

OVER STOWEY
PARISH COUNCIL

OVER STOWEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on October 3rd 2022
(postponed from September 21st 2022)**

**Please note that these minutes are draft until approved
at the October 19th 2022 meeting**

Present: Parish Councillor

P. Tully
K. Barrow
B. Bartlett
D. Peaster
R. Curtis

1. Apologies for Absence:

Cllrs Lindley and Goddard
Cllrs Caswell and Bolt

2. Members of the Public:

One member of the public was in attendance re item 6.h.i.

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

Cllrs Tully and Barrow declared an interest in item 6.h.i

4. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on July 20th 2022

Proposed: Cllr Barrow **Seconded:** Cllr Curtis

5. Correspondence:

a. Email re grit bins

The only grit bin in the parish is located in Hack Lane. When this needs to be refilled, Cllr Tully will undertake this

b. Email re Stowey Woods - Information only

Stowey Green Spaces will be taking on an additional strip of land as an extension to the Millennium Wood. This will involve changes to their licensing agreement, but what this might be and the cost is as yet unknown. Further details will be made available and relevant parties and agencies will be informed

6. Items for Discussion:

a. Email from Nether Stowey Parish Council re Outdoor Gym Equipment Project/RLT funding

The RLT funding available to Over Stowey Parish Council can be used for the following:

- Land for play space
- New playground equipment
- Ancillary items for playground gates/letter bins/signs

The councillors will consider what items might be needed for the play area at the Over Stowey Recreation Ground and present their ideas at the October 19th 2022 meeting.

They will also consider how they can support Nether Stowey Parish Council with their project for gym equipment at the playing fields in Nether Stowey.

b. Missed recycling collections

A number of residents have concerns about the frequency of missed collections and although understand to some extent the reasons for this, have questioned whether Suez are 'fit for purpose'.

Examples include:

- Situations where a lorry has reversed up a lane, collected up to a certain point and then then left other residences recycling
- Drivers being flagged down by a resident whose collection they missed, who was then very helpful and noted this on the system, but the next week a new driver missed it again (and was also flagged down)
- One side of a lane is collected and the other left
- Residents that let out accommodation obviously have more recycling to be collected and if missed, the amount accumulated is enormous
- The Thursday and particularly the Friday collections, if missed when reported online receive the message that it will be collected on the Monday. This does not usually happen and then residents are informed it will then be on the next scheduled collection day

It was proposed that the Clerk contact Somerset Waste Partnership to communicate the above points and the general dissatisfaction with the service as it stands at the moment.

Proposed: Cllr Peaster

Seconded: Cllr Curtis

c. Bus Back Better representative

Currently Over Stowey are not represented on the Somerset Bus Partnership. If you would like to be part of this, please contact the Clerk for further information. Councillors will also approach residents they feel might be interested in taking on this role.

d. Chairman's Award – nominations

After some discussion, a name was proposed which was agreed unanimously by all members present. The Clerk will contact them to confirm they are willing for their name to be put forward and if so, complete the nomination form ready for submission before the deadline of October 31st 2022.

Proposed: Cllr Curtis

Seconded: Cllr Bartlett

e. Somerset Council update

Cllr Tully and the Clerk attended a meeting hosted by Nether Stowey Parish Council at the beginning of September. Many questions were asked and at the moment, many of these cannot be answered as plans are still being drawn up for most areas of the new authority. The Clerk will be attending the Town and Parish Council LGR Conference on October 4th 2022 and will feedback at the next meeting.

f. Highways updates

- i. **Friarn** – work to clear the ditch adjacent to the Public Right of Way in Friarn is due to take place in October 2022
- ii. **Aley** – work is scheduled to take place from Monday 24th October 2022
- iii. **Cattle grids** – these have now been cleared
- iv. **Signage at Plainsfield** – since the initial response from the Highways Department, at the moment, nothing further has been communicated. This will be discussed with County and District Councillors at the next meeting
- v. **Road safety on the A39**
Work is due to take place at the location identified, dates to be confirmed
- vi. **Quantock Lane traffic calming request**
Highways have not yet responded to this request. This will be discussed with County and District Councillors at the next meeting
- vii. **Signage request re long vehicles**
Highways have not yet responded to this request. This will be discussed with County and District Councillors at the next meeting. It was also recommended that the sign (coming from Bincombe towards the road through Over Stowey) is for a 'Sharp Bend' to warn drivers of large vehicles that the road may not be suitable for their vehicle.
- viii. **Damaged sign (rotted posts/now missing)**
Following investigations by the Clerk, the AONB emailed to say that a project ran between 2001 and 2005 to restore approximately 150 traditional road signs. Funding was also available to provide grants to Parish Councils and villages for the installation of village gateway signs. This was open to all Parish Councils within the Quantock Hills AONB. Fifty percent grants for the cost of the making the signs was offered as well as help arranging design, production and installation. The Parish Council where the signs were located then took on the responsibility for them going forward. The Clerk has obtained a quote for the replacement of the sign (excluding installation) and it is approaching £2000.

