



## **LONG SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the parish council held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at 7.30pm**

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

**Members of the Public: 10**

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

The meeting started at 7.30pm.

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

A representative from Savills

Dan Yeates a Planning Consultant from Savills, and Alan Ringe, an architect provided a brief summary about their plans for land north of Crouds Lane. They have been appointed by the receivers to obtain formal permissions and sell the site and hope to focus on using the land and buildings to fulfil current housing needs. Members explained that there is a great deal of emotion connected to this site which historically has not been developed with the correct permissions in place. Cllr Rickards suggested that a public meeting\*\* or village-wide consultation would be a good starting point and could address the three main concerns for local residents which are drainage, traffic and the huge increase in the number of dwellings. Cllrs Rousell & Cox confirmed that a bigger meeting would be useful and offered to help with arrangements. The Chairman thanked them for coming and looked forward to hearing more in the future.

*\*\* Subsequent to the meeting and these minutes being written, a public meeting has been arranged, which will take place on **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm** in the Village Hall.\*\**

A member of the public (MOP) raised the issue of recent flooding and whether it had been made worse by hedge-cutting debris and road surface chippings blocking the drains. She also asked if the recent exposure of the reservoir had contributed. The Chairman confirmed that the poor quality of the road surfacing together with gully clearing would be raised at the meeting with Kier this week. The reservoir formerly belonged to Wessex Water, but is now privately owned, and recent work would not have added to the flooding issues, as the reservoir is empty. There was some discussion around the recent call for volunteers to form a Flood Group in Long Sutton and work together as the Knole Flood Group have, but it was agreed that no drain would have had the capacity to deal with the amount of rain that fell on 26<sup>th</sup> January, recorded as 3 inches in 3 hours.

#### **Somerset Councillors Report**

Cllr Kerley began by commending the parish on taking the lead with gully clearing. He confirmed the rise in council tax of 7.5% which will only stave off the inevitable next year. There is much debate currently about declaring a 114 notice, with opinion divided. Somerset as a county has the largest number of dementia cases, but not the largest budget, with 80% of council tax spent on Adult Social Care (ASC) and Special Educational Needs (SEN). The Chairman asked about the future of the



LCN's – Local County Networks. They were set up to try and coordinate and achieve economies of scale in the locality but aren't proving very effective. Cllr Kerley confirmed that their future was open to debate, but it was not straightforward.

Public session closed at 8.08pm & the meeting opened at 8.08pm

## **MINUTES**

### **24/152: Apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Pritchard.

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

### **24/153: Declarations of Interest.**

Cllr Wielgus declared a personal interest in Item 24/157(a) as the owner of Orchard Farm.

### **24/154: Minutes of the last meetings held on 7<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025 (LGA 1972sch12 para 41(1)).**

To receive and approve the [minutes of the meeting](#) held on 7<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> January as true and accurate records of those meetings.

It was RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the above meetings and the Chairman duly signed the minutes.

### **Matters Arising**

The WW1 silhouettes have now been delivered. The Chairman asked for an agreement on where they should be located be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

### **24/155: Finance**

- a. To approve the accounts for payment in February 2025.

It was RESOLVED to approve the accounts for payment for February 2025. Additional payments for Peter Tulk Construction to clear the ditch in Crouds Lane (as agreed at the December meeting) and the purchase of a new projector for the Village Hall (see item 24/159) were also approved.

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

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

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

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

- d. The submission of the formal precept request for 2025/'26 of £50,000 was confirmed by the clerk.



### **24/156: Somerset Council - Enhanced Highways Maintenance Scheme Pilot.**

Arrangements were confirmed for an in-person meeting with Kier, Cllr Tulk & the clerk taking place on 6<sup>th</sup> February to agree the most appropriate locations for the contracted gully clearing & jetting as previously agreed. Cllr Cox suggested Knightlands Lane and Crouds Lane should be prioritised. Cllr Rickards mentioned that some work had been carried out on Langport Road on 8<sup>th</sup> January & the clerk will ask for the associated report. Cllr Wielgus asked if it was more efficient to use the contractors in one area at a time rather than zig-zagging to various locations dictated by priority gullies. Cllr Tulk confirmed that advice would be taken from Kier.

County Cllr Kerley asked if he could join the meeting to observe & advise other local councils, and this was agreed.

### **24/157: Knole Flooding**

*The chairman invited members of the public to contribute in accordance with Standing Order 3(h): The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.*

- a. David Crawshaw reported that the SRA Grant application form has now been submitted online, and thanked Hamish Bradwell & the clerk for their work on this. He confirmed that mitigation measures taken so far helped to some extent last Sunday when 18mm of rain fell in just 40 minutes, and if successful, the grant to install the drainage pipe to take water from the north and east of Knole will also help a great deal.

The two remaining plans – Orchard Farm (increase a drainage pond and leaky dams) & the bridge raising – are subject to the Heritage Grant application. The initial expression of interest was unsuccessful but can be revised to cover the points in their advisory. It will be re-submitted next week.

