



## **LONG SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the parish council held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024 at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Councillors Cox (Chairman), Rousell (Vice Chairman), Greenfield, Coombes, Pritchard, Rickards & Tulk.

**Members of the Public: 5**

**Somerset Councillors:** Cllr Tim Kerley, Cllr Page sent apologies.

The meeting started at 7.30pm.

#### **Public Questions and Observations**

##### **Somerset Councillors Report**

Cllr Kerley explained that Cllr Page currently attends the Keinton Mandeville PC meeting which clashes every month with Long Sutton's so he will be unable to attend until they swap roles later in 2025.

He then reported that every department had come in under budget apart from Children's Services. There is a massive drive to recruit foster parents, which parish councils are being asked to promote. There are a lot of redundancies, although planning is a protected department. However, funds don't allow for the higher salaries that other councils can afford to pay planning officers, so staff numbers are low. The financial situation is still in a perilous state, and the government offer of more money for local government is only for councils who have a mayor. Somerset is looking to join forces with Wiltshire & Dorset Councils as part of the devolution process that would elect a mayor.

RC asked if local MPs were providing support and stated that parish councils can't be expected to absorb all the precept increase. TK confirmed that local MP's who are ex-councillors are being supportive, but only time will tell how much impact they are having. RC expressed disappointment with Cllr Page's continued absence, and the negativity from Somerset Council. Parish councillors who are all volunteers do their best with limited budgets, and he conveyed his frustration at the lack of support from Somerset Council and its councillors, and the fact that residents will suffer increased precepts for the same or worse service.

##### **Public questions**

A member of the public asked again about clearing the stream in Crouds Lane. He also asked if the Council had heard anything about developments in Crouds Lane and opposite the playing field on Martock Road

The Knole Flood Group had provided a summary following the last meeting for which RC thanked them. They then asked the council for support with two grant fund applications.

The Chairman confirmed that both of these matters were on the agenda for discussion later in the meeting.

Public session closed at 7.50pm & the meeting opened at 7.50pm



## **MINUTES**

### **24/117: Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Ward & Weilgus.

It was RESOLVED to receive and approve the apologies and reasons submitted.

### **24/118: Declarations of Interest.**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **24/119: Minutes of the last meetings held on 1<sup>st</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (LGA 1972sch12 para 41(1)).**

To receive and approve the [minutes of the meeting](#) held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 and 5<sup>th</sup> November as true and accurate records of those meetings.

It was RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the meetings held on 1<sup>st</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> November as true & correct records of the meetings. The Chairman duly signed the minutes. There were no matters arising.

### **24/120: Planning applications. Planning applications can be viewed on the Somerset Council website.**

#### **a. Planning application: 24/02513/FUL. Plot Dairy Farm, Knole, Long Sutton TA10**

*Proposal: Installation of a slurry lagoon*

Members had no objections to this application.

**Planning application: 24/02550/FUL.** Land OS 9687 Martock Road, Long Sutton, TA10 9JS

*Proposal: Erection of a new two storey dwelling with detached garage.*

NR provided a summary. After a brief discussion, members agreed not to object the application but to append additional comments relating to better use of renewable energy and strict adherence to the Internal Drainage Board's comments regarding on-site water management.

**Planning application: 24/02765/TCA.** Thatchover, Knole, Long Sutton TA10 9HZ

*Proposal: Notification to fell No. 1 tree within a conservation area.*

Members noted the details.

#### **b. Update on any existing planning applications.**

The clerk provided updates on decisions relating to some previously discussed applications.

There was a brief discussion about the mobile structure at Knole, still considered mobile despite evidence of concrete footings. TK confirmed that Enforcement have opened a case and retrospective permission will likely be sought.



### **24/121: Somerset Council - Enhanced Highways Maintenance Scheme Pilot.**

The clerk had distributed the meeting notes prior to the Council meeting

She and the Chairman had attended a meeting with the Nathan Turnbull, Kier representative on 4<sup>th</sup> November. RC reported that it was a positive meeting, and various criteria and costs were discussed. NT is going to provide an updated location of map of the gullies in the parish and an existing schedule of works. The clerk will follow up on this.

