

# OVER STOWEY PARISH COUNCIL

## OVER STOWEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

### Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on September 20th 2023

Please note that these minutes are draft until approved at the  
October 18th 2023 Meeting of the Parish Council

Present: Parish Councillor

P. Tully  
K. Barrow  
G. Goddard  
B. Bartlett  
D. Peaster  
R. Curtis  
T. Lindley

Somerset Councillors

M. Caswell (until 8.10pm)

#### 1. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Bolt

#### 2. Members of the Public:

Two members of the public were in attendance. One re item 5.a. and one re item 5.b.

#### 3. Declarations of Members Interests in Respect of Items on the Agenda

Cllrs Tully, Barrow and Lindley declared an interest in item 6.e.i.

#### 4. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on July 19<sup>th</sup> 2023

**Proposed:** Cllr Barrow      **Seconded:** Cllr Goddard

#### 5. Correspondence:

##### a. Email received re damage to item on a grave at the cemetery

- A member of the public spoke regarding this item and after a discussion by the members, it was proposed that Cllrs Peaster and Barrow would speak to the contractor to ensure they only trim the grass up to a foot around the grave and that the family will maintain the area within this

**Proposed:** Cllr Bartlett      **Seconded:** Cllr Curtis

##### b. Emails received re two broken stiles

- A member of the public spoke to explain their concerns regarding two stiles on the Public Right of Way BW26/1(TO CHECK)
- It was noted that one of the stiles has been repaired
- It was asked if to improve accessibility would metal kissing gates be considered by the landowner and the Public Rights of Way Department

- It was proposed that the Clerk contact the PROW Department with evidence provided to consider the above

**Proposed:** Cllr Lindley      **Seconded:** Cllr Curtis

**c. Parishioner complaint re low flying helicopters**

- Cllr Caswell explained that he had previously looked into this for another parish and that the area is a designated low flying zone for military training. Therefore any military aircraft can fly at lower heights throughout the zone
- It was proposed by Cllr Barrow that the complainants are made aware of the contact details available to report any incidents that they have concerns about

**Proposed:** Cllr Curtis      **Seconded:** Cllr Goddard

The Clerk will action this.

**6. Items for Discussion:**

**a. Parishioner request for extension of the previously agreed handrail at the cemetery**

- There are concerns that if there is a handrail all the way up to the arch this will cause access issues for maintenance and pallbearers
- It was proposed that the handrail is only installed as agreed at the July meeting on the right-hand side of the steps from the porch

**Proposed:** Cllr Barrow      **Seconded:** Cllr Peaster

Cllr Peaster will also contact a local contractor for an initial cost and report back at the October meeting.

**b. Grounds maintenance contract review update**

- One quote has been received and the Clerk is waiting for other contractors to respond
- Further information should be available for the October meeting.

**c. Somerset Council update – Cllrs Caswell**

- The financial situation for Somerset Council was discussed and will be fully considered when planning the budget and setting the precept for the parish
- Cllr Caswell updated the members on the most recent LCN meeting. Cllr Caswell stated that it was not as well attended as the first one and as they are here to stay, engagement is important to ensure any issues that parishes have can be raised and addressed
- Following online meetings that the Clerk has attended and feedback from Cllr Caswell it has been made very clear by Somerset Council that there is very little funding available for anything but statutory obligations. Therefore any issues or projects that the Parish Council were considering that are not a statutory obligation will be put on hold for the foreseeable future

**d. Highways issues updates**

- Signage at Plainsfield – see item 6.c.3.
- Quantock Lane traffic calming request – see item 6.c.3.

