

DRAFT MINUTES OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on Monday 21 February 2022 at 1830 at The Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

Present:

Mrs K Beacham– Chair (KB); Mrs N Cameron (NC); Mrs L Howard (LH); Dr B Ferguson; Mr K Male (KM); County Councillor C Paul (CP); and Mrs J Parsons - Clerk/RFO (JP).

Three members of the public were in attendance.

4230 County Councillor's Report

County Councillor Paul's latest report had been circulated to Members and made available on the Parish website (<https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-from-county-councillor-clare-paul-5/>). i) It was noted how hard Western Power had been working to resume power supplies, as Storm Franklin had turned out worse than Eunice in some areas. The Council had offered support to keep community services running. ii) Green bins would be collected at their next slot. iii) There would be a full Council meeting held in person at Canalside for budget setting later that week and this could be viewed on YouTube retrospectively. iv) From Thursday 24 Feb, all legal restrictions for the pandemic would be lifted and guidance would now be aimed at living with Covid. Over 75s and those with special circumstances would be offered a 4th vaccination. The youngest cohort would also be offered a small 1st dose.

CP and a member of the public left at this point.

4231 Public participation

Agenda item 7a was brought forward by the Chair. A resident voiced concerns about the light pollution from Bradon's Fruit Farm (producers of strawberries for Aldi all year round), which had been evident since 19 December 2021. There had been over 130 posts on social media from residents in Fivehead and surrounding parishes, who were concerned about the effect on the environment and nocturnal wildlife. The site has the potential to support a range of protected and priority species including badgers, reptiles, dormice, GCNs, breeding birds, and bats.

There did not appear to be any lighting plans published for any of the 7 applications that had been submitted over the years. Isle Brewers PC had confirmed that restrictions were in place and a promise that blinds would be erected over 6 months ago. A request was made that the PC might consider sending a report to SSDC Planning Enforcement and/or Environmental Health and Pollution, asking for details of any lighting restrictions in place from any approved lighting plans to be published and their plans for ensuring that the damaging light pollution would be eliminated.

The Chair reported that the PC had received two further notifications from residents, who had also reported their concerns to SSDC. The light was having negative effects on an international astronomical imaging and research observatory with over 11,500 members, run from Fivehead. SSDC had contacted the Managing Director after receiving complaints and been informed that blackout boards on order from Europe had been delayed several times. The MD had said that the lights were not on all night and would be off as soon as the strawberry crop had been harvested. They were still trying to source alternative boards. Curry Rivel PC had also received complaints and had tried to contact the company to request that a communication was made to the community, but had not received a reply. Members agreed unanimously that reports should be submitted to both Planning Enforcement and Environmental Health. **Action:** Clerk to report concerns of light pollution and request details of lighting restrictions to be published.

The resident was thanked and left at this point.

4232 Apologies for absence

Mr R Wynn

4233 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, previously circulated, held on 23 January 2022, were approved. Proposed by LH and seconded by BF. Carried unan. Hard copies of the Minutes were signed by the Chair.

4234 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

The following Declarations of Interest were made, with no dispensations given:

- i) Relating to matters at Min 4235c – BF, as an owner of a property affected by the slow broadband in Swell, would be asked to withdraw from decisions as necessary.
- ii) Relating to matters at Min 4235l – NC, as a property owner neighbouring Glendale, would be asked to withdraw from decisions as necessary.