A gang of two operatives including a jetter and associated traffic management costs £1400 for one day and can clear between 80 and 100 gullies. Members felt that the prices mentioned were reasonable and were keen to get some gully clearing carried out. RC confirmed that a budget allowance will be made for continued maintenance.

It was RESOLVED that the clerk will instruct Kier accordingly for a day's work at a cost of £1400.

### **24/122: Village Flooding Issues**

- a. Following the circulation of a summary of the Knole Flooding Group's aspirations, the Chairman invited further comment. The group requested the parish council's support in making a grant application to the Somerset Rivers Authority (SRA). This would allow for a project to lay a pipe across from Grove Lane (leading out to Bineham) and Stone Mead Lane (leading to Plot Farm) to take flood water from the north and east away from the hamlet of Knole. The estimated cost is £12,500.

It was RESOLVED to support the grant application to the SRA – the clerk will liaise with Martin Minogue for further details.

They further asked for PC support in applying for a Heritage Lottery Grant to fund a second project to replace 3 privately owned bridges in Stone Mead Lane at a cost of approximately £30,000. However, it was not clear if the parish council can legally support this, given that the work is to be carried out on private land. The clerk & Cllr Coombes will investigate further. The chairman also asked for a summary with more details and costings for this project.

GR further commented that residents should be aware that other proposals can be brought before the council, and support will be given where appropriate. The chairman echoed this sentiment and praised the Knole Flood Group for all their hard work in taking the correct steps and carrying out the necessary research. Members agreed that the formation of a Working Group to tackle flooding issues in other parts of the village would be useful and this will be revisited at the next meeting. RC will scope out further details.

- b. Other flooding issues

The issue of flooding on Crouds Lane to Shute Lane had been raised at the previous meeting and TT confirmed that recent flooding had again occurred with sewage in the flood water affecting the properties there. Wessex Water came to clear up, and the ditch had been cleared by some volunteers in 2023, but heavy machinery is required to clear a depth of 6 inches and remove the debris. Having made enquiries, TT confirmed that the work could be done at a cost of £600.



It was RESOLVED that the council fund this work – the clerk to liaise with Cllr Tulk.

### **24/123: Village Hall and Recreation Ground**

Following the Management Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> November, RC confirmed that seven A3 signs about keeping dogs on leads are now in place on the Rec field. The situation will continue to be monitored.

The committee has agreed to ringfence £10k for the pavilion fund.

The projector and AV equipment may need upgrading soon,

The WI have kindly offered to carry out two deep cleans in the spring & again in the autumn.

The insurance premium increased considerably, but a new broadband provider will be significantly cheaper.

The ongoing problem of the electricity tripping out at odd times is being looked at by an electrician and the non-working solar panels meter is a considerable loss of income, so this is being investigated urgently. Cllr Coombes is meeting an electrician on site imminently.

The next meeting is on 6<sup>th</sup> January & will consider a caretaker role and how to co-opt more committee members as numbers are low.

### **24/124: Pavilion Refurbishment**

RC had previously circulated a report to members largely about the funding efforts. He is now more confident that a budget of £125k can be attained, and the ECB & others are supportive. He asked if members would support proceeding with the pavilion refurbishment project as detailed in the report, noting that Spacemaker (modular suppliers) would want a deposit of 50% (circa £13k). Refurbishment would not start until February.

It was RESOLVED to support proceeding to the next stage. GR felt that it should be subject to an 85% surety of grant funding.

### **24/125: Environment Group**

- a. GR confirmed that there are now 10 members of the group. A large map has been created of owl sightings as part of the ongoing owl project and they would like to display this in the village for residents to peruse. She asked if the Village Hall could be used, and RC said yes, and suggested it be displayed in time for this weekend's coffee morning in the Church.  
GR confirmed that a camera survey of the Ilcehster Lane field will be carried out in December to monitor existing wildlife and a tree survey by Reimagining the Levels with plans to plant trees in March. A pond will be created in April and the footpath group are going to install a gate, free of charge on to Ilcehster Lane. Another meeting in a couple of weeks will scope out a charter protecting the legacy and agreeing a proper structure for the land and a long-term plan. She will report back at the next meeting with more details of their proposal.
- b. GR requested a budget of approximately £3k for signage and benches. RC confirmed that an allowance of £1k for the current year hadn't yet been used, and a further £2.5k could be included in the budget plans for 2025/'26.



