

Minutes of the Annual Parish meeting of Stawell Parish Council held on Wednesday 19th May 2021 in the village hall at 7.00 pm.

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

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

1434 Apologies: - Cllrs. Rod Conaway, and David Huxtable (SCC).

1435 Declarations of Interest: - None.

1436 Chairman's report: Brian Lishman reported as follows: -

"I am reporting on the most extraordinary year in the history of Stawell Parish Council, and I will say a little more of the history in a moment.

I would like to start by thanking all the councillors and particularly the Clerk for all their work and forbearance during this difficult time.

We have not met for more than a year in person and this is our first meeting since the pandemic developed. We at first operated under devolved powers, in much the same way that Chairmen of Parish meetings operate where that form of democracy operates, but when it became clear that we were going to be under lock-down or similar arrangement we had to evolve a system of telephone or "zoom" meeting. In our case we used the telephone and I am most grateful to Councillor Simon Thomas for setting this up and acting as contact host for all of our meetings. We seem to have accomplished everything without too much trouble although it did test my hearing at times and we had very little participation from the general public. One or two did occasionally join the meetings but had little to say.

To our history: -

Not operating from any written documents, I believe this might be the 70th anniversary of the inaugural annual meeting of Stawell Parish Council incorporating the village of Sutton Mallet. Before that date each was a separate Parish, but I do not know in what form they operated, whether as a meeting or a full council. Perhaps our new, or now not so new Stawell history group could report to us in due course.

During the duration of the pandemic, many in the villages have risen to the occasion and helped each other and in many cases helped the community. Some will know who they are, others will not but to all our grateful thanks, and some of the work still continues. Particular thanks are due to Mike and Claire Brown who from the outset have been collecting prescriptions, taking them to the surgery, collecting them and ensuring swift delivery. This has been a very time consuming and responsible task. From us all, and particularly those who this helped, a very big thank you, and I should probably include our medical practice in this thank you.

I understand that within the Parish, social media was used a great deal with quizzes etc. Unfortunately I am not a participant but I understand many were very grateful for this community interaction. Thank you to all who organised this and to other similar actions.

I was conscious that during the lock-down a much increased use of our public footpath system was evident. Meeting walkers from afar was sometimes the only people we saw on the farm from one week to the next."

1437 Minutes of the previous meeting of 12th April 2021 were taken as read, agreed and signed.

1438 Matters arising from the minutes: -

a. Emergency Use Bollards.

Simon Thomas reported that five suitable bollards could be purchased for £54.99. Following a discussion a vote was taken (4/1 in favour), he was authorised to buy these on behalf of the Parish Council. These will be safely stored in the village hall storage shed along with the three already there. Simon kindly said he would take responsibility for distributing these for road safety purposes.

b. Poor state of the roads in Sutton Mallet.

The Chairman reported that the potholes outside the Nino's Farm area had been patched up.

c. Waste Bins.

The possibility of obtaining a waste bin for each parish (Stawell and Sutton Mallet) was discussed, following which a vote resulted in 4/1 against the idea.

1439 County/District Councillors' reports.

a. County: - in his absence David Huxtable submitted the following report: -

"Greetings,

We have all had a challenging year.

The County Council has redeployed over 600 staff to help with the Corona virus epidemic. During my regular monthly newsletters you will be aware of all the successes that we have achieved and I am sure you will join me in congratulating the staff involved. We have also been relying on "zoom" and Microsoft teams to keep our regular meetings going. Things that would have taken years to implement have been achieved in weeks. I would single out the cooperation that my area of responsibility, Adult Social Care, has had with the Health Authority. I always said that my biggest challenge was to integrate the two systems and, as we spoke a different language, this was difficult. Faced with this crisis both systems have integrated and we now have become nationally recognised leaders. We are fortunate that the boundaries of the current County Council are co terminus with our CCG and I hope that the current LGA reorganisation will not impact on our achievements.

Turning to local issues: -

We have tried to be proactive with Highways issues and currently have two outstanding. The road outside Spring Hill Farm and the drain under Ford Lane. I hope both will be attended to shortly.

As always I thank you for your efforts and look forward after so long to meeting in person.

Kind regards

David".

- b. **District:** - None.

At 7.35 pm the Chairman closed proceedings and opened the meeting to the public.

a. Possible planning breach at Sutton Mallet – mobile home at The Hay Barn.

The householder concerned was present at the meeting and outlined the background information. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council had a duty to report such matters to the appropriate authorities, and the matter is now in the hands of the SDC planning enforcement team.

b. Thanks to the Community.

A member of the public expressed the thanks of the entire community to the individuals who have gone out of their way to volunteer to deal with prescriptions, provide shopping services and litter pick.

The meeting was re-opened at 7.50 pm.

1440 Financial matters.

a. Unaudited accounts for the year ended 31st March 2021.

The Clerk handed out copies of the Receipts and Payments Account and a line by line examination took place, with questions invited. Total income at £4000.17 against expenditure of £3109.30, resulted in the balances increasing during the year by £890.87. There was no amenity grant to the village hall during the year as this was paid in advance the previous year along with further grant aid to assist with the hall kitchen refurbishment.

Questions were invited and the Chairman called for a proposal to adopt the accounts as presented and Hugh Gange-Harris proposed and Simon Thomas seconded the motion. All agreed.

b. Five cheques tom issue:

No 486 £150.00 payee Stawell Church (amenity grant).
No 487 £100.00 “ Sutton Mallet Church (amenity grant).
No 488 £173.27 “ CN Fry (May net salary).
No 489 £140.96 “ “ (expenses).
No 490 £54.99 “ Simon Thomas (road safety cones).

c. Accounting Statements 2020/2021 (Page 5 of the AGAR forms).

Adoption of the Accounting Statements 2020/2021 was proposed by Hugh Gange-Harris and seconded by Simon Thomas. All agreed.

The Chairman duly signed the appropriate AGAR form which the Clerk (Responsible Financial Officer) has previously signed.

The Internal audit will now take place, followed by the Period of Public Scrutiny and then the external audit.

1441 Planning.

No new applications.

- a. Possible planning breach in Sutton Mallet. – see public discussion section (a) above.

1442 Correspondence.

a. Census 2021 – Take up.

SDC have advised that 97% of Sedgemoor households have initially responded to the recent census.

b. RTL3 Chilton Polden funding application.

The Clerk reported on an application for RTL3 funding being made by Chilton Polden Playing Field Association to install additional outdoor gym equipment costing £12000. Application amount £5664.

Comments are invited by 7th June 2021. Following a discussion it was decided to make no comment.

c. Meet the team at SDC.

An email from SDC detailing new portfolio holders has been received.

d. Clerks' and Councils' magazine.

The Clerk has received the latest edition.

1443 Matters of report and items for next meeting – None.

1444 Any other business and date of next meeting.

Any other business.

a. Local poll on the future of local government in Somerset.

SDC have confirmed that ballot papers are due to be posted to invite the public to vote on the future reorganisation of local government in the county.

b. Innsmeade Lane Stawell – damage to the highway and drainage ditches.

A discussion took place, and it seems further improvement the efficiency of the drainage ditch.

Date of next meeting – Monday 7th June 2021 in the village hall.

There being no other business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.13 pm

