

## KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Kingston Seymour Parish Council held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm in the meeting room,  
Village Hall

*Declarations of Interest under the Code of Local Government Conduct: None.*

### Public Participation Time

None.

### Present:

Councillors John Harris (Chairman), Paul Cox, Fred Malton, Mike Sewell (from 8.15pm), Claire Stuckey, Bryan Thomas, Mike Wallis. Leonie Allday, Clerk

### In attendance:

Philip and Jude Simmons, applicants, for item 8(i); Tim Harris, landowner, for item 8(vi); Rebecca Stockwell, parishioner and web manager, for item 7(i); John Hilliard, parishioner and Lead for Facilities and Activities, Parish Plan Implementation Steering Group for item 7(i).

*The Chairman indicated his intention to re-order the agenda to accommodate those attending only for specific items; the Clerk was asked if in future she could list any such items at the top of the agenda. It was agreed that the minutes would nevertheless be presented in agenda order.*

#### 1. Apologies for absence

District Councillors Jill Iles and Tony Moulin; Carolyn Hills, Parish Liaison Officer; PC Paul Morris and PCSOs Cathryn Turner and Ellie French.

#### 2. Community Safety and Police Report

The Clerk read a brief report from PC Morris informing the Council that there had been three thefts of power tools during the month of February. Other rural communities in North Somerset had been similarly targeted and the police were actively engaged in an operation to bring the offender(s) to justice.

The Chairman reported that he had received a letter from a parishioner complaining about a tractor which he considered was being driven without due regard for other road users. He had raised the matter with PCSO Cathryn Turner who had promised to write a generic letter to farmers in the area to ask them to exercise consideration. It was understood that this letter had not yet been issued but was imminent. The Clerk would write to the parishioner who had raised the complaint.

Action: Clerk

#### 3. Minutes of meetings

- (i) 10<sup>th</sup> January 2012
- (ii) 11<sup>th</sup> February 2012 (planning)

The minutes were agreed to be true records of the meetings and were duly signed by the Chairman.

#### 4. Matters Arising from meeting of 10.1.12. not covered under any other agenda item

**(a) Item 3 Paperless working** – the Clerk reported that the IT equipment was due to arrive this week.

**(b) Item 6(a) War Memorial** – MS reported that he had looked through the file handed to him by the Clerk and had drawn up a list of questions to ask each prospective contractor. He would be contacting them very shortly.

Action: MS

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**(c) Item 6(c) Response to letter to CPRE re Village of the Year competition** – the Clerk reported that CPRE had responded in detail to the Council's comments; she would circulate the letter. It seemed that at least some of the Council's concerns were likely to be addressed.

**(d) Item 7(vi) Nominations for county representative at Buckingham Palace Garden Party** – the Clerk reported that the successful council was Yate TC.

5. Financial / Administrative Report:

(i) Routine payments

The Clerk reported that the balance on the current account and per cash book was £2971.12 (of which, £190 was income relating to the website). Her cheque for £402.30 (tax due to HMRC, previously advised), had been banked and two cheques had been issued since the last meeting: NSC £105.00 (election re-charge fee); KSA £165.25 (hall hire 10/11).

Payments were due as follows: Clerk £637.30 (salary Jan / Feb, less tax); HMRC £89.40 (PAYE); Clerk £60.94 (expenses); Rebecca Stockwell £120 (web manager remuneration, 10 weeks 27 Dec – 4 Mar at £8 / hr x 1.5 hrs / week); Somerset Web Services £107.99 (website hosting package and renewal of domain name). It was proposed (CS, seconded PC) and unanimously agreed that these payments be made.

The Clerk informed councillors that following the Web Manager's report they would need to decide whether to pay a further £180, being the annual charge for the WordPress support service, or whether using the PAYGO service (£25 / consultation) would be more cost-effective.

Finally, the Clerk reported that the Balance on the Business Reserve Account was £3619.71.

Action: Clerk

(ii) Draft job description / contract for web manager

The Clerk reported that she had made a small amendment to one clause at the suggestion of CH. She had also ascertained that RS was happy with the draft. It was proposed (FM, seconded CS) and unanimously agreed that the revised contract be adopted. This was signed by both RS and the Chairman. One copy was given to RS and the other retained on file by the Clerk.