4235 Matters arising from the Minutes (23 Jan 21) and raised by Members

- a) Planning review – a request from the applicants of a recently approved planning application for a review of the process by which the Parish Council consults on applications had been received in Nov 21. As a response had been unavoidably delayed, it was agreed that the Chair and the Clerk would prepare a written explanation, which would be circulated to all Members for comment, before sending to the applicants. **Action:** Chair and Clerk to meet via Zoom to prepare response for all Members to comment.
- b) Cemetery matters – i) **Resolution: to allow Plot B72 to be reduced to a half-plot due to its close proximity to the path and tree at the centre of the Cemetery.** Proposed by NC and seconded by LH. Carried unan. It was noted that the Deed would be held in Trust, due to the applicant being under the legal age to apply, and transferred into the applicant's name once they reached 16. ii) Following a recent burial, the disposal of excess spoil had been raised with the grave digger. They could not take responsibility for this and it would fall to them if the funeral director was asked to arrange this. Other cemeteries either had a skip on site or had an area for it, which was cleared from time to time. Having recently paid for the removal of several years' build up, Members were keen to ensure this was done regularly and might need to cost this into future burial fees. It was agreed that KB would report back on how much was there, as the Clerk had asked that it might be used to fill in holes or sunken areas. A decision could be then be made at the next meeting. iii) The chain from the double gates was missing. It was not used to lock the gates so did not need replacing, but it held them shut. It was noted that the hangings needed checking and possible maintenance. KB would report on this when she visited with Dave Braddock to look at cutting back some of the shrubs. iv) The new Memorial bench provided by a resident was now in place and looked very good, in a nice, peaceful location. The Clerk had passed on the Council's thanks again. **Action:** KB to visit Cemetery and report on items ii) and iii) at the next meeting.
- c) Broadband for Swell – it was agreed that the Clerk would write again to David Warburton, as no reply had been received since contacting him again, in June 21, about the poor quality of broadband productivity in Swell. It was noted that he had been writing about how he was campaigning for other areas in his constituency recently in the Leveller, so Members felt a reminder about Swell was needed. **Action:** Clerk to write to David Warburton regarding Swell broadband, with stronger request for action.
- d) The Pound – i) no further update had been received on the reinstatement of Tollbridge to enable completion of the transfer of the Pound, so it was agreed that the Clerk should request the latest position. On 5 Jan 22, the owner had confirmed that no charges for late filing penalties would be passed on. ii) Details of a new community heritage listing project had been released, which might enable the Pound to be registered to protect it from future development. The Council would make a submission, but the public could also nominate assets. It was agreed that details would be passed to PB for social media and the Clerk would include this in the next newsletter article. **Action:** Clerk to complete application form and publicise via the Parish newsletter and social media (via PB).
- e) Welcome pack update – NC had updated the information sheet. She had also contacted The Crown to see if they would like to include a voucher in future and The Stable had been asked to update their details. **Action:** NC to follow up with The Crown and The Stable.
- f) Internal auditor – as SALC did not offer any recommended contacts, it was agreed that residents with accounting backgrounds might be approached. A member of the public suggested that they could ask their spouse who is a qualified accountant. It was agreed that the Clerk would wait to hear from the member of the public before following up other possible residents. **Action:** Clerk to add to agenda for March 22.

- g) Tree preservation order for Oak at Squirrelsmead – SSDC's Tree Officer (Phil Poulton) had confirmed that the root system of the Oak would not be affected by the approved development at Squirrelsmead, so no further action was necessary.
- h) Traffic issues – i) Highways had forwarded the Clerk's request for a visit to assess the traffic issues reported by residents on Swell Lane to SCC Traffic Management, who had responded with some suggestions. Members felt that the problems may be due to several road closures and deliveries having to find alternative routes. However, a site meeting would still be helpful and the drainage issues on Butcher's Hill could be reviewed at the same time. An update had been requested, but the meeting between Highways and the developer had had to be rescheduled. **Action:** Clerk to contact Highways to arrange a site visit with KB and the developer. ii) Signage for The Stable Coffee Shop had been moved to the 30mph speed limit sign on A378, under the guidance of Highways, after complaints that the sign was restricting visibility for residents.
- i) Jubilee celebrations – as there had been no response to the article in the Parish newsletter in Feb 22, a small sub-group of the PC, with offers of help from new residents, would take things forward initially. KB, LH and Pip Brett had met to make outline plans and a further meeting would take place on 17 March at 3pm. The event would be a manageable 'BYO' picnic on the Playing Field, with limited tables in the marquee, on Sunday 5 June. It would be a traditional, nostalgic theme, with bunting. The venue had been booked by KB. RW was looking into trestle tables. It was suggested that The Crown might like to run a bar and a resident had offered to make a celebration cake. Further entertainments would be explored by the sub-group.

The remaining member of the public left at this point.

- j) Parish Fund Grant application for Village Hall Wi-Fi – a decision was expected by end of Feb, so this would be added to the next agenda. **Action:** Clerk to add to March 22 agenda
- k) Grant allocation for Playing Field – to be reviewed again in March 22.
- l) Complaint about SSDC Planning's handling of 20/03631/S73A – a response had been received to the Council's complaint at Stage 1 of the complaint procedure, from SSDC Lead Specialist for Built Environment. It was agreed concern still remained about how this could be prevented from happening again and the response did not help to understand why the Parish had arrived at this position. It was agreed to escalate this to Stage 2 and the outcome required would be to understand why this had happened and how it could be prevented from happening again with other sites. Also, concerns about the landscaping of the site would be covered, with requests that mature trees might be used to speed up the process. **Action:** Clerk to respond to request a Stage 2 enquiry into the complaint by SSDC.

4236 Correspondence Received

- a) A request from a Fivehead resident had been received to register dissatisfaction with the amount of light emanating during darkness from the soft fruit growing business at Isle Brewers. See Min 4231.
- b) SALC had sent notification that the National Pay Scales award for Clerks for April 2021 had still not been agreed and the difference in backpay may now be payable in FY22/23.

