entrance. The quote includes timber steps with concrete pads at the top and bottom with a handrail. GG informs the revised quote is **£2080 + VAT**.

GG proposes the PC accept the quote and inform the PFMC to proceed with the works with the PC covering the cost, PH seconds the motion; all were in favour.

GG to contact SH and the PFMC to confirm authorisation for the works to commence

244. Stoke Environment Group

Stoke Environment Group Update

JP reports a composting workshop will be held on 19th March 2022 from 10am at The Village Hall.

The Green Charter – Adopt Statement of Intent and Values

GG refers to the Green Charter devised by Langport Town Clerk – Deborah Speed who has given permission for the charter to be adapted and adopted by individual councils.

GG suggests the statement of intent should be adopted as it is, changing the authority's name to SSG.

GG asks the SEG representative IU what the best course of action would be to prepare this document as a fit for purpose, working document for SSG.

IU responds it should be the PC who produce the document and take ownership for it – with the SEG willing to assist with drafting the document. IU suggests the statements need to be specific and meaningful to SSG.

GG recommends drafting a charter for the April meeting allocating topics to focus on in a relevant order of what can be achieved in the coming year.

IU responds that much of the document is interrelated, so items could be done in parallel – citing its implementation could take time.

JP suggests the community should be consulted on input towards the objectives of the charter.

SS recommends an item of this substance requires special attention and suggests a working group is developed to focus on the charter.

Clerk to add proposal of a working group to deliver the Green Charter to the next meeting

GG to revise the Charter and draft the terms of reference for a working group for the next meeting

245. Floods

GG reports that a communication from NS has highlighted concerns on the inactivity of the Flood Group. GG states SSG is located in a critical flood area but there have been no meetings of the flood group or any activity for some time.

SS enquires if the PC need to re-engage the flood group.

PH explains that the village is prepared by making sure the Environment Agency dredge rivers and continue management of the Sowe.

DF informs the Bridgewater Barrier is liable to be permitted which will decrease the likelihood of flooding in some areas of Somerset.

GG suggests writing to the flood group with a recommendation of holding a meeting before the next PC meeting to clarify its position, state the position of flood resilience within the Parish and formalise its position; all agree.

GG to write to the Flood Group to clarify and formalise its position and outline the flood resilience

246. Playing Fields

Nothing to report

247. Heart of the Village

Nothing to report

248. Village Website

Nothing to report

249. Broadband

The Clerk reports Airband are in the process of appointing a new representative for this area and a meeting date is yet to be confirmed.

250. Consultations and Surveys

Nothing to report

251. Financial Matters

Standing Orders

01-03-21 K de Silva – Clerks Salary	£377.00
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Payments to be authorised

Nick Sloan - Website Administration	£120.00
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Williams Hall - Hire for meetings	£80.00
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J Williams (Sunrise Horticultural services) Hedge cutting	£50.00
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K de Silva - Clerks Expenses - Printer Ink, A4 Envelopes, Stamps	£32.14
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K de Silva – Re-imbursement for the purchase of equipment for the footpath Group (Min 232)	£298.30
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Payments Received

HMRC VAT Reclaim for 2020-21	£895.73
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Other financial items

Bank Reconciliation for February completed by GG

GG proposes all payments are made; SS seconds the motion; all were in favour.

252. Other Items for Discussion

Independent Internal Auditor for the AGAR

The Clerk reports an independent internal auditor needs to be appointed to complete the audit for the AGAR.

A recommendation of BW has been made. SS responds PS may know of someone who is familiar with the JPAG (Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance), and Proper Practices required to complete the internal audit.

Clerk to contact BW and PS to investigate if any recommendations could be made.

GG reports he has been contacted by a Parishioner regarding the ‘Give back at Christmas’ initiative asking why this was not done as part of the Reeves Feast.

GG reports he has spoken to HV who is an administer of the Reeves Feast who informed the Reeves Feast is predominantly for individuals in need – the Christmas initiative was for a group.

SS questions why the Reeves Feast is not publicised more, citing few members of the community seem to know about the charity.

GG recommends asking the administrators of the fund HV and GY to discuss the Reeves Feast purpose and function with the PC. All agree.

GG to contact to administrators to request attendance at a PC meeting to offer more information about the charity

GG reports the Parishioner has also questioned if it is acceptable for the remaining food vouchers not used during the initiative should be used to provide each child at the school with an Easter Egg (Min. 183).

AM responds there are 7x£15 Morrisons vouchers remaining from the initiative that have a limited expiry date on them. Some of the families identified through the initiative did not want to accept them.

GG asks if there is a potential issue using the vouchers for something they were not intended for.

AM responds the next best thing is them being used for the children, citing Morrisons donated extra vouchers for the cause as well as 20 boxes of biscuits.

JH states that technically the vouchers should be used for their intended purpose but providing each child at the school with an Easter Egg would be the next best thing.

PH informs this would be a preferable use of the vouchers, rather than the vouchers not being used and the money going back into Morrisons company.

SS informs that although it is not PC business, SS would like to thank the community for the overwhelming generosity when SS and NS started an appeal for donations to go to Ukraine. SS informs within minutes of an appeal on social media people arrived at her door with donations. The amount of donations and £500 monetary donation from SGG and NC PCC has been absolutely remarkable – SS expresses a heartfelt thank you to the community for their help.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.13pm.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held in the main hall at The Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory on Monday 11th April 2022 at 7.30pm.

Please email any items for the agenda to the clerk (ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk) or the Chairman (grahiamgleed@gmail.com) by Friday 8th April 2022.