(iii) NALC briefings

The Clerk drew the attention of councillors to NALC legal briefings on (i) the content of private e-mail accounts with respect to Freedom of Information enquiries (ii) the provisions of the Localism Act relating to Standards of Conduct of councillors (iii) clarification of the new regulations on pre-determination and bias. These would be circulated.

(iv) Plans for Annual Parish Meeting

The Chairman reported that he had heard an interesting presentation about the work of the EA's Flood Incident Management Team and that the Team Leader was willing to speak at the Annual Parish Meeting if this was agreed. He would stress the advantages of signing up to the EA's "Floodline" telephone flood alert service. This was generally felt to be a good and topical suggestion and the Clerk was asked to make the necessary arrangements.

Action: Clerk

6. Changes to village bus service

It was noted that North Somerset Council would shortly be withdrawing the present supported service 660, when a new community minibus service will commence. The new service would run less frequently and on only 3 days a week. One parishioner had written to the Council regretting the loss of the service. The Clerk would put the details of the new service in the Village Magazine and had already supplied them to the Web Manager.

Action: Clerk

7. Reports to the Council

(i) Village website - Web Manager's report

RS began her report by giving some key statistics: the website had been in existence for almost a year and during that time the average number of "hits" per month had been 241, two thirds of these being new each month. 80% of users reached the website via a search engine such as Google and 5% were referred from other sites. She thought that there was scope to increase referrals via appropriate links. Business listings were disappointing by comparison with the interest expressed at the time of the Parish Plan survey and were not meeting the community's wish for a comprehensive local business directory; this needed to be investigated and new approaches made, including to businesses outside but serving the village. The charges for business listings also needed to be reviewed. This more proactive approach would rely on some help from councillors in identifying appropriate businesses. PC agreed to draw up a list, which would be circulated to other councillors.

Use of the website as a source of information about village activities and events was growing; there was quite a lot of traffic and most of the feedback was positive. Some organisers were now passing information through to RS on a regular basis. However, others were not, and sometimes she only learned of an event via a noticeboard at the Triangle. RS recognized that there had been some complaints about out-of-date items remaining on the website. Everyone needed to be encouraged to "think website"; the more information was received, the easier it would be to keep the website update since the Home Page operated on a scrolling system, with "old news" only being deleted as "new news" was advised. She would explain and demonstrate this as part of her report to the forthcoming Annual Parish Meeting.

On the issue of whether or not to continue to pay for the WordPress support package, RS reported that she had used it quite extensively in the early stages. She anticipated that as time went on she would need less support, but suggested that if possible the Council pay for another year (£180 including VAT). It was proposed (PC, seconded MS) and unanimously agreed that this should be done.

The Chairman thanked RS for her report and for all the work both she had done over the last year.

Action: PC, all

(ii) Update on works to the sea defences

JH in his capacity as Chairman of the North Somerset Flood Risk Action Group reported that the sea defences sub-committee had held another constructive meeting with the EA. A revised Strategy was expected in the early summer; it seemed probable that this would be less prescriptive and that the amount of compensatory habitat being sought would be reduced by around a third. It was hoped that there would be no "lines on maps" to cause blight, but rather that the loss of habitat to "coastal squeeze" would be monitored. Only when a certain trigger point was reached, perhaps in many years' time, would discussions on managed realignment recommence. However, if in the meantime any landowners wished to dispose of land for this purpose, the EA would always be interested to hear from them.

In the shorter term, the existing sea defences along both sides of the Congresbury Yeo outfall would be repaired and upgraded, giving them a lifespan of at least another 25 years and offering improved protection to local communities. Work was also to be carried out higher up the river in Congresbury. These projects were expected to commence in 2013/14.

(iii) Campaign for better Broadband

MS reported that he and the Chairman had met with the provider of a satellite Broadband system who was convinced that they could deliver a much faster service in our area. A demonstration could be arranged and it was suggested that this should be on a Saturday. MS would liaise with the Clerk as to suitable dates.

