

## STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023 in the meeting room at The Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory.**

**Present** – Janice Pearce (Chair), Anne Merritt, Peter House, John Hembrow, Heather Venn, Ann Finn.

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

**52. Apologies for absence** – Jason Morgan and David Fothergill (Somerset Councillor)

**Approve and sign the minutes of the April meeting.** The minutes had been amended as requested, agreed, and signed accordingly.

**Approve and sign the minutes of the May meeting.** The minutes were agreed and signed accordingly.

**Interests and dispensations** – HV declares an interest in planning application 36/23/0015AGN and will abstain from any vote.

### **Public Question Time.**

Neil Sollis, Chair of the Playing Fields Management Committee, is present to inform that in the last 3 months there has been an increase in vandalism at the Playing Fields. This has included three benches being destroyed, fences and trees being damaged, graffiti on equipment and on the back of the pavilion. This came to a head on Tuesday 30 May when it was noted that one of the round benches had been attempted to be set on fire between 8pm and 7am the following morning. NS informs this is the worst that any vandalism has been at the Playing Fields during his time on the Playing Fields committee.

NS informs that he has met with two members of the PC to discuss the vandalism and what steps can be taken next.

The vandalism was reported to the non-emergency police. Following this, two down pipes on the pavilion were damaged the next day. This was also reported to the PCSO who advised they would carry out further patrols within the village including the Playing Fields.

NS has met with the PCSO to show them and discuss the damage.

The PCSO has recommended CCTV is installed as a preventative measure and informed that any further incidents should be reported.

A discussion ensues on the impact of CCTV at the playing field, how it would be governed and how this preventative measure may be implemented. NS is continuing to have proactive discussions with the older children, and he has obtained quotes for the installation of CCTV and considered appropriate locations for the installation of the cameras. This cost would be in the region of £1533.00 plus VAT plus £540.00 and £90 annual maintenance.

NS informs he has subsequently had proactive conversations with several older children at the Playing Field to ascertain what they would like - and they have requested a youth shelter. NS has given permission for them to use the old shower block in the interim as a place for them to be that would cause no problems for anyone else. This is enabling the Playing Fields committee representatives to build relationships based on respect and trust with the young people.

HV enquires about the recent damage to newly installed football nets. A member of the public who installed the nets informs they were the strongest nets that could be supplied, and it is a consideration that the damage may have been done by a sharp object - which itself is a concern.

NS has also obtained quotes for a metal-based shelter for the older children./ younger adults. The first quote was £15,778.80 plus VAT and another at £16,664.00 plus VAT. NS informs this would provide a covered area not only for the older children but could be utilised by the preschool and children of the school also.

HV enquires if these proposals will have any impact on the proposals and location of those made by the Play project. NS explains the proposed the positioning to the right of the pavilion or on the ridge which will be away from any residential areas.

HV suggests the proposals of CCTV and a shelter are items which could be considered for implementation sooner than the Project Play and new MUGA proposals – which would inevitably take time to raise funding and build. NS agrees citing it could also remove the gatherings of younger people at the Church and Village hall too.

A member of the project play steering group agrees the proposals from NS would provide more covered seating for younger and older members of the community – but the whole project should be considered holistically and not in piecemeal.

AM raises concerns about the matting that is underneath the equipment already and asks if this should be repaired and made good ahead of any new installations. NS informs this has many complications as there is concrete underneath and it could prove to be an expensive job. It is planned that in Autumn topsoil and seeding can be planted which will make this area much better.

A discussion ensues on installation, maintenance, and materials the shelters could be made from.

It is agreed for the PFMC to obtain 3 quotes for any proposed installations and decide what funding they could offer and what would be required from PC funds and CIL funding.

Clerk to add the item to the next agenda.

### **53. Community Plan**

A member of the community plan steering group informs a community plan delivery team has now been agreed to monitor actions of the community plan and to keep the community informed and engaged on progress.

They inform the first quarterly tracker will be published at the end of the month.

The Clerk asks who is involved in the monitoring group. They inform it is currently Danny James, Ian Upshall, Phil Evans, and Kate James.

The member of the steering group informs the tracker will be published with an invite to the rest of the community to grow the group from the initial small focus group.

In the first instance, the community plan tracker will be available in hard copy at key village venues, with electronic copies on the village website and social media. Community feedback will dictate how this information is shared in the future.

### **54. Project play**

A member of the Project Play steering group informs assembly's have been held with the children at the school to demonstrate what could be achieved. They were shown pictures of traditional MUGA's and Nu-MUGAs and there was an overwhelming majority preferred the Nu-MUGA style equipment and installations.

