

Stogumber Parish Council.

Minutes of meeting held in Deane Close Common Room on 10th March 2016

The meeting started at 19:30

Present

Councillors J. Spicer, Chairman, C Bramall, M Symes, T Vesey, J Hull.

C Morrison-Jones, Clerk

District Councillor: A Trollope-Bellew. County Councillor C Lawrence

Item	Topic.	Action
1.	Apologies. Apologies received from Cllrs G Tuckfield, V Sellick, T Brick and C Matravers and PCSO P Bolton	
2.	Declarations of Interest and requests for dispensations CB – declared interest in Beacon Field as lives opposite JS – declared interest in item 16 b) v, Vellow Road, as passes through his property	
3.	Public Comments, Questions or Suggestions None	
4.	Police Report No police presence but PCSO P Bolton had forwarded a report by email that was read out by the chairman. Warning was given to be aware of cold callers selling either household items or pictures. Under no circumstances have anything to do with these people and never let them enter your property. Recorded crimes for the entire Beat up to February = 408 year to date, just under 10% down on last year Recorded incidents for the entire Beat: ASB 190 = 42% down on last year CRIME 253 = 20% down on last year GENERAL 569 = 14% down on last year PUBLIC SAFETY etc 831 = 13 % down on last year TRANSPORTATION 386 = 16% down on last year Christine Lawrence then commented on the intended sale of Williton Police Station and also the possibility of losing custodial facilities in this area, meaning transport of individuals requiring detention to Bridgewater and the loss of Police time to this area that this would entail.	
5.	County Councillor Report Christine distributed a press release from Somerset CC outlining an ambitious vision for the county that included, amongst other things, the desire to create a Somerset University and a garden town. Work is also under way exploring devolution which, even if full devolution does not occur, has resulted in cooperation between authorities and triggering ways to work together and save money. A budget of £75 million has been agreed for investment in roads (with a large proportion towards the A358 / A303 improvements), schools and economic development and news was received last week of an additional £2.9million from central government which will be invested in key frontline services, highways and to replenish reserves.	
6.	District Councillor Report Cllr A Trollope-Bellew reported that the financial director of EDF had resigned over the budget for Hinkley Point C but there is thought that the French Government may step in to ensure the project goes ahead. The District Council budget is now set for the next financial year but there are serious concerns that by 18/19 finances will mean that West Somerset will have to merge with a	

neighbouring council. One key point that is a strong possibility that hospitals will be re-rated to be on a par with charities – this would require an 80% refund of business rates costing WSDC £320,000 plus a substantial drop in income moving forward. This eventuality has had to be budgeted for.

7. Minutes of meetings held on 14/1/16 and 6/2/16

It was unanimously agreed that the draft minutes of the meetings held on 14/1/16 and 6/2/16 were a true and accurate record of the meetings. The minutes were signed by the chairman.

8. West Somerset Local Plan Update

The Chairman reported that Stogumber had been invited to attend four of the sessions next week and he intended to attend the Policy Wording and the Housing Supply sessions as these two would be discussing issues most relevant to the Stogumber Neighbourhood Plan.

JS

9. Neighbourhood Plan Update

The consultation period is now over and plenty of comments, most constructive, had been received and were now being collated.

JS

10. Play Ground

I. The present advice from the Charity Commission is that the Parish Council could become the corporate trustee of the playground association. Once this has been done, steps could be taken to change the constitution of the playground association to allow the association to dispose of the playground and allow the Parish Council to negotiate with Magna / FIT regarding the granting of a new lease. Magna have advised that they would carry out a consultation with residents before allowing this in order to confirm that this is the wish of residents. Fields in Trust (FIT) have an in house legal team that can deal with the lease although their estimated costs of £3,000 have been queried by the JS. It was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council proceeds with the steps needed to become the corporate trustee of the playground association. The clerk raised concerns regarding the increased work load involved in becoming a trustee and, although the Parish Council weren't able to fund additional hours to cover this, it was agreed to see how other tasks that the clerk currently carried out could be distributed amongst councillors in order to gain the extra time needed.

JS / CMJ

II. As the ground is now drying up, CB agreed to pursue the buying of woodchip for around the equipment, as agreed at the January meeting

CB

III. Repairs to the wooden structure are progressing as the weather improves - Mr Moss hopes to be able to finish soon. It was unanimously agreed to authorise the clerk to organise a qualified inspection of the structure when repairs were finished to ensure the structure is in correct repair and can be re-opened for use.

CMJ

IV. The Clerk produced a draft inspection check list for the playground and equipment for councillors to use for weekly inspections. JS to trial use of the sheets.

JS

11. The Beacon Field

a) **Grass Let:** Martin Waldock has already put sheep on the field. He has indicated the he would be happy to pay the same amount as last year and the Clerk was requested to send an invoice to Mr Waldock

CMJ

b) **Car Park Funding:** One quote had so far been obtained for construction of the splay:

The work had been divided into two phases . Phase 1 is the splay , the soakaway and the tarmac drive. Phase 2 is the stone on the car park . Richard Criddle has submitted a price for phase 1 as follows :- splay £5560 and tarmac by C J Lynch £3000-£3800.The total is about £9000. Phase 2 is £6790. Another quote was expected to be received next week.

TV / CB

It was understood that there may be possibility of financial contributions from CRASH, the festival, Village Hall and Gardens Open – these avenues of funding were to be investigated further.

