



## **OVER STOWEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on April 19<sup>th</sup> 2023**

**Please note that these minutes are draft until approved at the May 17<sup>th</sup> 2023  
Annual Meeting of the Parish Council**

Present: Parish Councillor

P. Tully  
K. Barrow  
R. Curtis (from 19.05 – 20.30)  
T. Lindley  
G. Goddard  
B. Bartlett  
D. Peaster

Somerset Councillors

M. Caswell (until 20.30)  
B. Bolt (until 20.30)

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

None

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

Ten members of the public were in attendance re Planning – item 5

### **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 March 15th 2023**

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

### **5. Planning applications: (Moved from agenda item 8)**

#### **a. Planning Application 40/23/00002**

Location

Streams, Bincombe Road, Over Stowey  
Bridgwater, TA5 1EZ

Proposal

Change of use of land to campsite including the erection  
of 2no. log cabins, 2 no. glamping pods, 2no. bell tents, with  
associated toilet and shower block facilities and amenities

There were ten members of the public in attendance with regard to this planning application. Many issues and concerns were raised and these were considered by the Parish Council and along with their own observations, it was proposed that the Parish Council object to the proposal (see appendix i below for the full response)

**Proposed:** Cllr Lindley

**Seconded:** Cllr Curtis

## **6. Correspondence:**

- a. Email received re invitations to the Stowey Green Spaces and SALC AGM's
  - Due to prior commitments and capacity of councillors, apologies will be sent to both organisations

## **7. Items for Discussion:**

- a. Highways issues (moved from agenda item 7.g.), following site meeting with the Highways Department officer:
  - i. Signage at Plainsfield
    - The Highways department will review what signage would be most suitable and send a costing to the Parish Council
  - ii. Quantock Lane traffic calming request
    - Still to be considered
  - iii. Signage (sharp bend) request re long vehicles for road through Over Stowey
    - Highways have suggested an alternative option which they will forward to the Parish Council for consideration
  - iv. Update from site visit by Highways (undertaken September 2021)
    - Safety concerns regarding traffic levels and speed throughout the parish have been raised with the Highways Department for many years. Plans are now in place for them to review road safety speeds with a view to considering schemes to improve the situation. This will not happen quickly, but steps are being taken to have work undertaken if agreed by all interested parties – the timescale for this is likely to be 3 – 5 years. The Parish Council will continue to pursue this with Highways to ensure any agreed improvements are made as soon as is practicably possible
  - v. Damaged visibility mirror at Marsh Mills crossroads
    - The Highways Department do not authorise the use of mirrors and have suggested other ways to highlight the crossroads more visibly. These include:
      - Low level visibility posts on each corner where possible (likely to be three out of the four verges)
      - Road markings to be redone as soon as possible

- Another 'SLOW' road marking coming from Plainsfield after the one before the bend to reinforce that there is another reason to reduce speed (i.e. the crossroads that come after the bend)
  - Road signage that can be highlighted with a yellow background for greater visibility will be put in place
  - New road signs coming from Plainsfield notifying of the crossroads
  - Existing signage that needs repairing or replacing has been noted
- vi. Update on reports made re STOP sign
  - This has been reviewed by the Highways Department and the location and height of the sign is being reviewed to consider placing further in from the edge of the road and slightly higher to prevent being hit by large vehicles
- vii. Review of rules regarding walking of dogs on public highways
  - The Clerk will contact the Dog Warden for information on what signage is available
- viii. Update re neighbouring parish boundary maintenance
  - The Clerk will forward the details and location of the area to the Highways Officer
- b. Confirm dates and times of the annual meetings:
  - The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 6.30pm, with the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council following at 7.00pm. Both meetings will be held at Over Stowey Village Hall.  
**Proposed:** Cllr Barrow      **Seconded:** Cllr Peaster
- c. Consider suitable support for the Over Stowey Village Hall and Recreation Ground event to be held on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2023
  - It was suggested that if the OSVH&RC Committee require a donation to cover costs after the event, this will be reviewed at the May 2023 meeting. The Clerk will include this as an item on the May agenda
- d. Feedback from the Clerk on a review of the grounds maintenance contract
  - The Clerk will undertake this after the May annual meetings
- e. Update re Great Wood Project proposal
  - The Clerk had emailed the Creative Innovation Centre CIC with the concerns of the Parish Council. A response from them was received stating:  
*'Your concerns will be noted and may eventually prevent us from doing the project as we also agree with the access concerns. If they change we will let you know'*

