



# Minutes of the Long Sutton Parish Council Meeting

## 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021, after the conclusion of the Annual Parish Meeting at 7:30pm

### Via the virtual platform Zoom.

#### **Present:**

Councillors Mr T Brand (Chairman), Mr G R Cox (Vice Chairman), Mrs R Coombes, Mr C Dowse, Mr R Fell, Mrs G Marffy, Mr N Rousell, Mr G Stoddart-Stones, Mr M Turpin.

South Somerset District Council (SSDC) Councillor Gerard Tucker.

Somerset County Council (SCC) Councillor Dean Ruddle.

On 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020, the Government introduced The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 to allow local councils to meet remotely.

There was one member of the public present, and two representatives from Wessex Internet to deliver a short presentation.

#### **The Public Session** opened at 7:40pm

The presentation commenced with a short history of broadband provision from Wessex Internet (WI) over the last three years. The focus is to be a leading broadband provider in this area, working with local farmers and businesses to enable the network to be built and installed. WI are working in Somerset, and Long Sutton is at the north west of the area covered. The government voucher system is used to provide the basis of take up of the service, and WI working with Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) who are contracted to provide full fibre to all properties in the area which are sub 30 Mbps.

The roll out of the provision will be in six phases, the details are to be finalised. A company is not required to facilitate administration of the scheme. There is currently a strong potential take up of residents in Knole. Work is likely to start in three to four months.

Public session closed at 7:53pm.

The meeting opened at 7:53pm.

#### **1 To receive apologies for absence (LGA 1972 S85 (1))**

All Councillors present.



**2 Declarations of interest**

None.

**3 Minutes of the meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021**

It was resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 as a true and accurate record.

**4 Matters arising from the minutes.**

None

**5 County Councillors Report**

Batts Lane Quarry does not appear on the agenda for SCC committee, but may appear in May. It is important to be vigilant, to be able to attend if appropriate. Cllr Ruddle has been watching for it appearing. SCC are duty bound to send notification when the application is due to be heard.

Grass cutting is due to start. A and B roads will start during the first week of May and June. C and unclassified roads will be June and July. The second cut will commence in August.

There are no County Council elections this year.

**6 District Councillors report**

Cllr Tucker commented that his report would be light. The Unitary debate continues. Cllr Tucker attended a site visit of the Knightlands planning application, to clarify the process.

Area North met in March, and will meet in April, predominantly overseeing grants. Recent grants awarded is for a land purchase proposition in Somerton, and two grants in South Petherton. Cllr Tucker recommended that Long Sutton must come forward if required to apply.

There are internal politics regarding the Unitary debate. It is probable there will be a referendum on Stronger Somerset and One Somerset, and an additional District Council meeting to discuss. Virtual platform meetings will cease after 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021, unless there is a change in legislation. District Council will continue with Microsoft Teams.

District Council in March had a useful presentation regarding recovery and renewal strategy processes and getting back on track – looking at community recovery.

A question was raised regarding consultation about a hedge, from planning at SSDC. Long Sutton Parish Council (LSPC) raised concerns regarding the location of the proposed hedge removal to create a gateway, which was both ignored and not registered on the planning portal. Since January 2021, there is less engagement at a



local level required, and this application does not fall within the remit of consulting a ward member for recommendation. There are more delegated powers at District level to expediate a decision.

This overall process will be reviewed in six months and hopefully there will be a need for a ward member to be involved in the future. Cllr Stoddart-Stones to draft a letter of protest at the process followed in this instance.

Question regarding the Community Development fund, and was it still in existence to apply for funding for a Neighbourhood Plan. There are some resources available to assist with planning. Suggestion for LS cricket club to apply for funding as well.

## **7 Planning Applications:**

### **7.1 New Planning Applications received:**

**21/00687/HDG Application to carry out removal works to 6m of hedgerow.** The Parish Council responded with concerns to the proposed location of the removal, proposing an alternative location, which was neither acknowledged nor responded to. Decided (1/4/2021).

**Application 21/000525/HOU Long Acre Crouds Lane Long Sutton.** Erection of a two-storey side extension, a single storey rear extension and a replacement detached garage (*Considered between meetings, no objections*).

### **7.2 Update on ongoing planning applications:**

Batts Lane Quarry: There should have been a Regulation Committee meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021 which has been postponed due to the current phosphate issue. Outside organisations are being consulted, which is causing a delay. It could be months before the planning application is heard.

Little Upton Bridge Farm: No further information, under the appeals process.

21/00171/HOU Westley Cottage, Langport Road, Long Sutton TA10 9NB. Single Storey Side Extension. Permitted with conditions (15/03/2021).

21/00162/COL 1 Rowley Cottages, Hermitage Road, Long Sutton TA10 9NP. Certificate of Lawfulness for the existing use of a Historic access and egress to Hermitage Road. Decided (06/04/2021).

Application 21/00054/REM: Land South of Bineham City Cottage, Bineham Lane, Long Sutton. Reserved Matters application following Outline approval of 19/02283/OUT. Awaiting decision.

20/01884/S73A & 20/02036/S19 Stuckeys House The Green, Long Sutton, TA10 9HS. Application to vary conditions 2 of 17/01479/FUL and 17/01480/LBC to install a smart heritage window system instead of crital. Awaiting decision.



21/00069/HOU The Old Forge, Cross Lane, Long Sutton TA10 9LR. Erection of Detached Oak Framed Garage. Awaiting decision.

Application 21/00137/FUL: Land adjacent to Knightlands, Knole Causeway, Long Sutton. The erection of a new dwelling, car port and vehicle access. Awaiting decision.