Action: MS, Clerk

8. Planning

(i) Planning Application No. 12/P/0231/LDE: Certificate of Lawful Use Existing for the use of Tunnel/House 1 as B8 storage, at Bullock Farm, Back Lane (Mr P Simmons)

FM asked why no site meeting had been held; the Chairman stated that he had visited the farm on other business recently and had taken the view that it was unnecessary. However councillors felt that whilst the Council's practice remained one of visiting every site, it ought to be applied consistently. PS confirmed that the building in question had been used continuously by a succession of tenants for the past 13 years. FM questioned whether the nature of the  
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use was wholly B8; PS responded that the planning officer was satisfied that the principal use fell into that category. The Council agreed that there was no reason to object to the granting of a certificate; the Clerk would make comments accordingly.

Action: Clerk

- (ii) Planning Application No. 12/P/0329/F: Erection of building for feed, bedding and equipment storage, to include an internal amenity refreshment area, for use in association with private stables, at Back Lane Stables (Miss E Brooks)

The Chairman reported that a site meeting had been held. It had been necessary to arrange it at very short notice, as the applicant was going on holiday. Some councillors felt that this was unsatisfactory especially as it had been notified to them by e-mail and not all of them had picked up the message in time. The Clerk apologized and agreed to telephone if such an eventuality were to arise again.

It was noted that the proposed development was for a building which would be detached from, although very close to, the existing stables. Councillors had no objection to the proposed development but asked the Clerk to request that the consent, if given, be conditioned to prevent the use of the new building for additional stabling or for human occupation.

Action: Clerk

- (iii) Update on planning applications previously considered

The Clerk reported the following outcomes:

- *Agricultural building to rear of 1 Bullocks Cottage – consent with conditions*
- *Farm Track and removal of hedge, adj Lampley Road – consent with conditions*
- *Bramble Farm – new agricultural dwelling reserved matters – consent with conditions. The Clerk was asked to inquire as to the reason for the difference between the conditions attached to the outline and reserved matters consents as they related to the occupation of the existing building*
- *Extension to “granny annexe”, Poplar Farm – consent with conditions*
- *LDE application for hardstanding and extension to garage / store building Gout House Farm – certificate granted. It was noted that the case officer’s report left open the question of the nature of the use of the building, which could still be subject to enforcement action*

Action: Clerk

- (iv) Update on alleged breaches of regulations / compliance / enforcement / appeals

- *Yew Tree Farm – appeal in progress*
- *Queried need for planning permission for stock lakes at fishing lakes – JH reported that he had visited all the fishing businesses; one (Acorn) had permission for their stock lakes. PS commented that he had now submitted an application; this would include the possible future use of the stock lakes for fishing.*
- *Alleged unauthorized development at The Penns (now Pastures New), Middle Lane – It was noted that despite the refusal of planning permission, some building work had taken place in the approximate location of the proposed stable block. It was agreed that PC would visit the landowner to ascertain his intentions.*

Action: PC

- (v) Decision Notices and Delegated Reports – consultation on proposed change to North Somerset Council’s procedures for notifying local councils of outcomes

The Clerk reported that North Somerset Council wished to stop sending letters explaining to local councils why decisions had been taken against their wishes / recommendations, when this occurred. It proposed instead to send the case officer’s report as well as the Notice of Decision; this would include a section explaining why consent was to be granted contrary to the local council’s wishes. The Clerk thought that this was a sensible rationalization, although there might be timing issues; she would write to the Council accordingly.

Action: Clerk

- (vi) Tutshill Sluice Crossing – update on proposals to open this crossing to the public

It was noted that this was a long-standing aspiration of North Somerset Council / Sustrans and that negotiations between a consultant acting for NSC and local landowners were currently in train. The Chairman explained that the landowners directly involved (Tim Harris and Nigel Cole on the Kingston Seymour side of the river) had a number of concerns. TH indicated that it was likely that they would agree to a permissive path (not a public right of way), for walkers and cyclists only – the possibility of extending the use to horse-riders was ruled out for the time being but would be revisited at a later date. He remained concerned about the loss of privacy for his family and in particular about the risks to cyclists from farm traffic entering and leaving his yard.