### **24/126: Communication: website and e-newsletter**

- a. Members agreed that the next newsletter should include the following matters: Flooding issues around the village & a request to report issues; Environment group bullet points; the Christmas Cart; fostering; Village Hall Committee call for new members; the go ahead for the Pavilion project.
- b. Actions for consideration and approval - It was decided that the clerk should issue an additional newsletter about what's going on in December, before the January issue at the end of the month. Also, a new feature "Business of the Month" to be included for 2025.

### **24/127: Finance**

- a. To approve the accounts for payment in December 2024.

It was RESOLVED to approve the accounts for payment for December 2024 together with some additional expenses for the Chairman. £470.72 tennis court border materials; £110 for framed picture (gift to retiring clerk).

- b. To view and approve the bank reconciliation to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024.

It was RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliations to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 as circulated.

- c. To note and approve the spend to budget to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024.

It was RESOLVED to agree the spend to budget to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024 as circulated.

- d. To agree the budget setting process and priorities for 2025/'26.

It was agreed that NR, RC and the clerk will meet on 20<sup>th</sup> December to draft a budget which will then be circulated to members. Suggestions included an allowance for Village Infrastructure for devolved Somerset Council duties and for a flood contingency plan.

### **24/128: Representative reports from councillors.**

- a. Community Safety (including the monthly crime statistics from Police.uk and the Speed Indicator Device).

NR had previously circulated the data from the SID (Speed Indicator Device) which had been in two locations in the village during the previous month. He summarised the information which showed that at Langport Road the speed limit is largely being obeyed despite the perception that traffic is speeding.

At Martock Road outside the school's 20mph limit, over 70% are speeding at 29mph. He has been contacted by a school governor who had enquired about a Community Speedwatch scheme or flashing lights devices for outside the school, funded by the council. A brief discussion confirmed that there have been a few efforts to introduce a speedwatch initiative in the past, and there has never been enough support. Cllr Coombes said that flashing lights have been *replaced* at a nearby school and she will find out how much that cost. It was also felt that the volume of traffic at the start



and end of the school day naturally slows traffic. NR will respond accordingly to the school governor and share the SID statistics.

The recent crime report listed 6 incidents in the village including vehicle crime, theft from a vehicle and violence & sexual offences during the month of October.

- b. Lengthsman. RC confirmed that the tennis court border was almost complete, and grass had been cut to improve visibility at the village green.
- c. Highways and Footpaths. JP confirmed that timbers and a stile will be replaced when the weather allows in St Bushes Plantation. The County Warden confirmed that he can likely supply some gates for the parish.

### **24/129: Other correspondence not previously distributed & Councillors' Comments**

None from the clerk.

JP reported that the WI were keen to do more in the village for Armistice Day and asked the council to contribute towards the purchase of two WW1 silhouettes – a Tommy soldier and a female nurse. The total cost is £325. This led to a brief discussion about cleaning up the war memorial ready for 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary VE Day events in May 2025. TT offered to clean the slabs around the memorial and report back.

It was RESOLVED to cover the total cost of £325 – the clerk will liaise with Cllr Pritchard.

TT asked about other areas in the village being marked with “Please Keep Clear” white lines. This related to parking close to the junction of Shute Lane & Martock Road close to Walnut House. NR confirmed that highway regulations already state that parking within a certain distance of a junction is illegal but difficult to enforce, so not much can be done. We need to keep monitoring the situation.

### **24/130: Date of next meeting.**

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025, at 7.30pm in the Committee Room of the Village Hall.**

### **24/131: Agenda items for the next meeting.**

Budget - Risk register - Press and Media Policy with additional section covering social media –

Complaints policy to be reviewed.

Meeting closed at 9.41 pm

**END OF MINUTES**