

Stogumber Parish Council

Minutes, Annual Parish Council Meeting

Held on Thursday 6th May 2021, via the zoom virtual platform

Commencing at 19.45

(in the format to be presented to the next meeting for approval)

Present:

Cllrs C Bramall (Chair), M Symes (Vice-Chair), V Sellick, A White, T Vesey, T Brick, R Foster

C Morrison-Jones (clerk)

SCC Cllr C Lawrence

Cllr M Kravis (arrived late)

H Bailey (her presentation only)

Prior to the start of the formal meeting there was a short presentation by Hannah Bailey regarding the 'Two Rivers Project' by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust:

Formally run by Carina Gaertner, who has previously addressed the PC. Hannah (to work with communities to provide a legacy for the project when it ends) & Briony (project manager) have been funded for an additional year. 9 interventions planned for next year. Aim to use natural flood management methods to delay arrival of flood peak downstream, eg – leaky river dams, ponds, reconnecting to historical flood plains. All slow down the flow and aim to protect the communities

Want to develop local flood maps over the area- mapping work shops to be held over the summer to map areas of Stogumber at flood risk and to support local flood groups

Want to encourage nature & give people a sense of purpose and engage with the natural world - have a budget for community tree planting & events

It is important for the project to have a legacy and make projects community led so WWT becomes more advisory role.

RF thought that the Stogumber & Crowcombe schools would be very interested in joining any projects

CB noted that farmers were previously grant aided by EA and natural England to plant over winter months to prevent soil erosion and water run off - Has this funding now ceased?. HB offered to look into this and report back

H Bailey then left the meeting

1) Election of Chairman and receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The appointment of C Bramall was proposed by VS and seconded by MS . There were no other nominations. All were in favour; the Chair signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

2) To receive any apologies for absence

SW&T Cllr P Pilkington had previously informed the clerk of his resignation as a ward councillor.

3) Election of Vice Chairman and receive the Vice Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The appointment of M Symes was proposed by CB and seconded by AW. There were no other nominations. All were in favour; the Vice-Chair signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Due to intermittent broadband connection, CB handed over the chair to MS (Vice-Chair) for the rest of the meeting at this point to allow for a smoother running of the meeting

4) Declarations of Interest/Dispensations

AW and CB – Beacon Field (as neighbours)

5) Public comments, questions or suggestions

None

6) District and County Councillor reports

SCC Cllr C Lawrence:

- A year to remember. So sad for anyone who has lost loved ones because of covid
- Thanks to all who have looked out for and helped those who have needed it
- Work at County Hall has changed dramatically; Worked at home for most of the year and much has been achieved
- Highways work has got behind a little due the covid effort and a lot of SCC staff (over 1000) have temporarily moved to work for the NHS and vaccination roll out programme
- Still need to be careful and still need to learn to live with covid: Face, hands , space
- 03007906275 covid helpline is still open for those that need help
- Over 50,000 people in Somerset have now had their vaccination
- Lateral flow tests are available to help people monitor the distribution of covid and will allow for rapid response if case numbers go up
- Delighted that SPC got their grants from the Climate Emergency Fund. Exciting plans that she looks forward to seeing come to fruition

SW&T Cllr M Kravis:

- Purdah until 10pm tonight so things have been quieter
- SW&T meeting voted for referendum to be held
- 4 changes in cabinet members
- The people of Somerset will have another opportunity to decide in a referendum about the Unitary bids
- EV charge points to be installed in district owned car parks
- Partnership working on climate change with Sedgemoor DC

7) Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 11/3/21

The minutes were approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting. The minutes will be signed when the Parish Council next meet in person

8) Any matters arising from the minutes not covered by the agenda items below

None

9) Somerset Unitary consultation

The SPC response to the consultation of support for the One Somerset bid has been submitted by the clerk.

The Stronger Somerset group of councils are intending to hold a referendum on the unitary proposals in June, but the Government has indicated that they will use the results of the now closed consultation to form an opinion, together with information gained from services already servicing Somerset (eg fire brigade, ambulance etc).

CL -the expectation is that government will have a decision by end of June /early July
Will give local groups time to set their local priorities and to be able to plan for each area has what it needs.

10) The Beacon Field:

a) Electric car charging point

Funding for this project is currently being pursued by local contacts within Forum 21, an environmental group

b) Any other matters concerning the Beacon Field or car park

None

11) Highways / Footpaths

a) previously reported matters concerning Highways or Footpaths

i) road surface towards Capton. One pothole has been reported as being filled but no update has been received regarding the water flowing down the road during the wetter months. CL reported that Highways will be carrying out further investigations

b) any other matters concerning Highways or Footpaths

i) on the way to Vellow there seems to be quite a large amount of rubbish in a layby. MS belongs to landowner – needs clearing before others think it is acceptable to fly tip

ii) there is a water leak in Hill Street which could be from a cesspit overflowing or a leak from the same source? Waterboard are investigating and are going to put a camera down

iii) Ash tree overhanging footpath at Sunny Dene. MS has spoken to landowner

iv) Lower Vexford - Leigh Lane, issues of HGVs getting stuck. Leigh Lane is half in Crowcombe and half in Stogumber. The clerk is awaiting acknowledgement from Crowcombe that approaches can be made to Highways for 'Not suitable for heavy goods vehicles' signage at the Crowcombe end.

