



Minutes of Long Sutton Parish Council

2nd February 2021 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, 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 4th 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 were 5 members of the public present.

The Public Session opened at 7:30pm.

A member of the public present raised the issue of the stream and hedge at Crouds Lane. SCC Highways will not address the condition of the area as it is the responsibility of the property owner. The property owner has documentation to state that it is the responsibility of SCC. To be discussed later in the meeting.

Other members of the public raised the issue of an alleged breach of planning near to their property. This has been escalated to SSDC Planning department. Aside from the alleged planning breach, construction works are taking place outside stipulated times for commencement and end of such works, and at the weekend, which is causing a nuisance. The residents would welcome completion of the works, but in line with previous planning consent. A request was made for a Stop Notice to be issued.

The frustration experienced when contacting Planning to raise this issue was highlighted, as notification is by the website portal only. The question was raised that the Parish Council should write further to District Executive to request urgent action by SSDC. The Parish Council must liaise with the Planning Authority and cannot take any direct action.

Cllrs Tucker and Ruddle agreed to escalate this matter directly with SSDC. There are a number of construction works at a few sites in this location and it is important to be precise when reporting the alleged breach. Should any action or timescale be deemed insufficient, the next recourse is the Planning Ombudsman in London, and to copy in the local MP.

The public session concluded at 7:45pm.

The meeting opened at 7:45pm.



1 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Coombes who is unwell. It was resolved to accept and approve the apologies.

2 Declarations of interest.

None.

3 Minutes of the meeting 5th January 2021.

An incorrect figure had been quoted in the payments list on the draft minutes published on the website and circulated to councillors. The figure should have read £26256.55 and not £22656.55 as stated. It was resolved that the minutes are a true record of the meeting held on 5th January 2021, with this alteration as stated, and will be signed by Cllr Brand when the Parish Council next meets in person.

4 Matters arising from the minutes.

None

5 County Councillors Report

Cllr Ruddle confirmed that the Batts Lane Quarry application is not listed on the February Regulation Committee agenda and will possibly be heard in the March meeting. It is important that Councillors and residents attend if possible, to be heard by the committee.

Audit committee found that Highways officers were authorising duplicate payments to a contractor for a considerable period of time. The accounts cannot be signed off due to the valuation of assets not being accurate. In previous years, this figure has been a guess. There is £9.5 million in reserves for resilience and COVID related issues.

6 District Councillors Report

Cllr Tucker gave details of a complex report regarding the ongoing phosphate issue and how planning applications are being affected. There has been a request for a less technical version to make the report more accessible. To summarise:



- Natural England report in mid 2020 stated that the build-up of phosphates on the Somerset Levels needs to stop.
- A phosphate credit system to be introduced. Developers will buy credits to offset the phosphates produced as a result of new building.
- The phosphate calculator is specific to each Parish therefore each area is set at a different.
- The whole process appears to be in favour of the larger developer. The smaller developer will be less able to compete.
- The proposed system favours development, with no further details about what happens regarding agriculture. The system applies to an increase in dairy and agricultural buildings.
- There are currently 4300 planning applications county wide that cannot be determined due to this situation.
- The intention is for the credit system to be started in May this year, with the planning system returning to normal by autumn this year.
- Cllr Tucker recommends waiting to see how this affects Long Sutton Parish.
- Cllr Tucker has requested a more accessible format of the report to create ease of understanding.
- The concern is that the delays that the introduction of the system is creating, will mean that larger planning applications could request a refund of any planning fees paid.

Further concerns not related to the phosphate issue. The report 'Planning Reimagined' will see any large planning application referred straight to Regulation committee and will not be heard by local authority, which gives a more balanced view for the community. It is also unlikely that any householder application will be addressed by delegated powers or ward member input. This is a cause for concern, as a planning officer can be brought in from outside of the area, with no local knowledge. Further discussion of this point raised the importance of local knowledge, and also that the role of the elected member should stay strong.

7 Planning Applications

7.1 New Planning Applications received:

**Application: 21/00069/HOU The Old Forge, Cross Lane, Long Sutton, T10 9LR.
Erection of a detached oak frame garage.**

This application for an oak framed garage is not contentious and similar in scale and design to another one recently approved. Access is considered problematic, but if Highways consider visibility to be within the agreed limits then no further issues. It was resolved to support this application, but to mention the consideration of the access.



Application: 21/00171/HOU Westley Cottage, Langport Road, Long Sutton TA10 9NB. Single Storey Side Extension.

The design is in keeping with the rest of the property. The parking is a little tight but does not look problematic. It was resolved to support this application.

7.2 Update on planning applications received if applicable:

Application: 20/01884/S73A Stuckey's House, The Green, Long Sutton, TA10 9HS.

Vary condition 2 or approval 17/01749/FUL to install smart heritage windows instead of crittal. Awaiting decision.

Application: 20/02036/S16 Stuckey's House, The Green, Long Sutton, TA10 9HS.