- iii. Signage (sharp bend) request re long vehicles for road through Over Stowey (from Crowcombe) - ongoing
  - iv. Update from site visit by Highways (undertaken September 2021) – ongoing
  - v. Safety issues at Marsh Mills crossroads
    - A number of issues are still outstanding
  - vi. Update on reports made re STOP sign
    - It has been queried whether it a legal obligation for the Highways Department to provide clear and obvious signage at this junction. A response has not yet been received
  - vii. Review of rules regarding walking of dogs on public highways
    - Awaiting response from the dog warden
  - viii. Overgrown trees/hedgerows on South Lane
    - Work has taken place on this stretch of the road. Confirmation on whether the additional work necessary has taken place will be reviewed at the October meeting
  - ix. Verge cutting (service currently provided by Somerset Council)
    - This was discussed at the September 2023 LCN meeting with a view to Over Stowey Parish Council and other parishes if they wish, taking over the service from Somerset Council. Cllr Caswell is awaiting a response as to the current budget allocated to this by SC
  - x. Hedge cutting (landowners responsibility)
    - This is an ongoing concern with councillors
    - It was proposed that Cllrs Peaster, Tully and Barrow meet to discuss the options and to produce a letter to be distributed to landowners with suggestions on how landowners may be able to more easily undertake hedge cutting of their boundary in a cost-effective way
- e. Possible projects for the parish
- i. Potential donation request/s for work/projects at the Village Hall and Recreation Ground
    - A donation/grant request for £5000 towards the refurbishment of the social club area of the Village Hall was submitted. This amount has been matched with funds already raised by the Over Stowey Village Hall and Recreation Ground Committee
    - As Cllrs Tully, Barrow and Lindley declared an interest in this item, they were required to leave the room whilst the request was reviewed
    - Cllr Curtis was nominated as the Chair as Cllr Tully had to stand down for this item. Cllr Curtis agreed to stand in

**Proposed:** Cllr Goddard      **Seconded:** Cllr Peaster

- The remaining councillors then reviewed the submission and it was agreed that a grant for the full amount under the Powers and Duties of Parish Councils – Community Centre’s (Power to provide and equip community buildings) LGA 1972, section 133 be granted
- The funds will come from the Downing Legacy reserve which was an amount bequeathed to the parish in 2015 for the ‘general purposes of Over Stowey Parish Council’  
**Proposed:** Cllr Goddard      **Seconded:** Cllr Bartlett
- ii. Update re Kings Coronation plaque at Bincombe Green
  - The plaque is due to be placed soon and the invoice should be available for the October 2023 meeting
- iii. Update re plaque for Over Stowey Recreation Ground
  - Cllr Tully will confirm the measurements with the Clerk and quotes can then be obtained

## 7. Matters arising for the Agenda for the October 2023 meeting

- a. Budget planning
- b. Confirm date for the December 2023 meeting
- c. Hedge cutting – report from Cllrs Tully, Barrow and Peaster
- d. Clerk’s request for overtime payment to consider

## 8. Planning applications:

- a. Planning updates:
  - Applications 40/23/00005 and 40/23/00006 are both still under consideration
- b. Agree resolution for a confidential session for item 8.c. below  
**Proposed:** Cllr Barrow      **Seconded:** Cllr Lindley
- c. Potential breaches of planning
  - One possible breach has been reported and is being followed up, another has been discounted and a further possible breach has been reported to the Parish Council. It was proposed that the Clerk informs the planning enforcement department at Somerset Council  
**Proposed:** Cllr Lindley      **Seconded:** Cllr Bartlett
- d. Planning applications
  - There were no planning applications to review

## 9. Personnel:

- The Clerk will be attending the SALC Finance/Budget Setting training at the beginning of October. SALC will not be charging for this course
- The Clerk will submit an overtime claim at the October meeting for review by the members

## 10. Financial Matters:

- a. Financial update
  - See appendix below
- b. Agree transfer from Business Reserve Account to Current Account if donation request/s agreed
  - See item 6.e.i.

**Proposed:** Cllr Goddard

**Seconded:** Cllr Peaster

### c. Payments

i.	Clerks Wages	September 2023	305.00
ii.	Donation	OS Village Hall and Recreation Ground	5000.00
iii.	Mobile phone contract	D/D August 2023	<u>26.25</u>
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£5331.25</b>

**Proposed:** Cllr Peaster

**Seconded:** Cllr Goddard

## 11. Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 7.00pm, to be held at Over Stowey Village Hall

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 8.35pm

Amanda McMurren - Clerk to Over Stowey Parish Council

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**Signed:**

**Dated:**