Stogumber end should partly be covered by the new signs planned from Castlake.

SCC Cllr CL left meeting at this point

12) Planning:

a) Any current planning concerns

consider application 3/31/21/005 on Purseys, Wood Lane, Stogumber, TA4 3TJ
Erection of garden shed with fixed front and side awnings:

RESOLVED: unanimous support

b) Previously reported planning concerns

None

c) Planning applications responded to under delegated powers since the last meeting

Application 3/31/21/004. The Garden House, Wood Lane, Stogumber, TA4 3TJ
Variation of Condition No. 02 (approved plans) of application 3/31/19/016
Supported by SPC. SW&T have yet to reach a decision

13) Finance

a) To approve bank reconciliation, 31.3.21

Councillors resolved to approve the bank reconciliation, dated 31.3.21, of
£22,207.66. £1,590 of this balance is held in reserved funds

b) Consider Insurance renewal 1st June 2021

The PC is currently insured with Aviva, via BHIB Insurance Brokers. 2021/22
represents the second year of the three-year long-term agreement that the PC entered
into with BHIB. The renewal premium is £229.47 and councillors resolved to accept
the renewal premium

c) Payments to approve

Cheque payments

C Morrison-Jones	£580.40	Salary – April & May 2021 – and expenses
HMRC	£59.60	PAYE

Debit Card Payments

28.4.21	Zoom Subscription	£14.39	28.4-27.5.21
22.4.21	Water2business	£17.59	Water, Beacon field
	BHIB	£229.47	Insurance renewal

Direct debit payments

12.4.21	PWLB	£3223.02	Beacon Field loan repayment
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d) Amounts received

16.3.21	HMRC	VAT reclaim	£909.68
22.4.21	SW&T	1 st half of precept	£10,250.00

e) Review and accept T&Cs surrounding the SCC Climate Emergency

Fund grants

The T&Cs from SCC regarding the grants awarded to SPC under the Climate
Emergency Fund had previously been circulated. Councillors resolve to accept the
agreements and authorised the clerk to sign and return both agreements on behalf of
SPC

f) Any other financial matters

The clerk reported that an error had occurred at the end of March involving an
Amazon purchase and the SPC debit card. The error was rectified at the beginning of
April with the full amount being credited to the SPC account

14) Consider Internal Auditor's Report

The Internal Auditor, Mrs K Smith, had carried out the internal audit and found the
Internal audit control arrangements to be satisfactory. Accordingly, the Internal
Auditor had signed-off Page 4 of the Annual Return without qualification.

15) Annual Return – approve Section 1, the Annual Governance Statement

Members agreed that replies to Questions 1 to 9 all be “Yes”.

The page was then signed by the Chair of the meeting and will be returned to the clerk to obtain her physical signature before submission to the external auditors

16) Annual Return – approve Section 2, the Accounting Statement

The Council considered the information prepared and signed by the Clerk that had been previously circulated. The statement was approved, and signed by the Chair of the meeting

17) Annual Return - confirm that the Council wishes to certify itself as exempt from the limited assurance review

It was agreed by councillors that the PC wished to certify itself as exempt from the limited assurance review as it had an income / expenditure of less than £25,000.

The document was signed by the Chair of the meeting and will be returned to the clerk to obtain her physical signature before submission to the external auditors

18) Consider appointing a Member as Lead on Climate Change and Nature Resilience

A parishioner had previously raised the suggestion that a Member be appointed a Lead on Climate change matters. Councillors noted that the PC works as a corporate unit and any decisions are made collectively by Members. In the case of Stogumber PC there are no subcommittees and so all decisions are discussed and resolved by full council. Members, and/or the clerk, can bring information that they have gathered/learnt to the rest of the Council for consideration as a group and it was felt that this would probably result in a more diverse and balanced spectrum of information reaching the council than one specific Member being relied upon to champion a specific cause.

19) Consider the renewal of the powers previously delegated to the clerk on 21.3.20 to enable the Parish Council to continue to function during the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic

Councillors RESOLVED that:

- (a) Should the council be unable to meet for whatever reason, the Clerk be given delegated authority to progress all ongoing matters and projects and authorise all regular payments and incur expenditure in line with the council's agreed budget
- (b) Any decisions taken under resolution (a) above will be taken, whenever possible, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the council. A record of all decisions and expenditure incurred under delegated authority will be kept and reported to members when the council next meets.
- (c) The authority to decide the council's response to planning applications be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the council. Whenever possible, members of the council will be informed of applications out for consultation and will be invited to submit comments to the Clerk.
- (d) The provisions outlined in resolutions (a-c) above will override any requirements to the contrary in the council's standing orders, financial

regulations or terms of reference.

(e) Should the Clerk be unable to perform their duties, a nominated councillor will assume the role of Proper Officer and RFO in an unpaid capacity

(f) The Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, may incur expenditure from the project earmarked reserve where such expenditure will help the community's efforts to support those in need of assistance or prevent social isolation.

(g) Should government allow councils to meet virtually (online), the council will take all reasonable steps to facilitate this.

20) Any other business by permission of the Chairman

i) There is a virtual village CDS/Airband meeting on 11th May @7.30pm to explain plans for broadband in the village and surrounding hamlets

ii) MS wished to record the Council's thanks to the clerk. It has been a difficult year but the clerk has done a great job keeping the PC functioning and working well

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21.15