Vary condition 2 or approval 17/01489/LBC to install smart heritage windows instead of crittal. Awaiting decision.

Application: 20/02850/FUL The Recreation Ground, Martock Road, Long Sutton.

Replacing the existing cricket nets. Awaiting decision.

APP/R3325/W/20/326373. The appeal has been lodged for Little Upton Bridge Farm (19/02460/FUL). No further information to date.

8 Village Hall and Recreation Ground (VH&RGC)

8.1 Matters brought forward by the committee.

The village hall is experiencing no financial difficulty during this lockdown. SSDC are providing grants to ensure financial stability. Currently there are three grant applications in progress: four electric car charging points, two battery packs to make more use of the energy generated by the solar panels, and a larger application for green energy upgrade. There is also grant funding being sought to refurbish the play area at the Recreation Ground.

As a result of updated guidance, the play area is to be reopened. Additional signage is to be erected, to highlight the need to use hand sanitiser, and to exercise care.

The tennis courts need professional attention, and a contractor has been commissioned.

The noticeboard is to be relocated from the old village shop to the village car park area, either onto the village hall, or to be freestanding on posts. The location previously proposed is no longer suitable as the intention is to place an electric car charging point instead. After considerable discussion, and against the wishes of one councillor, it was resolved to erect the noticeboard onto posts, facing inward to the car park, once the new steps are in place.

8.2 Play Equipment.

A short report was circulated to the Parish Council overviewing the play equipment and the reopening of the play area for use. Sanitising the area was a concern, as was the inspection regime.



There is no set regime for inspections, but after some discussion the following regime was suggested: that the area is given a routine overview on a weekly basis, reporting to the clerk. The clerk will inspect monthly (once training due in March, has been undertaken), and a formal annual inspection to take place once a year, arranged by the VH&RGC. It was resolved to adopt this inspection regime, and for the Parish Council to work with the VH&RGC. It was further resolved to commit the CIL monies received to be purposed towards addressing the immediate maintenance issues, with any surplus to be put towards replacing the equipment that is the most tired (as recommended in the report).

9 **Finance.**

9.1 **Payments to be agreed.**

It was resolved to agree the payments as listed below.

Details	Credit £	Debit £	Balance £
Balance brought forward from January 2021 meeting			26256.55
Balance agreed to bank statement 27 January 2021			26256.55
Accounts for payment February 2021			
Clerk salary (January)		333.27	
Howe Tree Surgery (CWS) (January)		656.25	
HMRC re clerk salary (January)		83.20	
Timeback accounts payroll (January)		5.00	
Clerk expenses: Office 365 annual subscription		59.99	
Cllr Rousell: refund padlock for Speed Indicator Device (an addition to the circulated list)		37.70	
Total		1175.41	-1175.41
Balance after February payments			25081.41

9.2 **To review the Parish Council asset register**

The Parish Council asset register was reviewed as presented. The solar panels on the village hall, as discussed last month, needed to be added to the register. Even though they are on the roof of the village hall, the Parish Council purchased them originally and are responsible for any maintenance. The asset register will need to be rested when the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) is submitted.



10 Representative reports and any other matters

10.1 Community Safety.

10.1.1 Monthly Police Report. In December there were three incidents (theft) as reported on the Police.uk website.

10.2 Community Warden Scheme. No issues to report.

10.3 Highways.

The ditch at Crouds Lane needs to be addressed. The issue is that debris from overhanging trees will continue to clog up the ditch, when cleared, unless the trees are also cut back. This is the property owner's responsibility. After some discussion, Cllr Fell agreed to speak with the property owner to attempt to instigate appropriate actions.

The Speed Indicator Device is now situated at the Martock Road location.

10.4 Footpaths.

A resident in Tengore Lane has been addressing the litter problem in that area, on the road. Further correspondence has been received regarding the litter in Long Sutton, and issues in other areas of the parish which include dog mess, stiles requiring maintenance, and also to highlight pressure on footpaths with people walking now encroaching into crops. Cllr Cox has provided a short text for the Parish Newsletter with regards to not dropping litter and cleaning up after their dog. The Parish Council will survey the footpaths in the spring, and work with the lengthsman to address any maintenance issues.

11 Other correspondence not previously distributed. None.

12 Date of next meeting.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 2nd March 2021 at 7:30pm via the Zoom virtual platform.

Current guidance remains in place, and the Parish Council will continue to meet remotely. Face to face meetings at the village hall will recommence only when guidance permits.

13 Any other business to be raised at the next meeting.

Grant request from the Cricket Club for a contribution towards a replacement mower. The culvers from Knole to Bineham need to be cleared, as flood water is eroding the causeway.

Earmarking of reserve funds.

Neighbourhood/Parish Plan to be discussed.

Councillor Brand announced his intention to step down as Chairman and as a councillor after the meeting in May 2021.

Meeting closed at 8:57pm.