

DRAFT MINUTES OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on Monday 1 September 2025, at 1830, at The Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

Present:

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

There was no public participation.

4787 Somerset Councillors' Report

Latest report available on the Parish website - <https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-from-somerset-councillors-sep-25/>

4788 Apologies for absence

Councillor R Wynn; Somerset Councillors M Stanton and R Wilkins

4789 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

BF had previously declared an interest as Chair of the Village Hall Management Committee and received a partial dispensation to remain in the meeting to provide Village Hall updates, but not vote.

4790 Minutes

The Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, previously circulated, held on 4 August 25, were approved. Proposed by LH and seconded by BF. Carried unan.

4791 Matters arising from the Minutes (4 Aug) and raised by Members

- a) Grass maintenance – Two quotes had been received for the interim contract to end Oct 25; it was agreed to give the work to D & H Plant, a small family business based in High Ham with established experience of council grass cutting. The insurance broker had confirmed that £5M Public Liability could be accepted due to the low-risk nature of the work, using walk behind mowers and strimmers, subject to risk assessments being in place. **Resolution: to appoint D & H Plant to undertake the grass cutting of the Cemetery, St Martin's churchyard, Langford Corner and the village green, from Sept-Oct, including two cuts of the rear of the Cemetery, for £1730 (no VAT) and to approve overspend of £278.** Proposed by KB and seconded by DB. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk/DB to organise general risk assessment for agreement with the contractor, to be supplemented with their specialist dynamic assessment on site and Clerk to appoint the contractor, subject to insurance cover in place.
- b) Other maintenance – i) Two quotes had been received for removal of two small dead trees in the Garden of Remembrance. It was agreed to appoint Evergreen Garden and Tree Services, who had provided the necessary £10M Public Liability insurance and the most competitive price. **Resolution: to appoint Evergreen Tree Services to undertake the removal of two trees from the Garden of Remembrance as soon as possible, without optional stump grinding, at a cost of £360 inc VAT, from Cemetery maintenance line.** Proposed by BF and seconded by MK. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to ask Evergreen to book in work as soon as possible;
ii) DB was planning future maintenance work at the Cemetery, which could be undertaken by the Fixers with the purchase of some new tools, saving on contractor costs. A list of tools had been circulated. A budget of c£250 was agreed, to be funded from Reserves. **Resolution: to authorise DB to purchase tools as specified for future maintenance tasks, for c£250, from the Grounds and Maintenance Reserve.** Proposed by KB and seconded by CM. Carried unan. **Action:** DB to purchase tools and provide invoice for reimbursement/reclaim of VAT. Clerk to add to Asset Listing.
- c) Playing Field maintenance work – Parish Council insurance could not cover volunteers/Fixers for carrying out work on behalf of the Playing Field charity, so it would be necessary to contact the Playing Field insurers for advice on whether this could be covered under their insurance; the work was low risk, including washing the MUGA surface and painting the shelter.

