

DRAFT MINUTES OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on Monday 8 April 2024, at 1830, at The Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

Present:

Mrs K Beacham – Chair (KB); Dr B Ferguson (BF); Mr D Braddock (DB); Mr M King (MK); Mrs C Munday (CM); Somerset Councillor M Stanton (MS) and Mrs J Parsons - Clerk/RFO (JP)

No public participation

4583 Apologies for absence

Mrs L Howard; Mr R Wynn; Somerset Councillor R Wilkins

4584 Somerset Councillors' Report

MS gave a verbal update: i) The focus of the Council was now on restructuring and downsizing to make the necessary cost savings, with redundancies expected to reduce staffing by 5 to 1. ii) Selling off of surplus buildings was going well, with good prices. iii) Planning was experiencing long delays due to phosphates issues now being resolved, so more applications coming into the pipeline which had been on hold. iv) Flooding had been underpublicized this year and was actually 180% more than in 2014, spread more widely across the county. v) The Gravity site would bring 4,000 jobs, requiring more housing. vi) Following the consultant's report commissioned £10-£15m savings were expected to be made in adult social care; however, refinancing by the Government was still needed, which would not take place until after the election. Without this, it would not be possible to achieve a balanced budget next year. vii) All potholes should be reported online and would be attended to within 2 weeks.

A written report was circulated after the meeting, which can be found here: <https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-from-somerset-councillors-april-24/>

MS left the meeting at this point.

4585 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, previously circulated, held on 4 March 2024 were approved. Numbering corrections to previous Minutes 4565, 4566 and 4567 (12 Feb) and date corrections to 4423, 4425, 4446v, 4446vi, 4487b(iii), 4487b(iv) and 4511ci were signed by the Chair. Proposed by DB and seconded by CM. Carried unan.

4586 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None

4587 Matters arising from the Minutes (4 Mar) and raised by Members

- a) Local Community Network (LCN) update – Information on the highways steward role would be circulated when available. Next meeting - 11 June 24.
- b) Crane enquiries – this was now with Principal Planning Liaison Officer, Adam Garland; last followed up 5/4/24. **Action:** Clerk to add to May 24 agenda. MS to follow up.
- c) 21/02786/S73A – 18/01855/FUL – update on landscaping plans - i) KB had met with two residents on Ganges Hill to review possible solutions for overlooking of their properties. One had planted a laurel hedge, which was already growing well, and the other intended to plant bamboo, for rapid screening. Planting at 2 Glendale had been done, but would need time for growth to reach levels that would give the desired screening effect. Planting at 1 Glendale was underway to replace trees lost to disease. ii) DB had met with owners of 3 Glendale to look at improving the bat house, to encourage the bats to return. Assurance had been given by the owners that the remaining established trees would not be removed from the boundary area. iii) It was agreed that the ongoing landscaping plans would be kept under watching brief.

- d) Garden of Remembrance – i) **Resolution: to approve the natural tree slice memorial for Plot R9 (Muschamp), with no hooks, embedded flat with up to 4ins approx above ground.** Proposed by BF and seconded by KB. Carried unan. ii) A final deadline for receiving proof of ownership for Plot R8 would be given to enable a pending plot purchase to be completed. The Clerk would also try contacting the funeral director to see if anything was held on file for this plot, but the business had changed hands. **Action:** Clerk to contact resident and funeral director to progress plot R8 matters.
- e) Drainage/ditch management – insurance update – the Council's insurance would not cover drainage work to be undertaken by volunteers, as the land was not owned by the Parish Council; work of this type is not considered low risk. Highways had agreed to complete work in the new financial year, so the Clerk would follow up to see when this would be scheduled and also ask if it would be possible if grips could be dug by Highways, on Ganges Hill and Isle Brewers Road. **Action:** Clerk to follow up work with Highways.
- f) Grass maintenance update – i) Two cuts had been done in March by the new contractor. Despite the wet/difficult ground, all was looking good. ii) Invoicing would now take place on a monthly basis for cuts completed.
- g) Playing Field/Village Hall merger update – i) A new banking mandate was needed due to the change in circumstances of the Playing Field Management Committee and also the bank requiring a board of resolution to take off and approve signatories. The completed forms had been returned to TSB Charity bank section and were now awaiting approval. ii) KB and the current PF Chair were now signatories of the PF NS&L savings account. iii) A meeting had taken place to add two further trustees for the new charity (Richard Hadfield/Rob Leighton).
- h) Defibrillator update – i) Payment of the 24/25 maintenance contract (£324) was being arranged by the VH Treasurer, which would leave approx £213 of funds in the VH account. ii) Funds held for future running by the Parish Council at 31 March 24 were £982. iii) Transfer of the contract would take place when the new merged charity was in place, with the defibrillator group becoming a Parish Council working group once this was completed.
- i) Village Green update – DB had grassed over the Coronation bed area, due to remains of old sheep pens preventing this from being dug deep enough for planting. It was agreed that an area would now be designated at Langford Corner. DB had also added the grass mat and seeded this area. Both areas were growing well.
- j) Signpost restoration materials – **Resolution: to approve £70 for paint and primer from the Maintenance budget line, for remaining signposts, to be reclaimed from CPRE grant fund on completion.** Proposed by CM and seconded by MK. Carried unan.
- k) Maintenance costs – **Resolution: to approve from Maintenance budget line: c£24 for oil/grease for hedge cutter; c£14 for grass seed; c£12 for Algon slab cleaner for the Pound.** Proposed by KB and seconded by BF. Carried unan.
- l) Office costs – **Resolution: to approve additional print cost of £1 (inc VAT) for March from Office budget line.** Some months may require additional pages (ie for audit). Proposed by KB and seconded by DB. Carried unan.
- m) Website – i) Quotes had been received from Town & Parish Websites (current host) and Parish Online, for transferring to .gov url for website and email. Transferring to a new provider would take time, which would be difficult to fit in at the start of the new financial year, with the AGAR needing priority. It was recommended to make the change but not currently a requirement, so there was time to implement this later in the year. Government funding towards the transfer was potentially available until 2025. The Clerk had also registered for free support. ii) **Resolution: to authorise payment of annual web charges (£370) due on 1 May 2024 and to consider switching to .gov url by end of financial year.** Proposed by KB and seconded by DB. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to add to August 24 agenda for further consideration

- n) Speed Indicator Device – i) Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with Somerset Council was pending update of the contract. ii) Insurers would need to be notified once SID purchased; cover for volunteers would be included, providing high-vis vests were worn and two people were present if ladders were to be used for installation. iii) A working group of DB, BF and RW would identify possible locations, with photos and map, for consideration at the next meeting, before sending to SC for approval. iv) Selection of the device would need approval from SC; this would be done when site locations were decided. v) KB would look into funding again, as the Police Commissioner's fund had re-opened in April. **Action:** DB/BF/RW to meet to work out locations; KB to look into funding; Clerk to add to May 24 agenda.
- o) Internal auditor – due to change in personal circumstances, the appointed auditor could no longer undertake the audit. Two local firms had been contacted for quotes. Parish and Town Auditing Services had responded and were able to take this on at short notice, so the AGAR could be approved in June. (The second firm later replied with a higher quote). **Resolution: to appoint Parish and Town Auditing Services to undertake the FY23/24 audit for a fixed fee of £150 (no VAT).** Proposed by BF and seconded by MK. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to sign the take-on letter and make arrangements to provide documentation by the end of April.
- p) Closure of village shop – a thank you piece had been included in the April parish newsletter and it was agreed that the Clerk would also write to Sue Atwell to thank her formally, on behalf of the Council, for her support to local residents. **Action:** Clerk to organise thank you letter.
- q) Annual Parish Meeting arrangements – CM kindly offered to order the wine and reimbursement would be made for bottles used after the event. **Resolution: to approve a budget of up to £40 for refreshments from Grants Other budget line.** Proposed by KB and seconded by DB. Carried unan. **Action:** CB to order white/red wine. Clerk to confirm date and time of APM (Wed 22 May, 6.30pm)
- r) WhatsApp group – KB had set up a group for members and the Clerk. It was agreed that this would be used for matters where appropriate (ie to flag email needing urgent attention).

4588 Correspondence Received

- a) Invitation to take part in follow up events for Health and Wellbeing on 24/4 and 15/5 had been received from SALC. CM offered to join the Zoom event on 24/4 and to feed back whether the event on 15/5 would be worth attending. **Action:** CM to book place on SALC Zoom event for 24/4.
- b) Information requested by the Valuation Office for the Cemetery had been submitted by the Clerk.
- c) Somerset Council had provided information on The Big Somerset Picnic for Somerset Day 2024 on 11-12 May. It was too short notice to arrange a parish event but a reminder would be sent to fly the flag for the weekend.

4589 Reports

- a) Playing Field / Village Hall – see Min 4587g
- b) Environment – See Min 4587i. DB reported on other work completed with help from Fixers and future jobs: i) The Pound had been cleared and replanted. DB had taken away the leftover small stones and would make a donation for plants for Langford Corner. ii) Three days work at the Cemetery had included clearing the hedges near the entrance gates, cleaning and tidying around the War Grave, putting up signs for the spoil area and building a hedgehog box, which was already occupied. The gravel path would be weeded and nettles cleared by the Jubilee tree. iii) The flower beds at Langford Corner would be tied and replanted. Thanks to DB and the Fixers for all their hard work.
- c) Rights of Way – PPLO report had been circulated: i) A new hedge trimmer had been received from SC, which DB is certified to use, along with the brushcutter, to help with longer length of hedgerows needing management. ii) Jobs on Green Lane and Swell Drove were held up as resources had not materialised. Our Ranger is moving on to a new job, so the post will be covered temporarily by Sarah Cresswell, who has helped in the past. iii) A new volunteer had joined the team, making it easier to work in pairs. iv) A narrow bridge on L11/19 is hazardous and in need of attention, as there is a steep muddy slope leading down to it, with a deep ditch, and the handrail is missing. v) Work continues with trying to make L11/32 an official route along Smiths Farm Drive. Approval has been given by the landowners, so it was just pending the completion of the paperwork, but this could take up to two years, due to delays at SC.

