

Minutes of the meeting of Stawell Parish Council held on Monday 7th December 2020 at 7.00 pm.

(Conducted via telephone conference call)

Present: - Cllrs. Penny Badcock, Hugh Gange-Harris, Brian Lishman (Chairman), Linda Osborne and Simon Thomas.

Also present: - Cllr. David Huxtable (SCC).

In attendance: - The Clerk (Chris Fry) and three members of the public.

1394 Apologies: - Cllr. Rod Conaway.

1395 Declarations of Interest: - Simon Thomas re "Stepping Out" item 1401 (a) below.

1396 Minutes of the last meeting of 2nd November 2020 were taken as read, agreed and signed.

1397 Matters arising from the minutes:-

a. Drainage problem in Sutton Mallet.

Both Brian Lishman and David Huxtable have visited the site of the problem. The spring water from Spring Farm is prevented from draining away, and Lawrence Hackling (SCC highways) is proposing to improve the water flow by diverting the surface water across the road and into the outfall ditch.

David Huxtable said he would check on progress and keep the Clerk updated.

1398 County Councillor's report: - David Huxtable reported as follows: -

a. Covid-19: -

David Huxtable said that Yeovil hospital would begin the mass vaccination process on Tuesday 8th December, with the over 80s and care staff being given priority.

District Councillor's report: - None.

1399 Financial Matters: -

Three cheques to issue: -

No 477 £36.50 payee DM Payroll Services (Payroll fee – 2nd half 2020/2021).

No 478 £240.00 payee C N Fry (Dec/Jan net salary).

No 479 £90.00 " HMRC (Paye Oct/Nov/Dec).

The Precept request (£4950) for 2021/2022 has been submitted.

1400 Planning –Two applications for consideration: -

a. Application number: - 46/20/00003/LR

Applicant: - Mr King.

Location: - 5 Ford Lane Stawell Bridgwater TA7 9AF.

Proposal: - Erection of a two storey to the side (south) elevation and single storey extension to the front (east) elevation on the site of existing outbuilding (to be demolished).

Brian Lishman said there were no objections recorded on the planning portal to date. Hugh Gange-Harris (immediate neighbour) confirmed that he had no objection to the proposal.

Brian Lishman described an apparent anomaly surrounding the route of the nearby footpath. He noted that the Footpath Officer was advising the applicants that the footpath requires diverting ahead of the start of any building work. He sought the consent of the parish council to his drawing up appropriate comments for the council to lodge with SDC planning department which are as follows: -

The Parish Council of Stawell supports application number 46/20/00003 and believes the plans as submitted do improve the property and have no detriment on other parishioners.

We do. However, object to the restriction requested by the Footpath Officer. The footpath system was passed into law by an Act of Parliament (National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1948), which became effective over a period of time by SCC in the early 1950s and the procedure used was to request the Parish Council to survey the designated paths, which were relayed to the County Council. The footpath in question was surveyed by a member of the Parish Council, who, I believe, was Mr E E Alford on 23d May 1951 and this was drawn on a map by the County Council. The map used by them was an Ordinance Survey map, 6" to the mile (1/10560), published in 1884. The survey remarks read as follows: -

Starting on the boundary of Bawdrip as a continuation of 2/43 and runs in a SE direction to the junction of 2/38 and to the junction of 2/39 and thence in a SE direction to Ford Lane (I have a carbon copy of the submitted survey). This was drawn on a map, I believe by the County Council. The line of the footpath is a lane, which, by the scale of the map is 30' by 40' wide, and is simply a line from the drawer's interpretation of the survey (in any case the footpath does not meet Ford Lane opposite the Grange, but is opposite a cottage at the bend in Ford Lane). At the time the Grange would be the most notable property in Ford Lane, approximately 100 metres from the meeting of 31/3.

The council homes were built many years ago. The Chairman of the Parish Council has seen a photo of numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4 being built, labelled 1948 (before the footpath order), and believed that number 5 would have been built at the same time. He has since been told that numbers 5, 6, 7 and 8 may have been built in 1958. In any case the County Council would have been responsible for this path for between 62 and 70 years, and have installed gates on this path, one of which is to the west of the car park and garage area of the council or former council houses in Ford Lane and then down to the southern boundary of number 5 Ford Lane. This is outside the boundary of the present application.

The Parish Council does not believe that, within the department responsible for footpaths, within SCC, a more correct map and details does not exist. The department has been responsible for looking after and ensuring its maintenance for, either since it was included on the definitive map, or for 62 years, depending on the date of the original build of number 5 Ford Lane. The appearance of the boundary would indicate that it is the original one put in place when the houses were built and the path 31/3 is down the outside of this boundary.