- d) Speed monitoring – i) A summary of second round of monitoring on the top road and Butcher's Hill showed further evidence of speed limits being exceeded. It was agreed to request extra Police speed checks. **Action:** Clerk to pass on the speeding report to the Police to support request for additional speed checks. ii) Further locations for monitoring were discussed. As the top road needed a frequent presence as a deterrent, if further locations were added, a second device may be necessary, for which it might be possible to apply for a grant from the Police Road Safety Fund. **Action:** Clerk to look into application deadlines/eligibility and add to Oct 25 agenda; iii) Information from SC Traffic Management on traffic speeds on Ganges Hill and signage for concealed driveways had been received. Current speed records showed a range of speeds between 14.2mph and 20.6mph, with no injury collision data, so this area would not be a priority for a road safety scheme, due to low speeds/incidents. Signage on the highway for concealed entrances was not currently permitted under the traffic signing regulations, so could not be authorised by Somerset Highways. Members suggested that adding a mirror and cutting back hedging to widen the carriageway might help with visibility. **Action:** Clerk to feed back advice with suggestions to resident; iv) The 30mph sign on Langford Corner had been restored within a few days, after being knocked by a passing wide vehicle - no further action needed.
- e) Footpaths update – i) Three outstanding bridge issues had been discussed with the Ranger, who was in support of work being carried out to replace/repair these and had arranged for the work to be costed. The work would be discussed with the department lead later in the month. No timescales had been approved but it was hopeful that the work would now be added to the pipeline to be completed before Winter. ii) Ranger would also look at removing the completed jobs from the Explore map; PLLO would be asked to re-send the details. iii) The tree down obstructing L11/2 was also discussed. The Parish Council would try to follow up and the Ranger would also be willing to speak to the landowner to help with the removal, if needed. **Action:** Clerk to feed back to PPLO and contact landowner for help with tree removal.
- f) Enhanced Highways Maintenance volunteer training – 14 volunteers had now completed the training. DB would prepare the risk assessment and identify work to be undertaken, for the Council to agree, before Clerk applying for a licence from Somerset Highways. **Action:** Clerk to add to Oct 25 agenda
- g) Emergency plan – MK provided a discussion handout for members to take away. Useful information for residents could be found on the government website – [Get prepared for emergencies](#) **Action:** Members to read information for discussion/look at website; Clerk to add to Oct 25 agenda
- h) Review of AGAR 24/25 – further explanation of the variances had been provided to the external auditor on 6/8/25 and a reply received that this was sufficient.
- i) Internal audit 25/26 – **Resolution: to re-appoint P Russell of PATAS for FY25/26 and authorise the cost of £165 for the internal audit and report.** Proposed by KB and seconded by LH. Carried unan.
- j) Asset of Community Value (ACV) – Crown Inn, Fivehead – as the asset was due to be removed from South Somerset ACV Register on 17/11/25, it was agreed that the Council would look into how to keep it registered. **Action:** Clerk to request how to retain assets on the ACV register and add to Oct 25 agenda
- k) Overflow from Sunnyside Park outlets – following further reports of foul-smelling output to the ditch on Isle Abbots Road in August, the matter was reported to the Environment Agency hotline on 21/8/25; an officer from the Bridgwater office had requested photos and was looking into this.

4792 Correspondence Received

- a) Parish information sheets on Playing Pitch Strategy, Built Sports Facilities Strategy and Open Space Assessment had been received from Somerset Council and circulated.
- b) Grit bin levels had been requested by SC Highways, by 12 Sep; KB had re-checked and confirmed that all had sufficient levels. **Action:** Clerk to confirm levels to SC Highways

4793 Reports

- a) Playing Field – the play area had been closed down for the foreseeable future, with daily inspections taking place, as required by the Playing Field insurers. Next meeting – 10/9/25; MK, Chair of new CIO was now joining the meetings.
- b) Village Hall – the interim committee were inviting the new CIO to decide on any future expenditure, whilst the instructed solicitors were progressing with checking the vesting documents to be fit for purpose to complete the transfer.
- c) Cemetery – see Min 4791b
- d) SALC – Somerset Parishes Conference, including SALC AGM, to be held on 3/10/25
- e) Rights of Way – see Min 4791e. PPLO also reported: i) L11/6 – Green Lane ditch had been cleaned out and prepared for Winter. More surface work may be needed, depending on how it weathers with future rain; ii) SC had completed second surface cut of the bridleways (29/8/25).
- f) Environment – Fixers had helped to clear Green Lane. Work was now focused on cemetery maintenance, including the surround for the War Grave, to be done before grass cut. Members asked DB to pass on a big thank you to all the Fixers for their ongoing help.
- g) Highways and Police – nothing further to report

4794 Planning - see <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/view-and-comment-on-a-planning-application/> for details.

There were no applications for consideration.

4795 Finance

- a) Payments authorised and unrecorded during previous month:
 - (i) Parish Magazine Printing – newsletter printing (Aug) - £366.75
- b) Payments to be authorised:
 - (i) Parish Online – annual subscription renewal - £36 (inc VAT)
 - (ii) HMRC – Employer NI (Aug) - £30.93
 - (iii) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Salary (Aug) - £623.20
 - (iv) J Parsons – Homeworking allowance (Aug) - £26
 - (v) J Parsons – HP Instant Ink (Aug) - £4.49 (inc VAT)
- c) Income received:
 - (i) NatWest interest (Jul) – £74.89
 - (ii) M Braddock – Defib donations - £60

4796 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

- a) It was noted that there had been problems with the website not being available on 26/8/25, reported by KB and resolved by web host the same day. Further page display problems on one part of the site had been reported by the Clerk on 30/8/25, which were fixed immediately.
- b) KB passed on details to the Clerk from a local IT provider, to consider updating the PC laptop as it would not be able to support Windows 11, when Windows 10 is no longer supported.

4797 Date for Next Meeting

Monday 6 October at 6.30pm at Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

The meeting closed at 7.34pm.

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