The Chairman noted that the consultant John Grimshaw had been due to address the Parish Council but had cancelled his visit. In answer to the query previously raised at the Parish Council's request by the Clerk as to why there had been no consultation with the Parish Council, NSC officer David Fish had replied that he had thought it unnecessary as the proposed cycleway would be entirely on private land. Councillors agreed that this was not an acceptable response, as it ignored the implications of creating this path for the village as a whole. These were certain to include an increase in traffic, which in turn would give rise to road safety and parking issues, as well as a general loss of tranquillity. Although some parishioners would welcome the proposed cycleway, it was difficult to see that there would be any tangible benefit to the village as a whole. The Chairman reminded councillors that the creation of this path, although distinct from the coastal footpath to be created as part of the National Tidal Trail, would be a prelude to it; both would use the river crossing.

The Clerk would write to Mr Fish making expressing the Council's concerns and asking for a formal consultation to be held at an early date, and certainly in advance of the submission of any application for works to the river crossing.

Action: Clerk

#### 9. Roads and footpaths

PC reported that some sections of Back Lane had been repaired and others temporarily patched pending the piling work which needed to be carried out before the job could be completed. A new area officer was now in post, Geoff Brigg. PC had discussed with him other work which needed doing, including the white lines in Lampley Road.

The Chairman reported that when visiting Plantations Lakes he had asked William Travis to clear the blockage in the footpath between Middle Lane and Ham Lane. BT noted that the waymarkers were missing from some of the footpaths such as the one by the motorway and PC was asked to obtain some more from NSC.

Action: PC

#### 10. Reports of meetings and in-service events attended by councillors / clerk:

- (i) PCAA meeting 24 January- PC and BT had attended. The minutes would be circulated.
- (ii) ALCA / CPRE seminar re Neighbourhood Planning, Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March – The Chairman and Clerk had attended. The Clerk had prepared a short briefing paper; the Chairman suggested that if possible all councillors should attend a training session so that they could make an informed decision later in the year as to whether and when to engage with the new Neighbourhood Planning process.

Action: all

- (iii) Visits to Castlewood offices – JH, BT and the Clerk had toured the new offices and found it very interesting.

#### 11. Forthcoming meetings and events:

- (i) The Localism Act and Neighbourhood Planning - free conference Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March 9.30am-4.30pm – FM hoped to attend
- (ii) Hinkley Point C Connection project – meeting of local community forum Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March, 7pm, Scotch Horn Centre, Nailsea – BT would attend
- (iii) Civic Service hosted by Clevedon TC – Chairman to attend
- (iv) North Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group Stakeholder Event – Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 3pm, Winter Gardens, WSM – Cathy Cooke would be asked if she could attend on the Council's behalf.

#### 12. Correspondence & Information

Some 65 items had been advised and those of relevance would be circulated. The Clerk reported that local councils had been advised of their duty to draw up an Equality Statement; MS offered to prepare a draft.

Action: MS

13. Members' Concerns

(i) Jubilee

MS reported that plans for a simple programme of low-cost, family friendly events were being developed for the Sunday; the working party was meeting again in two days' time. The question of a Beacon would be revisited.

The Clerk reported that she had obtained designs and costings for Jubilee mugs and asked if the Council was happy for her to make a decision on the basis of consensus reached at the forthcoming meeting. This was agreed.

Action: Clerk

(ii) Commemorative tree-planting

FM reported that he had it in mind that one tree would be planted for each child in the village, if suitable land could be made available for the purpose. He was advised to put a brief article in the Village magazine and on the website.

Action: FM

(iii) School places

PC reported that a local family was having trouble securing a place for their child at Yatton Infants School. It was suspected that they might have missed the application date. MS would follow this up.

Action: MS

*The meeting closed at 10.25pm*

*Dates of future meetings:*

*Annual Parish Meeting: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April, 7.30pm*

*Annual and Regular Meeting of the Council: Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May, 7.30pm*