Following on from this, consultations were held with older (secondary) children at the Pavilion over two evenings - which saw over a dozen young people attend each evening, and older residents – and again the Nu-MUGA and seating came out as a majority in support.

They explain that conversations are now ongoing regarding funding and grants. As a Nu-MUGA proposal is bespoke the installation can be phased.

They inform the groundwork for applying for grants and funding has been done with the CIL survey, Youth survey and consultations to supply the evidence to apply for additional funding and grants.

The next stage is the PFMC have requested absolute assurance that planning permission is not required, and a Certificate of Lawfulness can be obtained from Somerset Council prior to the commencement of any work.

They explain the process of submitting the required forms to Somerset Council which will cost in the region of £179.00. As the member of the Project Play steering group is an accredited planner, they are able to submit the forms on behalf of the PC and they ask support from the PC to submit the forms and cover the cost.

JP proposes the PC allow the member of the steering group to submit the required paperwork to Somerset Council covering a cost of up to £200. JH seconds the motion, all in favour – MOTION CARRIED.

**Project Play representative to circulate the paperwork and send to Somerset Council with the Clerk paying the payment and seek reimbursement.**

The member of the steering group informs of the governance – some funders requires terms of reference, accounts, proof of CIL allocation, and accounts for the last 3 years. They ask that the PC lead the deliverance, governance and payment of the project as it moves forward.

All agree that project play is a steering/working group of the PC and the PC in the first instance be responsible for the governance of the project.

All were in favour.

AM notes that during the Envirofair – the older generation were very supportive of the Project Play in principle and making the Playing Fields a wonderful community space.

## **55. Planning**

**36/23/0016 Pine House. Curload, Stoke St Gregory Demolition and replacement of outbuildings.**

*Stoke St Gregory Parish Council agree to support this planning application.*

**36/23/0014 Dene Cottage. Stoke Road, Meare Green ,Stoke St Gregory E rection of a single storey wrap around extension to the side and rear of the dwelling.**

*Stoke St Gregory Parish Council agree to support this planning application.*

**36/ 23/0015/AGN Laburnham Farm. Woodhill, Stoke St Gregory Application for prior notification for the erection of an extension to an agricultural building.**

*Stoke St Gregory Parish Council agree to support this planning application.*

**36/23/00213 Slough Court. Slough Lane, Stoke St Gregory Erection of an agricultural building to cover an open yard to reduce the volume of rainwater entering the slurry stores.**

*Stoke St Gregory Parish Council agree to support this planning application.*

**36/23/0012 Sturts Barn. Huntham Lane, Stoke St Gregory Erection of a detached garage with hobby workshop and storage above the dwelling.**

*Stoke St Gregory Parish Council agree to support this planning application.*

**JP refers back to item 2 Minute 53 Community Plan**

## **53. Community Plan (Continued)**

JP informs that the Community Plan will be ongoing and explains how it is separated into separate themes. JP asks the PC if there is any particular sections they wish to focus on.

JP recommends AF – Road Safety and Speeding, JM – Environment. JP explains she is working with community activities as one of the outcomes of the plan was for annual events and community events.

JP expresses concern for the element of the elderly in the village and for those who are carers in the village. JP has discussed this aspect with the Village Agent and the possibility of a monthly café which could be attended by the Village Agent could be investigated further.

AM suggests an article is submitted to the Stoke News on the Village Agent and their roles and how they can help vulnerable people in the village.

HV raises concerns about the possible duplication – there is a requirement to be more informed on exactly who is doing what and how it being monitored. HV states we have a community plan, we are all aware of it and we will all be doing our bit, as we always have, as a Parish Council. Results will inevitably take time.

JP recommends another article is including in the Stoke News informing people of what the role is of a Parish Council and the remit of what limited powers a Parish Council has.

**JP to write articles on the above for the next edition of the Stoke News.**

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

JP reports she has been made aware that the Village Hall are keen to take on responsibility of the Petanque Court.

A discussion ensues on how the CIL monies would be paid and allocated.

It is agreed to have further discussions with the WI and VH as to the implementation.

The Clerk asks if a Certificate of Lawfulness is required and should be applied for. This should be considered once plans are finalised further but should be applied for by the PC.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6 57. Annual Governance and Accountability return (AGAR)**

The Clerk informs the annual accounts and AGAR has now been internally audited by Rebecca Goodchild who has confirmed the PC have complied with the relevant procedures and controls throughout the financial year to a satisfactory standard which meets the need of the authority and RG has signed the Internal auditors report. The Clerk expresses thanks to Mrs Goodchild for the diligent and thorough auditing of the PC accounts.