The Parish Council objects to the requirement being requested by the Footpath Officer on the application. We believe that if any official diversion is required, it should be the responsibility of her department.

b. Application number: - 46/20/00004/EC.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Lewis.

Location: - Flitchetts Farm Stawell Road Stawell Bridgwater TA7 9AU.

Proposal: - Change of use and conversion of existing storage building into a washing/laundry/dry room for the caravan park.

Brian Lishman said this “change of use” application has no impact on the footprint of the site itself. Following a discussion it was agreed unanimously that the following comments should be sent to SDC planning department: -

The Parish Council of Stawell supports this application and has no other comment to make.

1401 Correspondence: -

a. “Stepping Out” – Stawell village hall.

Simon Thomas opened this discussion by saying that the village hall committee had been approached by Sue Philcox to accommodate a “Stepping Out” group, probably starting in September 2021, to help young adults with learning difficulties. It is intended to limit the sizes of the groups to 10 young people, with 5 supervising adults at all times. The group is proposing to use the hall every day from 9am till 4pm, with the young people attending from 10am till 3pm, and will work around anyone currently using the hall (yoga and Zumba etc.), or applying to use it in the future.

Because of the possible impact on the village, Sue produced and distributed a flyer to each village household, so the community is fully aware of the proposal. No objections have been received. Sue attended the meeting and invited questions.

The main area of concern was that the group might be seen as monopolising the hall, which is, of course, a community facility. Sue assured everyone that the group would give priority to any existing or future bookings.

Both the Chairman and David Huxtable were concerned about this and Brian Lishman asked that Simon Thomas (Hall Chairman), keep the Parish Council abreast of any future feedback, and, on that basis, the proposal was duly noted.

b. Somerset Bereavement Support Services.

The Clerk read out an email from the Marie Curie Volunteers Support Officer, reminding us about the many people who are currently losing loved ones in difficult circumstances, and highlighting the Marie Curie free bereavement support service. For more information go to: -

www.mariecurie.org.uk

c. Census 2021.

The Clerk read extracts from an email from Jill Loader, who works as Census Engagement Manager for Somerset with the Office for National Statistics. Her role is to maximise completion rates for the next census, which is due to take place on 21st March 2021, by promoting the importance of this once-in-a-decade opportunity to gather a detailed “snapshot” of the population of Somerset. For more information go to: -

www.census.gov.uk

d. Somerset Wood update.

The Clerk outlined an email from David Fothergill, Leader of SCC and County Councillor for Monkton and North Curry, outlining progress to date. 2000 trees have so far been planted, and the next two zones for planting have been approved by Somerset West and

Taunton council. To date, £5950 has been donated following an appeal a couple of years ago to parish councils throughout Somerset, and will be used to maintain the trees for the next few years. The Somerset Wood commemorates the lives of the 11,281 men and women who left Somerset to serve their country in WW1, but sadly did not return.

e. Scam Calls

An email has been received from the SDC press office warning of a bogus scam supposedly from HMRC about arrears of tax, with the threat of further action being taken.

f. Christmas Travel Arrangements.

An email has been received from GWR about the usual restrictions at Christmas on the rail network.

g. Climate Emergency Strategy.

The SDC press office have advised us that the five Somerset councils have received the green light to implement the recent plan for Somerset to go carbon neutral by 2030. The full strategy can be reviewed at: -

www.somerset.gov.uk/climatestrategy

h. Sedgemoor – in Tier 2.

Government posters outlining the rules for Tier 2 have been displayed in both Stawell and Sutton Mallet. For more information go to: -

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

i. Sophisticated Email Scam.

A sophisticated email scam, designed to trick parish council Clerks' in to spending hundreds of pounds on Amazon vouchers was outlined. The Clerk said he wouldn't fall for it.

j. Stronger Somerset Poll.

It is claimed that Somerset residents are strongly in favour of the District councils' "Stronger Somerset" approach to future Unitary Authority set up. Brian Lishman said the Secretary of State was expected to decide on the way forward before Christmas.

1402 Matter for report and items for the next meeting: - None.

1403 Any other business and Date of the next meeting: -

Any other business: -

a. Fading road markings throughout Stawell and Sutton Mallet.

Simon Thomas suggested we should follow up on this problem, which was raised with SCC highways some time ago. The Clerk was asked to do this, including the request for "Slow" road markings on the A39 at the approach to the Ford Lane junction, in both directions.

b. Covid – 19 - Mass Vaccinations.

These are due to start on Tuesday 8th December, with Yeovil hospital being designated as a hub.

c. SDC Christmas car parking charges.

These are to be waived for the three weekends before Christmas.

d. Free spring bulbs from SDC.

These have been received and distributed to both Stawell and Sutton Mallet.

Date of the next meeting Monday 1st February 2021 2020 at 7 pm.

There being no other business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.58 pm.