

DRAFT MINUTES OF FIVEHEAD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
Held on Monday 2 February 2026, at 1830, at The Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

Present:

Mrs K Beacham – Chair (KB); Mrs L Howard (LH); Mr R Wynn (RW); Dr B Ferguson (BF); Mr D Braddock (DB); Somerset Councillor R Wilkins (CRW) and Mrs J Parsons - Clerk/RFO (JP)

There was no public participation.

4845 Somerset Councillors' Report

Please see latest report on the Parish website – <https://fivehead-village.org.uk/update-from-somerset-councillors-feb-26/>

CRW reported that, having declared a major incident, resources from other counties had been diverted to help Somerset Council deal with the latest flooding. Work undertaken after 2014 floods was enabling the accumulated water, affecting farmland as well as homes, to be cleared quicker. Flooding had also caused widespread highways defects across the county, with 70% more being reported over the weekend alone, compared to the whole of the previous winter. Additional unplanned repair costs would be over £1m.

4846 Apologies for absence

Councillor C Munday; Councillor M King; Somerset Councillor M Stanton

4847 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None

4848 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council, previously circulated, held on 12 January. Proposed by LH and seconded by BF. Carried unan.

4849 Matters arising from the Minutes (12 Jan) and raised by Members

- a) Wooden structure on land off of A378 – reported and under investigation by Enforcement (26/00011/ENF)
- b) Road crossing safety A378 – Traffic Management had advised that there were no budget streams available at this time for a new controlled crossing. The Road Safety team uses the injury collision database to prioritise limited funds for safety schemes and there was currently no record of injury in this area, recorded by the Police. Funding of a feasibility study to support community funding of a crossing was considered prohibitively expensive. Members agreed to request if road markings or signage could be considered. **Action:** Clerk to request if road markings/signage could be provided and add to March 26 agenda
- c) Wessex Internet – under the latest government funding scheme, Wessex had been surveying the village, to plan how to bring full fibre broadband to residents later in the year. Introductory information had been sent to the Parish Council (see website - <https://fivehead-village.org.uk/project-gigabit-dorset-and-south-somerset-update-feb-26/>)
Information would be sent out to residents and a consultation meeting offered by Wessex, if needed. It was noted that some areas of the village, such as Ganges Close, Orchard Rise and Butcher's Hill, did not have telecommunication poles; current services were delivered through underground ducts. New poles had been installed on Stowey Road and existing underground ducting was being used in Silver Street. Members agreed to invite the Regional Engagement Manager to the next meeting, to find out more about how they planned to deliver their services.
Action: Clerk to invite Wessex to attend next meeting and add to Mar 26 agenda
- d) Chapter 8 reassessment – three companies had been contacted for quotes; only one was able to provide a refresher course. CRW recommended contacting Gerard Tucker, Langport Town Clerk, who had recently undertaken Chp 8 training. Members agreed to follow up this suggestion and to approve up to £600 + VAT for 3 people. **Resolution: to approve up to £600 + VAT for Chp 8 refresher training, in March, for 3 people (DB, BF, RW) from CIL budget.** Proposed by KB and seconded by LH. Carried unan. **Action:** Clerk to obtain further costings and book refresher training.

- e) Cemetery work – following the removal of the diseased box hedge, more space had been opened up for the Garden of Remembrance. It was agreed in principle that low maintenance flowering, column-shaped shrubs would be a more modern way of marking the area. **Resolution: to consider a scheme of approximately five flowering slender shrubs to border the Garden of Remembrance.** Proposed by RW and seconded by LH. Carried unan. DB offered to cost this approach for further discussion. **Action:** DB to cost shrubs for Garden of Remembrance and Clerk to add to Mar 26 agenda
- f) Emergency Plan – deferred to March 26

CRW left the meeting at this point.