The Government is currently consulting on changing the name of the AONB and if this goes ahead, it is hoped there may be funding available for the re-branding of the existing signs. It was agreed that this will be taken off the agenda until further information is available.

ix. **Verge cutting**

This will be discussed in full at the October 19th 2022 meeting

x. **Hedge cutting**

This will be discussed in full at the October 19th 2022 meeting

xi. **Damaged visibility mirror at Marsh Mills crossroads**

Following a request to the Highways Department for the cost of replacing the mirror, the response below was received:

Somerset County Council do not place mirrors on the Public Highway. Mirrors of any kind placed on the Highway are regarded as "unauthorised signs". Somerset County Council as the Highway Authority does not allow the use of traffic mirrors as they are considered by the Department for Transport (DfT) as a non-prescribed sign and special permission must be given by the DfT for their use. Somerset County Council would not seek this special permission from the DfT as mirrors can give a misleading impression of vehicle movements, particularly motorcyclists who will be inconspicuous in a mirror. If not positioned correctly, they can also cause dazzle to approaching motorists, they also require regular maintenance to keep them clean, they are ineffective during inclement weather and they are often the subject of vandalism or accidental damage.

Whilst I appreciate that there are many in place these have been erected by private individuals and strictly speaking should be removed, however should an individual wish to place a mirror on private property, then they are able to do this with the landowners' permission, but they will also need to take on the liability for this and apply to the District Council for the necessary planning permissions

The Clerk has responded stating that the crossroads has limited visibility and what else can be put in place at this location to reduce the risk of accidents. Highways have not yet responded to this request. This will be discussed with County and District Councillors at the next meeting.

g. Cemetery update

The re-levelling of the cemetery has taken place and the Parish Council agreed that the result is excellent and expressed their thanks to the contractor who had undertaken the work. The Clerk will pass this on.

As the new ashes plot area has also been agreed, the Clerk has produced a plan of this for future reference.

h. Potential projects for the parish

i. **Update re the car park and future plans for it**

Not all interested parties were able to attend, so this will be on the agenda for the October 19th meeting 2022 and all parties will be invited to attend

ii. **Feedback re grants available for the Village Hall roof repair**

The grant application has been submitted and a decision is expected at the end of October

iii. **New plaque for the bench at Bincombe Green**

Two quotes have been received. It was agreed that the supplier of the plaque produced for the Diamond Jubilee should also provide the plaque for the Platinum Jubilee. The Clerk will contact them to confirm this

Proposed: Cllr Barrow **Seconded:** Cllr Curtis

iv. **Replacement plaques for the recreation ground**

No further information is currently available as to the location of the original plaques. This item is now closed, however should the situation change in the future, this will be re-visited

7. Matters arising for the Agenda for the October 2022 meeting

- Finance review – draft budget
- Discuss plans for verge and hedge cutting to be undertaken by the Parish Council
- Feedback from the LGR conference – the Clerk
- Feedback re availability of grants for the recreation ground boundary

8. Planning:

a. Update re potential breach of planning

A letter has been sent to the landowner, but no response has been received. If the Clerk receives any further concerns about the issue, the Clerk will direct the correspondent to the enforcement team at the planning department at Sedgemoor District Council

9. Personnel:

- a. Hours update – the Clerk had calculated the additional work undertaken from April 1st 2022 – August 31st 2022, which totals 10 hours. It was agreed that this be paid (see item 10.c.i.)
- b. Additional tasks anticipated for August/September 2022
 - Switch to online bank account
 - Still to be done
 - Create plan for new ashes burial area at the cemetery
 - This has been completed
 - Support with the Village Hall roof grant application (if considered a viable option)
 - This has been submitted
 - Archiving of Parish Council records
 - Ongoing
 - Creation of new Parish Council email addresses
 - Ongoing
 - Review of Joint Practitioners Advisory Group Practitioners Guide 2022/2023
 - Ongoing
 - Vat reclaim
 - To do

10. Financial Matters:

a. Consider option to opt out of the SAAA central external auditor appointment arrangements

The Clerk was asked what their recommendation would be, which would be to stay with the existing arrangements. It was proposed that this recommendation is followed:

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

b. Consider donation of £40 to the Royal British Legion re purchase of wreaths

The Church Warden was present and it was suggested that as the Church is responsible for the memorials, that the Parish Council could consider contributing to the cost in the future. This will be considered if such a request is made.

c. Payments

i. Clerk's wages	September 2022 (including 10 hrs. o/t see item 9.a.)		407.90
ii. Expenses	Printer paper	7.00	
	Land Registry search	3.00	10.00
iii. Topsoil	Cemetery work		729.60
iv. Wood-Land Southwest	Cemetery work		432.00
v. SALC	Annual affiliation fee		104.83
vi. Donation	See item 10.b.		
vii. HP Ink subscription	July	£9.99	
	August	£4.49	
	September	<u>£4.49</u>	18.97
viii. Mobile phone contract	D/D June	£22.95	
	D/D August	£22.95	
	D/D September	<u>£22.95</u>	
			<u>68.85</u>
	TOTAL		£1772.15

Proposed: Cllr Peaster

Seconded: Cllr Curtis

11. Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 19th October 2022 at 7.00pm at Over Stowey Village Hall

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 8.35pm

Amanda McMurren - Clerk to Over Stowey Parish Council

Email: clerk@overstoweyparishcouncil.gov.uk Tel: 07391 313740

Signed:

Dated: