

## STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in the meeting room at The Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory.

**Present** – Janice Pearce (Chair), Heather Venn, Peter House, John Hembrow, Ian Upshall, Ann Finn, Jason Morgan, Danny James, Sue Buller (District Councillor), David Fothergill (County Councillor)

**In Attendance** – Kelly de Silva (Clerk) and three members of the public

**270. Apologies for absence** – Anne Merritt

**Declarations of Interests and Dispensations** – None

**Public question time** – The applicants for planning application 36/23/0004 were present to explain the differences between this application and the original application, which was withdrawn, citing they had adhered to the Planning Officers requests.

A member of the public questioned the situation with Footpath T25/25 and requested a copy of the Footpath Officers response which will be included in the minutes.

A member of the public was present to seek support and approval from the PC regarding a Health and Wellbeing hub proposal which was seeking CIL investment of £20,000.

They offered a comprehensive presentation and plan to the PC for consideration. The CIL application and supporting information can be found as an appendix to the minutes.

They informed the proposed 'Health and Wellbeing Hub' would operate as a charity with a Chair and Trustees managing it and they would be applying for additional grants, crowdfunding, and other available funding to realise the project.

A discussion ensues with Members of the PC making enquiries with regards to the size of the containers which would house the equipment and host the activities. The PC also queried sanitary facilities and utility provision.

JP queries the upkeep charges and costs of using the facility citing a 'membership' based proposal during the current economic climate may be difficult for some members of the community to afford.

The member of the public informed a membership cost - which had been considered - was £10 per month; which is cheaper than gym membership, with some instructors agreeing to hold some activities for no charge.

DJ informs the proposal encompasses a lot of the outcomes of the village plan which is currently being analysed ahead of publication.

HV asks if the PFMC have agreed to the proposal yet and informs there are already some exclusivity issues with the access to the Tennis Courts. HV notes it is important that any CIL investment is inclusive to all. HV informs there should be provision for those that could not afford a monthly membership. The member of the public responds that the proposal would be all inclusive and all-encompassing as well as a financially sustainable project.

HV asks how security, and the risk of vandalism will be managed. The member of the public responds the project would regenerate a currently disused and derelict space where the old pavilion was formerly sited. If this area became a positive community space people would look after it. They explain that security would be managed by cameras and deterrents with keypad access that is traceable and trackable. They inform there is scope for the containers to become a feature and use renewable energy.

IU suggests a huge amount of work has gone into the proposal, but a more in-depth and detailed plan / proposal should be developed from this point for the PC to consider the application thoroughly. IU informs it is an area of the Playing Fields which requires regenerating and utilising in a positive way.

JM agrees requesting information is provided for plumbing and utilities. HV notes the proposal would require the approval and support of the PFMC also.

The PC thank the member of the public for a comprehensive and positive proposal.

Clerk to add the item to the next agenda for further consideration

#### **271. Planning**

**36/23/0004 Holly Cottage, Stoke Road, Meare Green, Stoke St Gregory** - Demolition of barn and erection of 1 No. single storey dwelling (in lieu of Class Q consent 36/21/0029CQ)

The following response was agreed;

*The PC support this application with the original comments from the PC for planning application 36/21/0029CQ)*

**36/23/0003 Dark Lane Farm. Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory** - Erection of a two-storey extension to the rear (Resubmission of 36/22/0010)

The following response was agreed;

*The PC support this application with the original comments from the PC for planning application 36/22/0010.*

**APP/W3330/D/22/3311963 Dene Cottage, Stoke Road, Meare Green, Stoke St Gregory** - Appeal under S78 against refusal or against conditions of approval of householder application for the erection of a two-storey extension to the rear (resubmission of 36/22/0002)

It was agreed the PC would not comment on the appeal.

#### **272. Parking issues on the Willey Road**

PH informs the parking issues remain being a problem due to the lack of enforcement available to remedy the inconsiderate parking. HV agrees citing it has been an issue for many years.

JP informs people are still parking on the bend of Willey Road / The square. Vehicles are also parking in the square when using the shop/pub rather than the car park provided. IU agrees citing vehicles are parked over the fire hydrant. IU suggests a sign is considered requesting people to not park over the hydrant and use the several car parks in the village that are available.

*IU to contact the homeowner at the old bakery to request if a small sign could be placed on the wall requesting people do not park on the fire hydrant or the bend.*

*JP to contact the HOTV regarding signage to request people use the car park of the Royal Oak when using the facility and include parking issues in the Chairs report in village publications.*

#### **273. Village Website**

DJ informs one of the issues the website has is up-to date content. Local groups should be more proactive at supplying content. The Clerk agrees citing the website administrator uploads content supplied immediately.

IU informs the website is only one medium for communicating. The PC should consider a better plan for a communications package to engage with the community. IU suggests the PC look at all the tools available to invigorate the village communications as a whole.

IU continues that the website needs to be reliant and up to date with content supplied and old content removed.

**ARE YOU A LOCAL GROUP? ARE YOU HOLDING AN EVENT OR ACTIVITY WITHIN THE VILLAGE? YOUR VILLAGE WEBSITE NEEDS YOU!**

Please send information on groups, activities, classes, updates – even your photographs of the village and surrounding areas either to the Clerk at [ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk) or to the website administrator at [curloadfarm@gmail.com](mailto:curloadfarm@gmail.com)

#### **274. CIL (Community infrastructure Levy) Update**

##### **Petanque Court Application**

JP informs the person leading the application has been indisposed recently. The village hall has designated a suitable area and the WI have agreed to maintain the court a second quote now obtained for the proposal.

### **275. Appointment of an Internal Auditor.**

The Clerk informs the PC are required to appoint an internal auditor ahead of the submission of the mandatory Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to the external auditor – PKF Littlejohn. It is agreed to ask the RG to complete the audit as they are familiar with the criteria which is required to be adhered to.

**Clerk to contact RG.**

### **276. Private hedge cutting**

#### **Update**

The Clerk informs the hedge reported on Huntham Lane has been cut back and the speed signage on the Willey Road has been cleared. IU notes the speed signs on the Willey road/Griggs Hill are in the wrong place to be effective.

The PC expresses thanks to those who have maintained the hedges ahead of the fledgling season.

#### **Willow hedge at the top of Curload**

The Clerk informs a map of highways has been obtained but it is not clear where the curtilage is that belongs to Highways at the top of Curload. PH informs it identifies the bank on Curload does appear to be owned by Highways but has not been maintained.

JH informs the willow hedge reinstates the hedge which was removed during the railway bridge works. It is agreed the hedge may present issues in the future; but it will be the responsibility of the homeowners to maintain the planted willow so that it does not affect the visibility splay.

**Clerk to remove the item from the agenda.**

*It is agreed to move item 21 ahead in proceedings as a member of the public is attending for this matter.*

### **277. Footpaths**

#### **T25/25**

The Clerk informs a member of the public has reported the public right of way T25/25 is blocked, with no obvious footpath signage. The member of the public reported being asked to leave the route even though the route was clearly stated on the OS map.

The Clerk reported this via the ROAM map and to the Somerset Council Footpath Officer who responded;

*I am aware of the permanent building obstructions on T25/25. This path is one of many hundreds of Rights of Way in Somerset with similar historic obstructions...*

*SCC's Rights of Way Safety Inspection Manual sets out the prioritisation of issues. This is a risk-based prioritisation, cross referencing the potential severity with the path category to determine the issue priority. Given the path is rarely used due to the building obstructions, it is a low priority issue. Due to increased workloads, low priority issues may not be addressed for a significant period of time due to higher priorities on the network. Each Warden has been tasked with a target each year of resolving 1no. historic obstruction/s on a path and I already have a list of paths to investigate and resolve in 2023/2024.*

A discussion ensues on the exact location, the accuracy of the route, and the obstructions. DF suggests the PC could apply for a diversion or permissive route, but this would require the landowner's permission.

HV recommends a PC representative walks the route to positively identify the obstructions and discuss the next course of action. IU agrees citing an exact 6-digit co-ordinate could be obtained to assist with further investigations.

### **278. SSG village plan update**

DJ reports the village plan analysis report has now been submitted to CCS - who have provided positive comments in the feedback. An action plan of SMART goals and measurable achievements has also been submitted.

DJ informs some councils have merged the action plan and executive summary – but the steering group have worked hard to produce a plan which is engaging to provide a purposeful and accessible plan. It is a great opportunity for a collaborative approach to deliver what the community want.

DJ informs the collective commitment document has been signed by all key groups within the village and it is hoped all will work together for the best interests of the community.

JP thanks DJ and KJ for all of their hard work in producing the plan.

#### **279. County Councillor report**

DF reports there is now only 3 weeks until the vesting day of the Somerset Council. A service was held at Wells Cathedral where the 5 councils placed their civic chains on the alter to signify the unitary. The 23-24 budget has been set –although it will be a stretch, for the unitary council in its first year.

DF informs there is a consultation on the Somerset Council website regarding school term dates and a campaign is ongoing on domestic abuse. The authority is currently recruiting social workers and offering up to a £20,000 bursary for training to be a social worker. The Council are also looking to recruit child advocates to support children through the Route 1 programme.

More information on this can be found on the Somerset Council website [www.somerset.gov.uk](http://www.somerset.gov.uk)

#### **280. The Younger Generation Project**

DJ reports various companies have been approached to obtain information and research which options are viable prior to obtaining quotes. Discussions are ongoing on the range of options to consider which will be accessible and inclusive. DJ states all options are being considered and research is being completed properly.

Once a final plan has been developed, it will be presented to the PC and PFMC for approval then the project group will engage with the school, children, and parents.

DJ informs these projects require funding - there is a lot of additional funding and grants available for which will be applied. DJ states the project will require ownership from the community for it to be a success.

#### **281. Emergency Incident and Response plan**

IU informs work is ongoing on the plan.

#### **282. Warm community hubs**

JP informs the food larder at the Church was not used, so the stock has been transferred to The Willowset.

#### **283. Street lighting in Church Close**

The Clerk informs 13 responses were received from the consultation with residents on Church Close. From the feedback, mentioning a varying reasons, the PC agree they will not be pursuing this suggestion at this time.

Thank you to all who took the time and offered their views on the consultation.

#### **284. Gates and access from the allotments and Church Close**

Due to the contractor being unavailable there is no further update.

#### **285. Transfer of the allotments to the PC**

Nothing to report

#### **286. Kings Coronation**

JP reports all of the main village organisations have been contacted, with several offering a variety of stalls and contributions. This will include stalls, decorating and bunting, the HOTV will be doing a BBQ, the cricket club are organising a bar, the tennis club will be opening the tennis courts and there will be a rounders match, 5 a side football, crafts for children as well as other activities and events.

JP informs a member of the public wishes to apply for a small grant of £50 towards printing for a stall

which will be an information point on all local groups.  
The PC agree to acquire further information and consider this at the next meeting.

**287. Parish Clock**

The Clerk informs the spring has been made and it is anticipated the spring will be installed this week. Due to the specialist work involved it may take a few weeks for the clock mechanisms to calibrate.  
The PC thank NS for his work with this matter.

**288. APM (Annual Parish Meeting)**

The Clerk informs a Guest speaker is yet to be confirmed. The PC agree to arrange the APM for 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

**289. Broomfield Park**

The Clerk informs she has contacted the developer regarding road markings and is waiting for a response.

**290. Highways**

The Clerk informs a correspondence has been sent to Cllr. Mike Rigby highlighting the issues during the floods, adverse weather and insufficient gritting and grit bin replenishment.

**291. Stoke Environment Group update**

IU reports as part of the Kings Coronation, the SEG plan to do some volunteering in action as part of “the big help out”. This will happen throughout the village and the SEG hope the playing fields will feature within this event. The group have been working with the school on environment matters which can be incorporated into the National Curriculum whilst also providing an output for the upcoming Envirofair in June.

**292. Community woodland proposals**

IU is in touch with the land agents and continues to progress the matter.

**293. Playing Fields**

DJ informs the PFMC AGM will be held on 21<sup>st</sup> March. Another meeting is being planned for April.

**294. Floods**

JH reports the surface water flooding on Huntham Lane has been cleared.

IU reports there is a lot of surface water at Woodhill near the bus stop due to a blocked drain and at the top of Woodhill.

Clerk to report to SCC.

If you are aware of a blocked drain or gully, this can be reported directly to the Somerset County via their website at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/drains-and-gullies/>  
Potholes and any other road damage can also be reported at <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/?s=report+a+pothole>

#### **295. Heart of the village**

JP informs a draft correspondence to send to the HOTV committee should be circulated to the PC for consideration.

#### **296. Broadband**

The Clerk informs the Airband Broadband representative will be present at the April meeting.

#### **297. Consultation and surveys**

##### **Somerset statement of community involvement consultation**

It is agreed members of the PC will complete this survey as individuals

#### **298. Financial matters**

##### **Standing Orders**

01-03-23 K de Silva – Clerks Salary for February (29 Hours) £395.85

##### **Payments to be authorised**

D James - Reimbursement for village plan survey incentives (Min 182) £100.00

N Sloan - website administration £120.00

I Upshall - Re-imbursement for Climathon community rep attendance £25.00

##### **Payments Received**

None

##### **Other financial items**

None.

HV proposes all payments are made, JM seconds the motion; all in favour – MOTION CARRIED

#### **299. Other items for discussion**

Broken fingerpost at Churley

Deferred until the next meeting

##### **Confidential item**

Staffing and contractual business. Due to GDPR this is discussed in a closed session.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 10.10pm

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held in the meeting room at The Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 7.30pm.**

#### **Appendix – CIL application from MoorActiv for a Health and Wellbeing Hub**