## **8 Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee (VH&RGC)**

### **8.1 Matters brought forward by the committee.**

The refurbishment work at the village hall will commence next week, funded by the grant from Viridor. The refurbishment includes air conditioning installation, LED lighting, ground heat source pump and general painting and decorating. The elections due to take place at the beginning of May will commence in the Committee room.

The grant application for the battery system for the solar panels was not successful.

The annual playground inspection is due, and the maintenance is to continue. There is to be a grant funding application to extend the play area.

The concerns regarding the hall being closed, and legionella, have been addressed.

The solar panel cleaning works have been scheduled from the middle of April.

### **8.2 Replacement of the emergency exit door.**

The door requires some work. There is a shortfall in the funding bid awarded, and an alternative source of funding for this issue is to be sought. Suggestions were made for the VH&RGC to consider whilst further funding was being explored.

### **8.3 Marking of car parking spaces.**

Further to the successful planning application and the opening of the village shop, the car park requires marking and a bicycle rack needs to be installed. Cllr Cox has sourced a bicycle rack and arranged for the rack to be installed when the footpath is installed over the grass verge. A quote has been obtained for the car park marking, but further quotes are to be obtained before.

It was resolved to place the order for the bicycle rack, to ensure that it is available for installation.

## **9 How best to support village projects?**

Funding requests have been received from various village organisations during the year. It is important to be fair when considering applications for funding. A recommendation by the internal auditor recommendation (in the next agenda item) is to consider introducing a grant funding policy which can include criteria such as applications to be submitted twice a year to LSPC for consideration.



The clerk is to provide a draft grant funding policy at the next meeting for consideration, and for LSPC consider introducing a grant budget next year. The introduction of a grant awarding policy will be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting, as to whether it an appropriate or desired policy to be adopted.

## **10 Finance**

### **10.1 To approve balances and accounts for payment.**

| <b>Payments April 2021</b>                 | <b>Credit £</b> | <b>Debit £</b> | <b>Balance £</b> |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Balance b/fwd from April meeting           |                 |                | 23,879.38        |
| Allotment rent received                    | 255.00          |                | 250.36           |
| Allotment rent received                    | 510.00          |                |                  |
| Allotment rent received                    | 765.00          |                |                  |
| Grant paid, as agreed in the March meeting |                 | -1500.00       |                  |
| Cosmic website hosting and SSL certificate |                 | -120.00        |                  |
| Bank charges January to March 2021         |                 | -18.00         |                  |
|                                            | 1530.00         | -1638.00       | -108.00          |
| Balance agreed to statement 31 March 2021  |                 |                | 23,771.38        |
| <b>Accounts for payment April 2021</b>     |                 |                |                  |
| Clerk salary (March 2021)                  |                 | 333.27         |                  |
| Howe Tree Surgery (CWS)                    |                 | 656.25         |                  |
| HMRC re clerks salary (March)              |                 | 83.20          |                  |
| Timeback accounts payroll (March)          |                 | 5.00           |                  |
| B Bowen Internal Auditor                   |                 | 300.00         |                  |
|                                            |                 | 1377.72        | 1377.72          |
| <b>Balance after April payments</b>        |                 |                | <b>23,879.38</b> |

It was resolved to approve the payments as listed above.

### **10.2 To receive the internal auditor report.**

The internal audit took place at the end of March and the report received had been previously circulated to councillors. As previously stated, one of the recommendations was to consider the introduction of a grant funding policy. The method of authorising payments was overviewed. The recommendation is that all invoices for payment are forwarded to the two councillors authorising payments, for viewing and confirmation, whilst the council continues to meet remotely.

It was noted that LSPC is not acting as the sole managing trustee of the Village Hall, as running the hall is delegated to the VH&RGC. The clerk could not find grounds to disagree with this finding. This needs to be reflected in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

It was resolved to receive the report and to note the recommendations.



**11 Representative reports and any other matters regarding:**

**11.1 Community Safety**

**11.1.1 Monthly Crime Statistics from the Police.uk website**

The local police have been invited to the meeting, or to submit a report. The statistics from the police.uk website show one incident of antisocial behaviour in the Upton area in February 2021.

**11.2 Community Warden Scheme (CWS).**

Clarification regarding the relocation of the main parish noticeboard to the wall of the village hall. The pump track refurbishment does not require input from the lengthsman. The question of the lengthsman contract was raised, and the clerk suggested that an increase of rate be discussed as an In Camera item at the May 2021 council meeting. The lengthsman is happy to assist with footpaths and stiles, but the grass cutting in the parish takes a great deal of time.

Replacement of stiles with galvanised gates was discussed, and for LSPC to consider a rolling programme of replacing stiles with gates, whilst working with the landowner. It is up to the landowner to approve the type of access on their land.

**11.3 Highways.**

None.

**11.4 Footpaths.**

An update was received regarding an additional waste bin by the village shop. SSDC have visited the village and suggested the relocation of the bin currently by the village green, to the village shop, as there currently there are two bins there. This would ensure that the regular emptying of the bin remains on the SSDC schedule. It was resolved to instruct SSDC to relocate the bin to the location as suggested.

**12 Other correspondence not previously distributed:**

None

**13 Date of next meeting:**

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 7:30pm via the Zoom platform. This meeting is the Annual Parish Council meeting.



**14 Items for the next meeting agenda.**

The AGAR needs to be agreed.

Currently virtual meetings are not permitted after 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021. To discuss how LSPC are going to conduct meetings.

To consider the Unitary council debate and whether LSPC has preference to One Somerset or Stronger Somerset proposals.

**Meeting closed at 9:00 pm**

**End of minutes.**