STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 12th February 2024 in the meeting room at The Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory.

Present – Heather Venn, Peter House, Lawrence Bostock, John Hembrow, Ann Finn, Cllr. David Fothergill (Somerset Councillor)

In Attendance – Sally Taylor (Clerk) and two members of the public.

Apologies – Janice Pearce (Chair), John Hardy (Vice Chair), David Cuthbertson

199. Appointment of Chair for the Meeting – Due the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair, the Clerk informed the Council that a Chair would have to be appointed for the Meeting to proceed, and that HV had offered to take this role.
All Members were in agreement and the motion was carried.
JHa has only recently been appointed Vice Chair, and is currently on holiday it is not known if he will be comfortable with taking on the role of Chair due to the ongoing absence of JP. If there are any issues HV has offered to continue in this role for the next meeting.

200. Approve and sign the minutes of the January meeting – The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and signed accordingly.

201. Interests and dispensations; None

202. Public Question Time –
Chair of the PFC (Neil Sollis) was in attendance to give an update on developments at the Playing Field. In response to concerns over vandalism, and a lack of facilities for the youths of the Village, the PFC sought to deliver two projects; CCTV at the PF and a youth shelter. Both of these initiatives have been put in place. CCTV has been installed, and a £11k grant from the Valencia Fund (Taunton) was achieved to provide the youth shelter. This was installed last week and is already being well used.

203. Project Play (Item 5 on agenda)
While NS was in attendance, clarification was sought over whether the Letter of Support from the PC for grant applications had been received.
NS is not aware that it has, ST to check with Danny James if he has received and if not if it is still required.
If required, ST to draft an open letter of support which will be provided to the Grant providers if requested which will confirm the amount of CIL money ringfenced for Project Play which is held in the accounts of the PC.

204. Playing Field (Item 17 on agenda)
The new bin has been ordered and we are awaiting delivery.
The PFC AGM is on Monday 18th March. There was a discussion regarding PC representation on the PFC. There should be 3 Rep's for the PC. There is one long standing Rep who is not a Cllr (GB), there is an ex PC member (AM) and LB. As AM can attend as a Rep for Project Play, it was agreed she would no longer need to be a PC Rep. PH offered to represent.
Members voted for the Reps to be PH, LB and GB, all agreed, motion carried.
ST to e mail AM to inform her of this decision.
NS advised the PC that he is standing down as Chair of the PFC and stepping away from the Committee.
HV congratulated him for all he has achieved.

205. Planning

 Signed by the Chair……..Date……

There are no new planning applications to review.

HV reported that several residents have mentioned concerns about the development at Lovells House, Dark Lane. (Planning application 36/20/0023) The application was for a garage with games room above, but the building that has been put up resembles a house, there is also a standalone garage, and the access has significantly increased.

All agreed that a letter should be sent from the PC to Planning. HV to clarify first what has been approved and if there have been any amendments. The concerns that what has been built is not what has been applied for to be stated.

HV to check and draft letter for circulation prior to sending

206. Councillor Vacancy

ST has advertised the vacancy on the Website and in the Parish Noticeboard. Unable to post on the Parish Council Facebook page as has not been able to obtain admin access.

ST reported that there has been one resident requesting an application form. HV has also approached a former Cllr re standing again.

ST to post on the SSG Villagers FB page and to also post that the Parish Council page is currently not active.

207. Stoke St Gregory 2023 Community Plan

The next drop in surgery for the public to meet with a Councillor for updates/questions is scheduled for Saturday 9th March from 10am – 12pm. Although the Village Newsletter is unlikely to have been distributed by then it was felt that the date should stand. Volunteers requested to man this. *HV and JHe agreed to share the manning of this session. LB to make a sign.*

Replacement noticeboard, construction in progress.

208. Project Play

Already covered under minute 203.

209. CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)

HV reported that deadlines for spending have been checked. There is no current cause for concern.

210. Somerset Councillor Report

Report from DF is attached.

211. Preparation for APM

ST reported that the APM needs to be held before 1 June 2024.

A date was set 20 May 2024. LB was asked to be the speaker, he agreed and will present a talk on the Rural Life Museum.

212. Retirement of Dr James Hickman

It was agreed that Dr Hickman be asked to open the Village Fete on 6th July.

ST to invite

It was suggested that the village groups all contribute to an item to be made by Coates English Willow to commemorate his retirement to present to him at the Fete. For further discussion at the next meeting.

213. Woodhill Bus Shelter Repairs

As the shelter has been made safe and is still functional there is no immediate cause for concern. However, this does identify a need to have arrangements in place for damage repair/maintenance of PC assets.