**6.1** Stoke St Gregory Parish Council agree that the Annual Governance statement in Section 1 of the AGAR, which requires the PC to ensure a sound system of internal control is in place and that the preparation of the accounting statements was adhered to. It was signed by the Clerk / RFO Kelly de Silva and is now signed by the Chair, Janice Pearce.

**6.2** Stoke St Gregory Parish Council agree that the accounting statement in Section 2 of the AGAR as presented by the Clerk / RFO were accurate for the 2022-23 financial year. This was signed by the Clerk/RFO Kelly de Silva and is now signed by the chair, Janice Pearce.

**Clerk to publish the notice for the public rights period and send the AGAR to the external auditors PKF Littlejohn.**

A full copy of the annual accounts and supporting documentation can be found on the village website at <https://www.stokestgregory.org/parish-council/documents/financial-regulatory-documents/>

## **58. Anti-social behaviour**

This item was discussed during the public question time.

## **59. Casual Vacancy for 2 Parish Councillors**

The Parish Council declare the vacancies for 2 Parish Councillors.

The Clerk now informs the Electoral Officer of the vacancy and displays the Notice. The electoral Officer will inform after 10<sup>th</sup> July whether 10 or more electors have called for an election or if the PC can start the co-option process.

It is hoped to fill the posts by co-option at the August PC meeting.

Since the June meeting, a third vacancy on the PCV has arisen, and was declared to the Electoral Officer at the same time.

## **YOUR PARISH COUNCIL NEEDS YOU!**

If you are passionate about your community and have a few hours a week to spare to help your community thrive, please contact the Clerk for more information on being a Parish Councillor at [ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk)

## **60. Vacancy for the position of Parish Clerk.**

The Clerk informs the vacancy for the Parish clerk role will now be advertised and a job description has been circulated.

*(After four years in the role, the Clerk will be stepping down as Clerk to the PC to pursue her career.*

*It's a wonderful job, you meet great people, and no two days are ever the same.*

*The flexible hours fit in perfectly with having a young family.*

*No experience necessary, but good administration skills are an advantage. Please send a CV and covering letter to the Clerk if you are interested in the role.)*

## **61. Emergency Incident Response Plan**

Differed – JP to speak to IU regarding progress and any assistance required.

## **62. Broomfield Park**

Nothing to report.

## **63. Highways**

JP reports that over half term parking in the square had reduced significantly. AM informs that inconsiderate parking outside the shop is becoming an issue with cars parking directly outside in the bay and on the pavement rather than using the car park provided.

HV informs the PC has contacted the HOTV regarding parking outside the shop/pub and parking in the square is an ongoing problem which needs to keep being addressed, as it always has been.

The Clerk informs that there has been no further information from the TMO on a SID for Meare Green, but the Clerk has contacted Avon and Somerset Police to investigate if there are any SID initiatives or pilot schemes that can be applied for.

## **64. Footpaths**

AM reports that there is an increase in the fly tipping of garden refuse in the ditch that runs near the path. This is unsightly and has a detrimental effect on the environment.

It is agreed that AM will display a poster to highlight the issue, the Clerk will report it to Somerset Council as fly tipping.

## **65. Stoke Environment Group**

Community Orchard Proposal – SEG to undertake management of the community orchard on behalf of the community, maintaining access to the orchard, maintenance of the area and trees ensuring and encouraging its use for the whole community.

The PC unanimously support the proposal and offer full support citing it is an excellent idea.

## **66. Community Woodland Proposal**

Nothing to report.

## **67. Playing Fields**

The Clerk informs some links have been circulated to the PC of options to be considered. Glasdon offer the most cost effective and suitable bins.

AM informs the bin should be fixed to the ground.

Clerk to find a suitable replacement and circulate to the PC and PFMC for approval.

## **68. Consultations and surveys**

Nothing to report.

## **69. Financial Matters**

### **Standing Orders**

01-05-23 K de Silva – Clerks Salary for April (29 Hours)	£395.85
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### **Payments to be authorised**

N Sloan - Website Administration - May	£120.00
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ICO (Information Commissioners Office) annual subs (CHEQUE)	£40.00
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The Cumbrian Clock Co - Annual service	£234.00
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Anne Merritt – re-imbursement for the APM refreshments	£46.80
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R Goodchild -Internal Audit	£100.00
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### **Payments Received**

None

### **Other financial items**

None.

HV proposes all payments are made, JH seconds the motion, all in favour. MOTION CARRIED

**70. Other items for discussion**

None

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed at 9.32pm

DRAFT