4237 Reports

- a) Playing Field – no meetings had taken place.
- b) Village Hall – BF reported that the AGM had taken place on 15 Feb. Despite the difficult year, the VH had survived thanks to grants from SSDC and the PC, and also the healthy 100 Club prize draw (thanks to Paul Narey). The Hall was back to its previous running levels and was making plans for maintenance work. After the AGM, the VH Committee received a presentation from Rob Leighton on the projects. Some could be resourced from VH funds (brambles on the East near bungalows and car park resurfacing) but others would require grant support (Wi-Fi and boiler replacement). A meeting had been requested with two members of the VH Committee, with two members from the Playing Field Committee and two from the Parish Council, to discuss how the committees might work together for future sustainability. This would be discussed at the Council's next meeting, but it was anticipated that KB and BF would attend. **Action:** Clerk to add to March 22 agenda.

- c) SALC – nothing to report
- d) Cemetery – see Min 4235b
- e) Highways – see Min 4235h
- f) Environment – Dave Braddock had reported that tidying work had been done in the Cemetery, with some further shrub work to be looked at with KB. There was a large area of footpath to brush cut before March and weeding and plant work to be done at Langford Corner when the weather has settled. Five new landowners had given permission for bat surveys over their land in 2022, which when added to previous sites, will give 95% coverage around Fivehead.
- g) Rights of Way – Mary Braddock had reported that path L11/42 from Cathanger was now clear of undergrowth and steps were due for beginning of March. The broken stile on L11/33 (from Smiths Farm to South Drove) had been replaced with a gate and the high jump pole over the stile at Squirrelsmead Cottage had been removed. Bridleway and footpath finger posts near Swell were due to be replaced in March. Two paths across the fields at Swell had been weed killed so were now passable. Farmers had asked if it might be possible to publicise about the dangers of dog poo to pregnant cattle, so a short article would be included in the next Parish newsletter.
- h) Police – a request had been received for notification of Jubilee events planned, which the Clerk would provide. **Action:** Clerk to respond with Jubilee details
- i) Asset/Maintenance Check Report – RW would retain until March meeting

4238 Planning - see <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planningsearch/> for details. The applications below were considered:

- a) **21/03844/S73A** - Land OS 6790 Lower Swell - Application to vary condition 02 of planning permission ref 19/01900/FUL Demolition of existing agricultural building and erection of a detached dwelling and associated works; to make minor amendments to the approved development comprising reduction to the roof height and roof pitch (from 40 degrees to 36 degrees) – the development plans were reviewed for the dwelling that was now built. Concerns had been raised by a resident that the amendment did not cover all the changes that had been made from the approved application. Images and plans were supplied showing that the first floor and windows may be higher than approved. The Council questioned why the property had not been built to the specification in the first place and felt it was necessary to ask Planning for more detailed plans and an extension to be able to comment at the next meeting. **Action:** i) Clerk to request further plans and reassurance about the possible changes in levels, given the past problems that have arisen with levels on other developments. Also, to request an extension to 9 March 22 for the Council and residents to comment. ii) Clerk to find out if it would be possible to have larger hard copy plans in future to be able to assess levels and other dimensions.
- b) **22/00212/TPO** – Higher Langford Farm, Main Street, Fivehead - application to carry out Tree Surgery Works to No. 1 Tree as shown within the Yeovil District Council (FIVE 1) 1985 Tree Preservation Order – noted and there were no concerns.
- c) **21/00135/FUL** – Land opposite Old Manse, Stillbrook Road, Fivehead – the Council was still awaiting an update after sending a follow-up report to SSDC Planning Enforcement on 28 Jan 21, after concerns had been received from residents that the developer was cutting down the small copse and hedging in the field neighbouring the approved development site, where it was thought that permission had not been granted for development. **Action:** Clerk to follow up again for a report from the Enforcement Officer for March meeting.

4239 Finance

- a) Payments authorised and unrecorded during the previous month: None
- b) Payments to be authorised:
 - (i) Parish Magazine Printing – Newsletter printing (Feb) - £274.90
 - (ii) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Salary (Jan) - £489.60
 - (iii) J Parsons – Homeworking allowance (Jan) - £26
- c) Income received:
 - (i) NatWest Interest (Dec) - £0.44
 - (ii) The Stable – Newsletter advert - £55
 - (iii) Curry Rivel School – Newsletter - £220
 - (iv) Ella Foot Health – Newsletter advert - £27.50

4240 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

- a) Clerk – i) A request from the Bus Partnership to publicise a call for action from the community to the Government to extend Covid-19 support funding beyond April 22, as this was needed until user levels were back to normal. The Clerk would arrange for details to be added to social media and the website. ii) Further details on Councillor Brett's areas of responsibility had been circulated and would be discussed at the next meeting. iii) A resident had notified the Council of their purchase of a piece of land, which would require a small piece of hedge to be removed before March, so a gate could be added to allow access.

4241 Date for Next Meeting

Monday 7 March 2022 at 6.30pm, Village Hall/Playing Field, Stowey Road, Fivehead

The meeting closed at 8.16pm.

Chairman.....

Dated.....