The clerk is awaiting a response from the Legal Adviser at SLCC regarding the Heritage Grant application and the legality of the parish council supporting the application. Cllr Coombes had received potentially positive advice from the SALC which will be circulated to all members for information.

- b. Other flooding issues

The Chairman thanked Cllr Tulk for organising the work to clear the stream in Crouds Lane. He has asked the lengthsman to cut back hedgerows and verges that have overgrown gullies and there was a discussion around the installation of French drains in the Munday's Court area of Langport Road. Cllr Roussell asked if farmers could be asked to clear up some of the debris after hedge-cutting, and Cllr Wielgus suggested creating a map of the location of ditches that used to run throughout the village & perhaps reinstating some.

### **24/158: Licence Application**

Members had no objections to this application.



### **24/159: Village Hall and Recreation Ground**

Cllr Cox reported three items: £10k has been transferred to the parish council account for the pavilion fund; a new projector has been sourced and will be purchased by the parish council as part of the ring-fenced funding from the solar panels – he thanked Cllr Wielgus for his help with this matter. Finally, Cllr Rickards & Wielgus have made progress with the repair of the solar panel inverter which will be replaced under warranty. However, there is no delivery date yet.

### **24/160: Pavilion Refurbishment**

Cllr Cox reported that the container will be installed at the weekend. The Garfield Weston funding has been agreed in full despite being against a smaller budget. The aim is to have the work completed ready for the new season and the Chair will circulate a recent report to all members that he prepared for the Village Hall, cricket club & Clerk.

### **24/161: Risk Register Review**

Cllr Ward had reviewed the Risk Register and circulated a draft to all members. There hadn't been many changes, and high impact risk always remains residually high. Members approved the drafted document, and the Chairman asked the clerk to review the register every 6 months and notify members of any changes.

### **24/162: Policy Updates**

- a. Complaints Policy – The clerk had previously circulated an updated policy with minor amendments. Members approved the amendments and confirmed that it should be reviewed every two years.
- b. Press & Media Policy – The clerk had previously circulated a draft policy incorporating Cllr Wielgus' suggestions on social media. Members approved the policy. The clerk reminded members of the importance of using their dedicated parish council email addresses.
- c. Equality Impact Assessment - The clerk recommended that an Equality & Diversity Policy would be more appropriate for the council's purposes and was asked to prepare a document for the next meeting.

It was RESOLVED to adopt the Complaints and Press & Media policies.

### **24/163: Environment Group**

The Chair firstly thanked Cllr Rickards for all her work with the Environment Group, as she will be stepping back for a period of time.

Cllr Wielgus reported that a recent meeting had been very productive, a lot of trees have been offered, and there is a digital map of the field to accurately separate areas. The current plan is to



focus on one half of the field and grass take on the other half, until more volunteers are enlisted. A Simple Charter for the Long Sutton Nature Reserve (official name) has been drafted they and will be stepping up communications. The want to consult residents on their wants & needs for the field. He confirmed the following timetable:

- March - hedgerow planting down the middle of the field & installation of the access gate;
- April - wildflower planting on permissive footpath (aim to get the school involved);
- May/June - Nature Day & Environment Day (mustn't clash with half-term & other events that month – date to be confirmed)

#### **24/164: 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary VE Day Events**

Cllr Cox confirmed that several events are planned by FOLSC, the W.I, and Beacon lighting. He nominated Cllr Pritchard to keep the council updated.

#### **24/165: Communication: website and e-newsletter**

- a. Members agreed that the next newsletter should include the following matters: VE events; dates for Environment Group events; a scam warning; precept announcement; promoting the Annual Parish Assembly; local business mention.
- b. Members wanted to communicate to residents the reduction in the precept and a summary of PC achievements and responsibilities.

#### **24/166: Annual Assembly**

Members agreed the date of the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting as Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May. The clerk was asked to invite the local MP as a guest speaker and make a plan for other arrangements.

#### **24/167: Representative reports from councillors.**

- a. Community Safety (including the monthly crime statistics from Police.uk and the SID - Speed Indicator Device).  
Cllr Roussell reported that there had been 2 crimes in the village in November '24. The SID is currently in the village, and he will report on the data collected at the next meeting. He reminded members that signage must be kept visible otherwise the police cannot prosecute speeding offenders.
- b. Lengthsman  
Cllr Cox has asked the Lengthsman to check & clear grips around the village – these are the drains that need a spade to clear the verge area around them in order for water to reach them. If members spot any that need clearing, please let the clerk or Chair know.
- c. Highways and Footpaths – No report in Cllr Pritchard's absence.



**24/168: Other correspondence not previously distributed & Councillors' Comments**

- Fire alarm response consultation – dates for public meetings. The clerk to include details in the newsletter.
- Somerset Council's Flood report – clerk to submit reports for Shute Lane, Langport Road and Cross Lane.

**24/169: Date of next meeting.**

The next Parish Council meeting will take place on **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2025, at 7.30pm in the Committee Room of the Village Hall.**

**24/170: Agenda items for the next meeting.**

Equality & Diversity Policy

APM plan

Meeting closed at 9.31 pm

**END OF MINUTES**