- g) Draft policies – RW had circulated a draft social media policy with accompanying terms of reference for the Parish Council Facebook and NextDoor presence. Members thanked RW for putting together an excellent draft and agreed in principle with the proposed use of social media as one of several routes to circulate council information, without using discussion forums; council meetings would remain the official route to discuss and agree matters. The next step would be to look at the other existing policies (Information Security and Communications), to decide if these should remain as separate policies or be integrated into one new IT policy. It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate links to the other policies for further discussion. **Action:** Clerk to email links and add to Mar 26 agenda.
- h) Defibrillator update – Community Heartbeat Trust had confirmed the existing contract would be put in the Parish Council's name once it was renewed in March 26, with the invoice to be emailed to fiveheadpc@gmail.com. The support agreement could be renewed annually until 2030, when the equipment would be 8 years old and no longer under warranty. The charity would be willing to meet on Zoom to discuss a contract with new equipment; it was agreed that this could be done nearer the time, when other options on the market would also be reviewed. **Action:** Clerk to pass on update to Mary Braddock (MB)
- i) Email/website – i) Website host would register the agreed url – fiveheadparishcouncil.gov.uk and the email format – clerk@fiveheadparishcouncil.gov.uk; Members agreed the future naming format for councillors would be christian name and surname separated by a dot (ie kate.beacham@fiveheadparishcouncil.gov.uk), following the format of Somerset Council email. ii) Following the launch of the new Village Hall and Playing Field website, the old pages on the parish website would be permanently deleted and replaced with a summary page and link to the new website. **Action:** Clerk to carry out the changes to the pages and structure when possible.
- j) Meeting date changes – July – changed to 13th; Aug – changed to 10th (if required)
- k) **Resolution: to approve up to £6 for purchase of 1 x pack of A4 plain printer paper from Office budget line.** Proposed by KB and seconded by LH. Carried unan.

4850 Correspondence Received

- a) Thanks received from Harry Price, Parish magazine editor, for honorarium for 2025 services
- b) From Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, opportunity to take part in Engagement survey, open to 9 April
- c) From Somerset Council, daily updates on major flooding incident – see parish website for link to Somerset Council website for latest news. Members were grateful for the Council's excellent response and communications.

4851 Reports

- a) Village Hall and Playing Field CIO, SALC, Cemetery and Highways – no further reports
- b) Environment/Fixers – i) DB reported that the drain on Ganges Hill was coping well with the extra water, now that it had been exposed from years of built-up debris. ii) DB was planning to attend a free course on riparian rights, offered by Somerset Rivers Authority. iii) Fixers would be starting gardening and highways work in the next few weeks.

- c) Rights of Way – MB had provided the latest update: i) L11/2 – bridges over two ditches replaced with wooden structures and gates. Members were grateful to MB, the Ranger and all involved, including landowners who allowed access to waterlogged land. Bridge over River Five pending as this was more complex and expensive to replace; Ranger is aware. ii) L11/8 – footpath fingerpost re-sited by landowner. iii) Somerset Council was in the process of auditing all paths and volunteer status. They would email all registered volunteers. MB had checked and everyone was happy to continue. iv) Work on Swell Drove would be done once flood water subsides.

4852 Planning - see <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/view-and-comment-on-a-planning-application/> for details.

- a) **25/02946/FUL** – Land to West of Stowey Lane, Fivehead, TA3 6PR – proposed new agricultural barn – **approved STC**
 b) **25/02678/S73A** – Land OS 0082 Part Lower Swell – S73A application to vary Condition 2 (approved plans) – **approved STC**

4853 Projects/Reserves

- a) Reserves to be reviewed for year end – **Action:** Clerk to circulate Reserves and add to Mar 26 agenda

4854 Finance

- a) Payments authorised and unrecorded during previous month: None
 b) Payments to be authorised:
 (i) D Braddock – Drill/batteries (2)/charger (Power Tool World) - £259 inc VAT
 (ii) J Parsons – Clerk/RFO – Salary (Jan) - £643.20
 (iii) HMRC – Employer NI (Jan) - £33.93
 (iv) J Parsons – Homeworking allowance (Jan) - £26
 (v) J Parsons – HP Instant Ink (Jan) - £4.49 (inc VAT)
 c) Income received:
 (i) NatWest interest (Dec) – £67.81
 (ii) Fit and Fabulous – Newsletter advertising - £60
 (iii) Burrow Environmental – Newsletter advertising - £240
 (iv) M Braddock – Defib donation (quiz) - £15

4855 Matters of Report, Questions and Items for the Next Meeting

- a) For planning application 26/00193/HOU – extension requested to consult at next meeting
 b) No cold call zone – request to re-establish for Fivehead village
 c) Newsletter printing – to approve price increase from Feb 26 - £382.60 (previously £366.75)
 d) Crimestoppers – request for grant of £200

4856 Date for Next Meeting

Monday 2 March at 6.30pm at Village Hall, Stowey Road, Fivehead

The meeting closed at 8.34 pm.

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