



## **OVER STOWEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the  
19<sup>th</sup> February 2018 in the Village Hall

*Please note that these minutes are draft until approved  
at the March 19<sup>th</sup> 2018 Meeting*

Present:	Parish Councillor	R. Curtis K. Barrow P. Tully B. Bartlett M. Cavill G. Goddard
	District Councillor	J. Pay

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Councillor D. Peaster  
District/County Councillor M. Caswell

### **2. Members of the Public**

Mrs. S. Aubrey attended the meeting 'on behalf of Nether Stowey Library, as a member of the Over Stowey Parish but also a member of Friends of Nether Stowey Library' to highlight the consultation taking place which will affect the future of Nether Stowey Library.

This is currently ongoing and can be found on-line or paper copies are available from the Nether Stowey Parish Council offices.

Everyone within the local area is being encouraged to complete the survey to provide a comprehensive response to the proposals.

For more detailed information, follow the link below:

<http://somersestlibraries.co.uk/consultation/>

Somerset County Council have proposed two possible options for Nether Stowey Library (which SCC own); either a partnership with the local community to maintain the library building with some funding support from SCC which could be used towards the building costs and/or a Librarian's services. This would be a potentially costly option for the parish and Nether Stowey Parish Council are exploring options to see if there is a way to make it viable. The alternative is that SCC would provide a mobile library service and dispose of the building.

For further information follow the links below:

<http://netherstowey-pc.gov.uk/somersest-libraries-review-and-consultation-update/>

<http://netherstowey-pc.gov.uk/library-working-group-report-to-14-february/>

Friends of Nether Stowey Library have looked into running the library as a charity or a Community Benefit Society (Bencom) which comes with various benefits with regards to potential exemptions e.g. rates.

It is possible that Somerset County Council would pay a contribution each year on an ongoing basis, however this has not been confirmed.

Mrs. Aubrey asked if Over Stowey Parish Council would consider supporting Nether Stowey with an annual donation for example.

Mrs. Aubrey concluded by saying she was just looking for support and as an Over Stowey parishioner she feels the library would be very much missed if it were to go.

Councillor Barrow asked if the mobile library visits Over Stowey, which Mrs. Aubrey stated that it doesn't.

Councillor Morley wanted to know how many staff worked in the library at the moment.

Mrs. Aubrey responded by saying that only one librarian works there at present and whilst it could be run by volunteers, ideally going forward they would want to retain her.

The Clerk explained that there had already been contact with Nether Stowey Parish Council and this would continue, to ensure any relevant information was communicated to Over Stowey Parish Council.

At the moment no decisions can be made until the results of the consultation are published and Somerset County Council make their decisions on the future of the library services in the county.

Councillor Curtis thanked Mrs. Aubrey for attending the meeting.

Mrs. V. Curtis attended the meeting to voice the concerns she has with regards to the condition of the bridle paths and paths where EuroForest has been harvesting timber from Great Wood.

Mr. D. King – representing EuroForest, was also in attendance to address the issues raised.

Mrs. Curtis asked what instructions are given by the Forestry Commission about which bridle paths and paths are used, to which Mr. King responded that they are issued with operation maps and that guidance is given on the terrain.

He also stated that this years operating plans are in areas that have not been harvested before and that any bridle ways have to be taken into account.

Mrs. Curtis replied that the damage caused is the issue and who is responsible for reinstating the bridle paths?

Mr. King said that it is his job to ensure that this is done.

A question was also asked about what the time lag from damaging the bridle path to reinstating the path is, Mr. King answered that it is from when the last upload of timber in each area has been completed and that there are still areas to go back to which will be done when the other works are finished.

Mr. King expects the works to be completed within 8 – 10 weeks and that reinstatement couldn't be completed until at least 10 weeks, although some had already taken place.

When asked what work will need to be undertaken to reinstate the paths, Mr. King explained that a 360 excavator will be used to reinstate it to the standard it was before.

In terms of the surface, even if heavily used and naturally quite muddy, it would still be upgraded to a better standard than before.

The timescale to complete the reinstatement after the works have finished is usually a matter of days, possibly weeks.

Mr. King reiterated that only when an area is cleared and all work is completed will any reinstatement occur as a timber lorry weighs 44 tonnes when fully loaded and would only undo any reinstatement work if not fully cleared.

Mr. King also explained that this was the first operation by EuroForest in this area and that they would work hard to put it back to the same standard as before, if not better.

Mrs. Curtis asked if a bridle path in one area could be opened - Mr. King replied that they were 'a bit in limbo' as further works were needed before reinstatement could happen, weather dependent would hopefully be in one - two weeks. He also offered the opportunity of meeting with relevant parties to walk the bridle paths and talk through any further concerns.

Councillor Curtis thanked Mr. King for attending and responding to the issues raised.

Mrs. Aubrey and Mrs. Curtis left the meeting at this point.

The Parish Council asked Mr. King about the damage to the Mill Leat Wall, which potentially could have been caused by EuroForest lorries.

Mr. King replied by saying he could understand the concerns and that after receiving the initial e-mail from the Parish Council, he had contacted all the contracted drivers (as EuroForest does not own any of the lorries used) but as yet no-one has come forward with any evidence of any damage to a lorry.

He did say that he was aware of other large vehicles using that road and at the moment there is no evidence to show who has caused the damage.

Mr. King explained that if dates and times could be recorded of any damage observed it would narrow down the numbers of lorries to check. He added that a video camera could be set up to record any incidents and although would be time consuming, he would be happy to arrange this for the remainder of the works. Mr. King also said that the vehicles have become bigger as cost savings have become more important, however the best drivers were being sent in to the area due to the infrastructure of the roads.