HV to include the request for applicants to act as a handyman to be called upon for repairs and maintenance

 Signed by the Chair……..Date……

214. Emergency and Incident Response Plan
Put back on agenda next month

215. Broomfield Park
Nothing further to report.

216. Highways
AF reported her enquiries into having a SID installed along Meare Green. Costs are around £2,250 for the device and an additional cost for the installation of the pole.
HV proposed that a device be purchased as there is sufficient budget remaining from the 30 mph speed limit budget to fund this.
All agreed and motion carried. AF to carry out further investigations into the location for the device.
Hedge along Huntham Lane by School House and along School Field still needs cutting. This is now getting urgent. It is the responsibility of the School to maintain.
ST to e mail Mr Rycroft to request that this is done.

217. Footpaths
Footpath by allotments: PH has been to look but it is too narrow to get a topper through – unless a narrow one is available (around 6ft)
HV and ST to make enquiries about a small topper
He spoke to SEG about using a flail but they said that would not be suitable at this time.
PH also reports that blackthorn sprouts are causing an issue and need digging up – the ground needs clearing.
PH to speak to Footpath Group again about how this can be resolved.
AF reported a tree leaning out into the road bottom of Griggs Hill.
HV to ask Gerald to look at.

218. Stoke Environment Group
No update.

219. Defibrillators
AF has completed research into what unit to purchase for Meare Green. The machine she is recommending is the Mediana A16 (Recommended by BHF) It has universal pads for adult and child, it includes a responder kit and has a long life for batteries and pads.
Members voted to purchase this unit to be funded through CIL, motion carried.
ST to order unit.

The Dept of Health and Social Care scheme with match funding of approx. £750 is still being pursued for Curload, but we cannot apply until the site has been agreed. Pine House (Danny and Kate James) are in favour of having it sited there, however due to ongoing building works it is not ideal. As there is a lead time in processing of 16 weeks and deadline for bids is September 2024 a site needs to be identified as a priority. There is also a limit on number of available grants.
Other suggestions are: The Old Stores, Helen David and The Old Barbers. HV has already made contact with Helen, no response as yet.
HV to visit residents at Old Barbers (Mr and Mrs Leru)

Each machine should have a dedicated person to check the units regularly. Expiry dates of pads and batteries to be recorded and unit physically checked once per month.
AF to check Meare Green when installed.
ST to ask Phil or Jo if they are willing to check the Royal Oak one

220. Flooding
Huntham Lane, not much can be done. JHe to respond to letter from Phil Stone.

 Signed by the Chair……..Date……

221. Playing Fields
Already covered under minute 204.

222. HOTV
LB unable to attend Community Hub Meeting. Will feedback on future meetings.

223. Anti Social Behaviour
No reports of anything of concern.

224. Parish Council Website
DF advised that West Monkton are now active with their new Parish Online sponsored website and suggested looking at for information. Theirs does not link to other groups in the Village. ST sought clarification at a recent Parish Clerk training session and was advised that the PC should have its own website and not be a part of a Village website. As the PC pays for the upkeep of the Village website what are the cost implications of continuing to support this and developing own site to be gov.uk compliant? Need to know what the current £120 per month covers.
ST to provide costings to next meeting
HV to ask NS to clarify the breakdown of the monthly cost.
Graham Gleed has e mailed to inform the PC of an issue with being able to continue to run the Village Hall website. Cllr's were unsure of what he was asking of the PC and what the 'cloning' would involve.
PH to speak to GG to clarify

225. Financial Matters

Payments to be authorised

01-02-24 N Sloan - Website Admin	£120.00
25-01-24 Rockwell Print (Village Plan leaflets/posters/questionnaires)	£223.20
01-02-24 S Taylor Clerk Salary for January	£391.50
05-02-24 Wybone Ltd (Playing Field Bin)	£305.99
01-02-24 HOTV SSG (CIL Monies)	£7,000.00
10-01-24 Williams Hall	£45.00
07-02-24 A Finn (reimbursement for Defib Store purchase of pads)	£61.20

Payments approved. PH proposed, LB seconded

Budget/Precept: ST confirmed Precept forms had been submitted to SC by the deadline required.

226. Other items for discussion
Burial Ground: HV asked JHe where the plots for burial of ashes is located in the Burial Ground as we have received an enquiry. The area has not been used to date and it is thought it is in the far end into the triangle.
There may be a plan – ST to check filing cabinet.
Next time there is a planning site visit a detour to the Burial Ground will take place to check the layout.

The meeting was closed at 9.45pm

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 11th March at 7.30pm in the meeting room at The Williams Hall, Dark Lane, Stoke St Gregory.

 Signed by the Chair……..Date……