There is £1,000 of s106 money being held for Stogumber by WSDC. It was unanimously agreed by the Council to apply to use this money for the car park construction work

JS/CMJ

District Councillor A Trollope-Bellew and County Councillor C Lawrence left the meeting at this point

12. Woolston Moor Bus Stops

The Clerk had received a request from Bicknoller Parish Council for money towards the repairs to the two bus stops at Woolston Moor. Although not in Stogumber they are used regularly by Stogumber residents and the Parish Council has contributed to wards their maintenance costs previously. The cost of materials for repairs was estimated to be £225, with the labour being provided for free by volunteers.

The Parish Council resolved to issue a grant (under powers given by s137, LGA 1972) for half the cost of repairs, £112.50, to Bicknoller Parish Council.

13. Finance

a) Bank Balances

Current account balance as at 1/3/16 is £3,176.55. Unpresented cheques £25, Unpresented bankings £1,250. Therefore actual balance (which includes play area funds of £702.66, defibrillator funds of £1450 and lunchclub funds of £350) is £4,401.55. Reserve account balance is £3,372.32. Therefore the total available balance is £5,271.21

b) Payments to approve

The following expenditures were all agreed and the appropriate cheques signed:

I. Clerk's salary (February and March)	£359.33
II. MHRC, Clerk' PAYE	£89.60
III. Clerk's expenses for March	£77.84
IV. C Moss, re-imburement for play area wood	£103.56
V. P Sawatzki & Sons, hedge trimming in Beacon Field (inc £18 VAT)	£108.00
VI. Bicknoller Parish Council, bus shelter repairs	£112.50
VII. Porter Dodson, legal fees re graveyard option (inc £150 VAT)	£900.00
cheque issued 12.2.16 (resolution agreeing payment passed Nov '15 meeting item 11)	

c) Audit Arrangements for Smaller Authorities

The clerk explained that, as long as the annual turnover of the Parish Council remained under £25,000, from 2017 the council would not be obliged to carry out an external audit. However, a decision had to be reached, covering the next five financial years, that if an external audit were to be necessary, whether to remain with the designated local authority auditors or to seek alternative arrangements. It

was unanimously agreed to remain with the designated auditors if an external audit proved to be needed in the next five years.

d) Review Asset Register

The asset list, correct as of 10/3/16 was prepared by the clerk and circulated. It was unanimously agreed that it was correct

e) Review Internal Controls Document

It was resolved to pass documents were given to CB for CB & CM to review before the end of March

CB & CM

f) Review Risk Management Document

It was resolved to pass documents were given to CB for CB & CM to review before the end of March

CB & CM

14. Transparency Code

The Clerk reported on work still needed to be achieved in order to be fully compliant with the code. There are grants available to Parish Councils to help them achieve compliance. It was resolved that when grants applications for 16/17 open the Clerk, in conjunction with John Leech (website operator) would formulate a bid for funds.

CMJ

15. Planning

a) 3/31/16/001 Capton Farm, Capton Lane, Stogumber

A site meeting on 6/2/16 resolved to support the cattery development (see minutes)

b) 3/31/16/002 Derby House, Station Road, Stogumber

Under delegated powers, the Clerk responded to WSDC supporting the retrospective application for change of use from shop to residential use.

c) CA/31/16/001 Tree work at Cridlands Steep, Vellow Road, Stogumber

This application has been passed by WSDC

d) 3/31/15/012 The Beacon Field, Station Road, Stogumber

This application has been passed by WSDC

16. Highways

a) Update

None

b) Any Issues to Report

i. Silverdown – recent gully work has occurred and the sides in filled with scalpings. It was felt that the scalpings have not been sufficiently compacted and will only be displaced back onto the road by vehicles / rain.

JS / CMJ

ii. Pot holes in Escott lane, between Vellow Road and Escott Farm

JS / CMJ

iii. Pot hole in Preston Lane, between Preston Farm and the junction at Wood

JS / CMJ

iv. Vellow Road to Higher Kingswood, mud has been deposited on the road by wide vehicles encroaching on the grass verge.

JS / CMJ

- v. Vellow Road, before the Escott turning. The hedge/ bank is being pushed down into the neighbouring field by vehicles pulling over onto the verge. It was suggested that permission was sought to erect a fence or for safety bollards be placed in the verge to prevent vehicles pulling over onto the verge and damaging the bank. JS / CMJ
- vi. Some finger posts have been repainted white but the lettering has not been picked out in black, making them illegible. JS reported he was going to attend a workshop on historic fingerposts and would report back to the council. JS

17. Defibrillator - update

The total required of £2,000 has been reached thanks to donations from parishioners. Thank you letters to all donors have been sent by JH on behalf of the Parish Council. Quotes are being sought for the electrical work required to enable installation, this may prove to be a little more expensive than the initial allowance of £200.

18. Annual Parish Council Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting

It was agreed that both to be held on May 12th in the Deane Close Common Room. The Annual Parish Meeting to commence at 7.30pm and the Annual Parish Council Meeting to follow on at approximately 7.40pm

19. Any other business by permission of the Chairman

Village Event notification – JS reported that there is a litter pick day being organised in the village on St Georges day, 23rd April 9-11am with coffee and cake in the village hall afterwards for participants.

The meeting closed at 21.30 p.m.

The next meeting, The Annual Parish Council Meeting, will be at 7:40pm on Thursday 12th May 2016 at Deane Close Common Room following on from the Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm.