

Minutes of the meeting of Stawell Parish Council held on Monday 7th March 2022 in the village hall at 7.00 pm.

Present: - Cllrs. Penny Badcock, Phillip Jay, Brian Lishman (Chairman) and Linda Osborne.

Also present: - Cllrs. David Huxtable (SCC), Stuart Kingham and Duncan McGinty (SDC).

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

1521 Apologies: - Cllrs. Hugh Gange-Harris and Simon Thomas. Ian Graham (to be co-opted).

1522 Declarations of Interest: - None.

1523 Minutes of the previous meeting of 7th February 2022 were taken as read, agreed and signed.

1524 Matters arising from the minutes: -

a. Possible planning breach in Crengre Lane Stawell.

The Chairman reported that the landowner has spoken to the tenant who confirmed that a planning application is being prepared by Messrs Tamlyns. It is thought this application has now been submitted to SDC, although no advice has yet been received by the Parish Council.

b. Film work in Sutton Mallet.

The Chairman reported that £500 has been received from the film company into the Parish Council's bank account, and that this would be available for use towards an appropriate village event, possibly to mark HM Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022 and involving both Sutton Mallet and Stawell. He is expecting a further payment in respect of filming that took place on Church property.

c. Parish Council Vacancy

The Clerk reported that the vacancy caused by the resignation of Rod Conaway had been advertised as directed by SDC Electoral Services. He received confirmation on 8th February 2022 from SDC that no request has been received for an election to fill the vacancy, and steps should therefore be taken by the Parish Council to fill the vacancy by co-optation as soon as possible. One potential candidate has come forward, Mr Ian Graham who, although unable to attend tonight's meeting, has indicated to the Chairman that he is willing to be co-opted on to the Parish Council. This co-option was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Linda Osborne and received unanimous support.

The Clerk advised that a motion to delay the completion of the new member's declaration until the next meeting, and such a motion was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Linda Osborne and unanimously supported.

Parish Council Elections – 5th May 2022.

Parish Council elections have been brought forward by a year to coincide with elections to the new Unitary Authority on 5th May 2022. He handed out nomination packs to existing councillors and offered them to any member of the public who may be interested.

The Clerk has a limited number of Nomination Packs and they can also be obtained from SDC at its King Square offices.

The Notice of Poll is due to be published on Monday 21st March 2022 and nominations should be hand delivered to SDC's offices in King Square Bridgwater between that date and Tuesday 5th April 2022 at 4 pm. He advised that SDC staff would be on hand to check the validity of nominations if required.

1525 County/District Councillors' reports.

County: - David Huxtable reported as follows: -

a. Budget.

David reported that the full County Council passed what would be its final budget (ahead of the Unitary Authority being instigated), which involved a 1.99% general increase plus 1% for adult social care. The Central Government "one off" payment of £150 to every band A,B,C and D property's bill would have the effect of reducing bills in 2022/2023 to £90 pa below those of 2021/2022.

b. Boundary Commission review of Parliamentary Constituencies.

The Chairman raised this and was advised that any changes would be effective in time for the next national elections in 2024.

District: - Stuart Kingham reported as follows: -

a. Budget.

SDC has passed its 2022/2023 budget which would result in a £5 pa increase for a band D property.

b. Unitary Authority Legislative Timetable.

Stuart advised this will be as follows: -

9th March 2022 – Placed before the House of Lords.

14th March 2022 – Before the House of Commons.

5th May 2022 – Election Day.

25th May 2022 – the first Unitary Authority AGM.

At 7.22 pm the Chairman closed the meeting and invited public participation.

a. Possible planning breach at Crengue Lane Stawell.

A member of the public reported that two emails sent to the SDC enforcement team regarding local opposition to the activity to install equestrian facility at the site had gone unanswered. Duncan McGinty said he would look into this. Another parishioner said he believed there was a covenant in place to prevent loss of privacy.

The planning application mentioned in item 1524 (a) above will have the effect of regularising matters by considering all comments submitted by both the public and the Parish Council during the public consultation stage, in reaching a decision.

b. Central Government Bus subsidy.

A discussion took place on this matter.

At 7.36 pm the Chairman resumed the meeting.

1526. Financial Matters: -

Two cheques to issue –

No 512 £130.00 payee HMRC (paye Jan/Feb/Mar 2022).

No 513 £173.27 “ Mr CN Fry (March net salary).

1527. Planning – no new applications.

1528. Correspondence.

a. Poor Condition of Stawell Road heading west towards Chedzoy.

Hugh Gange-Harris sent an email to the Clerk concerning the poor condition of the road surface on the sharp left-hand bend at the bottom of the hill, leaving the village (heading west) on Stawell Road. He reports that the surface is split and rutted, thereby causing danger to walkers, runners and particularly cyclists.

The Clerk was asked to bring this to the attention of SCC Highways.

b. Defibrillator refresher training courses.

Hugh raised the possible need for a refresher course on how to use the defibrillator housed at the village hall, in order that someone at least knows how to operate the equipment. A parishioner feels it is not of much use otherwise.

A discussion took place during which it was pointed out that modern defibrillators were designed for use without the need for any training.

The Clerk was asked to check with the village hall committee Chairman that the equipment is fully accessible and in working order.

c. Footpath gate in Ford Lane.

A parishioner has emailed the Clerk to report on the poor and potentially dangerous condition of the gate to the footpath in Ford Lane where flooding regularly occurs. Access to the gate is impeded, with the ground below it having been eroded away. The parishioner's wife recently slipped and banged her head on the gate, causing concussion and a visit to A and E at Musgrove Park Hospital. Thankfully she has since made a complete recovery.

The Clerk was asked to report this problem via the online footpath portal.

1529. Matters of Report and Items for next meeting – none.

1530. Any Other Business and date of next meeting (5th April 2022).

Any Other Business.

a. Dead and dying swans on the King Sedgemoor Drain.

The Clerk has received an email from a Bawdrip parish councillor concerning the very distressing matter of swans dying on the KSD which forms the boundary between Chedzoy and Stawell. Both DEFRA and the RSPCA have been advised about the need for the carcasses to be removed.

b. Clerks' and Councils' Direct magazine.

The latest issue has been received.

Date of Next Meeting – Monday 5th April 2022.

There being no other business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 7.52 pm.