- d) SALC, Highways, Cemetery and Police – no further matters of report
- e) Asset check – RW to report at next meeting

4590 Planning - see <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/view-and-comment-on-a-planning-application/> for details.

The application below was considered:

- a) **24/00165/S73A – Glendale, Butcher’s Hill, Fivehead, TA3 6PD** – S73 application to amend Condition 2 (approved plans) to vary condition to reflect internal and external alterations and material changes of 20/03631/S73A – **approved STC**

4591 Assets, Reserves, Risk and Insurance

- a) **Resolution: to approve the Asset Listing correct to 31 March 2024.** Proposed by BF and seconded by CM. Carried unan.
- b) **Resolution: to approve the Reserves Listing correct to 31 March 2024.** Proposed by KB and seconded by DB. Carried unan.
- c) **Resolution: to approve the Risk Management Report (inc insurance cover) correct to 31 March 2024.** Proposed by MK and seconded by BF. Carried unan.

4592 Annual Review of Effectiveness of the System of Internal Control

- a) **Resolution: to approve the Internal Statement of Control, for year ended 31 March 2024.** The Chair and Clerk signed to authorise the statement.

4593 FY23/24 Annual Accounts and Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

- a) A final statement for the year ending 31 March 2024 had been circulated. The total income was £28,721.76 and total expenditure was £26,719.75, giving a surplus of £2002.01. £6,114.83 of ring-fenced CIL monies and £982 of ring-fenced Defibrillator funds were held on account as of 31 March 2024. Overspends had all been previously approved from Reserves.

Anomalies to report for the year are as follows: i) the Clerk's homeworking allowance for Feb (£26) was not paid in March, so this would be carried forward to FY24/25 and paid in April. ii) The payment to HMRC in March 24 had included an Employer's National Insurance (NI) contribution (£45.13); this had been deducted from the Clerk's February salary payment. Enquiries were underway to check if the Council would need to reimburse the Clerk for this.

Resolution: to approve the Annual Accounts for FY23/24 subject to confirmation of any adjustments needed to the salary line for employer NI contribution. Proposed by BF and seconded by DB. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to contact HMRC for advice on Employer contributions.

- b) **Resolution: to approve the CIL statement for FY23/24.** Proposed by KB and seconded by CM. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to add to website and send to SC, with evidence of payment.
- c) It was noted that the Internal auditors report and the AGAR for FY23/24 would be reviewed and approved in June 2024. Due to receipts and payments being over £25k, it would not be possible to make a request for exemption from an external assurance review.

4594 Finance

- a) Payments authorised and unrecorded during the previous month:
 - (i) Gales Building Conservation – repointing of the Pound - £1750
 - (ii) Gales Building Conservation – repointing of St Martin's church walls - £3450 (including £400 discount)
- b) Payments to be authorised:
 - (i) Greenways Grounds Maintenance – grass cuts for March (2) - £210.56
 - (ii) Village Hall – Small meeting room (Apr) - £18
 - (iii) Playing Field - Maintenance grant for FY24/25 - £2875
 - (iv) D Braddock – Rubber grass mat (Amazon) - £12.95 (inc VAT)
 - (v) J Parsons – HP Instant Ink (Mar + 10pg) - £4.99 (inc VAT)
 - (vi) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Salary (Mar) - £598
 - (vii) J Parsons – Homeworking allowance (Mar) - £26

- c) Income received in previous month:
 - (i) NatWest Interest (Feb) - £73.76
 - (ii) S Land – GoR plot purchase - £125
 - (iii) D Durrah – Newsletter advertising - £30
 - (iv) Aspect Property Management – Newsletter advertising (increased space) - £210
 - (v) Greenshutters – Newsletter advertising - £60
 - (vi) Vine Wine – Newsletter advertising - £60
 - (vii) Baptist Church – Newsletter advertising - £85
 - (viii) Beehive Storage – Newsletter advertising - £57.50
 - (ix) M Braddock – Defibrillator donation - £62
 - (x) M Braddock – Defibrillator donation (quiz) - £41
 - (xi) NatWest Interest (Mar) - £63.94
- d) **To note** Fivehead Cemetery non-domestic rate bill 2024/2025 from Somerset Council received - £0.00 due
- e) **To note** Internal review 4 of 4 to be completed by end of April 24 (LH/Clerk)

4595 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

- a) Clerk – for next meeting: i) Appointment of Chair, Vice-Chair and Members to bodies/roles; ii) Review and re-adoption of policies

4596 Date for Next Meetings

Monday 13 May 2024 at 6.30pm - Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, Fivehead Village Hall
 Wednesday 22 May 2024 at 6.30pm – Annual Parish Meeting, Fivehead Village Hall

The meeting closed at 8.52pm.

Chairman..... Dated.....