Councillor Bartlett commented that as currently we are unable to pinpoint anything, it was now a question of damage limitation.

With regards to the bridle ways and footpaths Councillor Barrow suggested that once the paths are reinstated the Parish Council meet with Mr. King to inspect them (with members of the public in attendance if they wish).

Mr. King would be happy to do this and will e-mail the Clerk to arrange this when the works are close to completion.

Others points to consider are:

- EuroForest have to work the area during the wrong time seasonally for the company but they have to fit around the needs of the area with regard to the wildlife and visitors to the woods during other times of the year.

This obviously has an impact with the weather affecting the conditions of the area.

- The Parish Council can view the woodland management plan to understand what works will be taking place in the future. The Parish council would need to contact the Forestry Commission if this is required.
- The work being carried out at present is a large-scale operation and it is thought that future works would not be as large, but that will depend on the Forestry Commissions management plan.

Councillor Curtis concluded the discussion by thanking Mr. King for attending the meeting and addressing the areas of concern.

Mr. King then left the meeting.

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

None

### **4. Minutes of the last meeting – January 15<sup>th</sup> 2018**

Proposed by Councillor G. Goddard  
Seconded by Councillor M. Cavill

## **5. Correspondence:**

- Joint Parishes Cluster meeting to be held on Tuesday 6 March 2018 at 7pm in the Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House

Councillor Curtis to attend.

- Life Support Resuscitation Training –

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 10.00 am at the Church Centre, Nether Stowey.

The Clerk communicated the information and distributed the posters.

## **6. Items for Discussion:**

- New annual audit procedures

The Clerk explained that the procedures for the annual audit now means that smaller authorities can certify themselves as exempt from the review by PFK Littlejohn (external auditors) where the higher of gross income or gross expenditure was £25,000 or less and that they meet the qualifying criteria.

The Clerk is currently checking the procedures and will ensure the new process is followed correctly.

The internal auditor will be confirmed at the March 2018 meeting.

- Update on the village hall kitchen refurbishment plans – Councillor Tully had confirmation that the grant application had been successful and that Sedgemoor District Council will match the contribution of £8000 from Over Stowey Parish Council.
- Information on libraries consultation in regard to Nether Stowey Library (see Members of the Public above).
- Update on highways issues – the cattle grid gate post has rotted and needs replacing. It has also been reported that the latch is now not working – possibly due to the condition of the gate post.

The Clerk will continue to pursue this to ensure the area is accessible to all.

Councillor Curtis attended the transport forum meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018, where the local parishes affected by the increase in traffic and roadworks, voiced their concerns.

- Clerk to receive information for Councillor Goddard's register of Interests Form

Information received from Councillor Goddard by the Clerk.

- New Councillor Training available for Councillor Goddard – discounted price of £25.00 from £30.00

Members to agree for Councillor Goddard to attend and Councillor Goddard to confirm which one she can attend:

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018 – Brent Knoll Village Hall  
7.00 – 9.00pm

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March – Methodist School Room, Watchet  
7.00 – 9.00pm

Councillor Goddard agreed she could attend the Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March session.

Proposed by Councillor K. Barrow  
Seconded by Councillor P. Tully

- The Essential Clerk Training available for the Clerk at a cost of £85.00 – members to agree for the Clerk to attend:

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2018 - Edgar Hall, Somerton Business Park, Somerton

Proposed by Councillor B. Bartlett  
Seconded by Councillor M. Cavill

- Update on defibrillator and cabinet prices – agreement to purchase and plans for installation to be discussed:

The Clerk has sourced an iPad SP1 fully automatic defibrillator and heated, key coded, waterproof storage cabinet for approximately £1600.00. All members agreed that the items could be purchased and for the Clerk to proceed up to a maximum of £1600.00.

Councillor Barrow estimated the total cost including installation would be approximately £2000.

**Proposed by Councillor K. Barrow**  
**Seconded by Councillor G. Goddard**

## **7. Matters Arising for the Agenda for the March 2018 meeting:**

- Donation request from Mendip Community transport – the Clerk will contact to see how the service is currently being used within the parish.
- The annual renewal payment for SLCC membership will be due.

## **8. Planning:**

There were no planning applications, however the Clerk will be attending a training session with regard to the Community Infrastructure Levy and will communicate the information to the Parish Council members at the March 2018 meeting.

## **9. Financial Matters:**

### a) Clerks Wages - **£174.09**

Proposed by Councillor P. Tully  
Seconded by Councillor M. Cavill

### b) SALC renewal - **£96.78**

Proposed by Councillor B. Bartlett  
Seconded by Councillor G. Goddard

### c) New Councillor Training - **£25.00 c/f to march (will be invoiced by SALC)**

### d) Essential Clerk Training - **£85.00 c/f to march (will be invoiced by SALC)**

### e) Purchase of defibrillator and cabinet (prices to be confirmed during meeting once agreement on models to purchase)

The Clerk will purchase on behalf of Over Stowey Parish Council for reimbursement at the March 2018 meeting.



**10. Date of Next Meeting** – Monday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

**Amanda McMurren**

**Clerk to Over Stowey Parish Council**

To: Members of the Parish Council Cllr R Curtis, Cllr B Bartlett,  
Cllr D Peaster, Cllr K Barrow, Cllr M Cavill, Cllr G Goddard, Cllr P Tully,  
County Cllr/District Cllr M Caswell, District Cllr J Pay