

OVER STOWEY  
PARISH COUNCIL

**OVER STOWEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on December 20th 2023**

**Please note that these minutes are draft until approved at the  
January 17<sup>th</sup> 2024 Meeting of the Parish Council**

Present: Parish Councillor P. Tully  
K. Barrow  
G. Goddard  
B. Bartlett  
D. Peaster  
R. Curtis (from 7.05pm)  
T. Lindley

Somerset Councillors

**1. Apologies for Absence:**

Cllrs Caswell and Bolt

**2. Members of the Public:**

Six members of the public were in attendance re item 6.a (agenda revised by the Chair to allow discussion to take place prior to other items) and one re item 7.a.

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

None declared

**4. Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on November 15th 2023**

**Proposed:** Cllr Goddard      **Seconded:** Cllr Bartlett

**5. Minutes of the Special Planning Meeting held on November 29<sup>th</sup> 2023**

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

**6. Correspondence:**

a. Request from members of the public received to comment on the new sign at Plainsfield

- Six members of the public were in attendance re this item. It was questioned why a new sign had been erected on the bank by the pond when there had been no consultation on this
- There are major concerns regarding the safety aspect due to the size and reflective nature of the sign at night when driving towards it

- It was requested that the sign be removed as soon as possible as the majority of the residents of the hamlet do not feel the need for or wish for a sign to be in place
- The Clerk explained that Highways had been asked about possibilities for signage within the Parish for safety reasons and to highlight locations
- A site meeting had taken place and the Parish Council were waiting for design suggestions to be made available to consult with local residents before a final decision was made
- The Parish Council had not been notified that the sign design had been agreed and would be installed
- It was proposed that the Clerk contact the relevant authority to request that the sign is removed as soon as possible

**Proposed:** Cllr Lindley

**Seconded:** Cllr Peaster

**b. Message received re new reflective posts at Marsh Mills crossroads**

- There are concerns about the new posts which have been installed to warn people of the crossroads at Marsh Mills as they are obstructing the mirror
- It was proposed that the situation is monitored by the Parish Council and reviewed at the January meeting

**Proposed:** Cllr Goddard

**Seconded:** Cllr Lindley

**c. Information received from website provider re domain name provision**

- The Clerk has been researching suitable companies to provide a gov.uk website domain as this is now required
- Parish Online in association with SALC are able to provide a new website and support, with the expertise necessary to undertake this
- It was proposed that the Clerk confirm with them that the Parish Council would like them to provide the services required

**Proposed:** Cllr Peaster

**Seconded:** Cllr Barrow

*Resolved unanimously*

## **7. Correspondence:**

**a. Somerset Council update – Asset and Service Devolution**

- The Clerk listed the items that Somerset Council are reviewing prior to the setting of their budget in January and February 2024
- Concerns with taking over any of these services include capacity, cost and liability
- A member of the public was in attendance to update the Parish Council on land assets
  - Quantocks National Landscapes (previously the AONB) are taking over New Stowey Farm
  - Stowey Woods is an ancient woodland and it is hoped that this will ensure that Somerset Council protect the location
  - Further updates will be made as and when available

**b. Grounds maintenance contract to consider**

- It has been asked if some additional works could be included in the contract, however there is an item in the contract that allows for other works to be undertaken if required. Therefore, no changes are necessary

**c. Cemetery steps handrail quote**

- The contractor has been in contact with the Clerk and has provided an estimate by email £300
- It was proposed that this estimate is accepted

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

**d. Highways updates**

- i. Feedback re review of rules regarding walking of dogs on public highways
  - The Clerk confirmed that the Highway Code states under Rule 56:

**Dogs.** Do not let a dog out on the road on its own. Keep it on a short lead when walking on the pavement, road or path shared with cyclists or horse riders

This item is now closed

- ii. Feedback re stiles on PROW BR26/1

- The Public Rights of Way Department have confirmed that the stiles have been replaced like for like and that kissing gates will not be installed
- Cllr Tully will inform the complainant

This item is now closed

- iii. Overgrown trees/hedgerows on South Lane

- This work has not yet been undertaken – Cllr Peaster will meet with the contractor to confirm which section still need to be cut back

- iv. Verge cutting – no discussion took place

- v. Hedge cutting

- An email has been received stating that New Stowey Farm will come under the Quantocks National Landscapes ownership and once the transfer from Somerset Council is complete, hedges will be cut back

- The Parish Council will monitor this to ensure work is undertaken

- vi. Request for Forestry England to clear ditch in Friarn

- It was proposed that the Clerk contacts Forestry England regarding this request

**Proposed:** Cllr Curtis

**Seconded:** Cllr Bartlett

**e. Possible projects for the parish**

- i. Update re plaque for Over Stowey Recreation Ground

- Cllr Curtis will take the revised layout and wording to one of the companies to request this option at an acceptable cost to the parish before the January 2024 meeting