- f. Receive and review updated asset register
  - The Clerk had circulated the above prior to the meeting and this was fully reviewed at the meeting and agreed  
**Proposed:** Cllr Goddard                      **Seconded:** Cllr Peaster
- g. Somerset Council update
  - Cllrs Caswell and Bolt have been attending training sessions and meetings since vesting day on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2023. It has been a quiet start regarding changes since becoming a Unitary Authority and there is much work to be undertaken
- h. Possible projects for the parish
  - i. Update on grant application for railings to replace fencing at the recreation ground
    - The grant application is being reviewed and a decision is expected at the end of April/beginning of May
  - ii. Support for the Village Hall
    - This will be deferred to the May/June meetings to allow the OSVH&RG Committee to review priorities and submit requests for funding if necessary

## **8. Matters arising for the Agenda for the May 2023 meeting**

- i. Concerns re water from the spring in Quantock Lane
- ii. Cattle grids full again – to be assessed and reported

## **9. Personnel:**

- a. Consider request from the Clerk re overtime payment
  - The Clerk submitted a claim for 11 hours for the period 31/10/2022 – 31/03/2023. It was proposed that this be agreed  
**Proposed:** Cllr Peaster                      **Seconded:** Cllr Barrow

## **10. Financial Matters:**

- a. Brief financial update
  - The Clerk had circulated the above to councillors prior to the meeting (see appendix ii). This was then reviewed at the meeting and agreed  
**Proposed:** Cllr Bartlett                      **Seconded:** Cllr Lindley
- b. Update re online banking
  - Online banking is now live – the Clerk is awaiting for full authorisation from the bank to be able to undertake all functions

- c. Review of new policies for online banking, with a view to adopting if agreed
- The draft policies had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. These were fully reviewed at the meeting and it was proposed that both policies be agreed

**Proposed:** Cllr Goddard

**Seconded:** Cllr Bartlett

d. Payments

i.	Clerks Wages	April 2023 (including overtime as agreed under item 9.a.)	458.45
ii.	Expenses	Printer paper	22.20
iii.	Microsoft	Annual subscription	135.36
iv.	HP Ink	March 2023	4.49
v.	Mobile phone contract	D/D Mar & April 2023	<u>49.20</u>
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£669.70</b>

**Proposed:** Cllr Barrow

**Seconded:** Cllr Goddard

**11. Date of next meeting:**

Annual Parish Meeting - Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 6.30pm, followed by  
The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.00pm, both to be held at  
Over Stowey Village Hall

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 8.45pm

Amanda McMurren - Clerk to Over Stowey Parish Council

Email: [clerk@overstoweyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@overstoweyparishcouncil.gov.uk) Tel: **07391 313740**

**Signed:**

**Dated:**

**Appendix (i)**  
**Planning (Item 5.a.)**

**Material considerations:**

Groups are to be encouraged, this will create noise and therefore noise pollution. The type of accommodation being considered is conducive to outdoor socialising and engagement with others and will have a direct impact on local residents and the wildlife in the area. Even when inside one of the suggested structures, there would be no way to prevent noise from gatherings from impacting on the environment

Bincombe is a quiet, and at night, dark hamlet, with no street lighting and very little other light apart from that generated by local residents. The development will create light pollution for the hamlet and will be incredibly detrimental to wildlife in the area.

Although not in the AONB, it is located on the boundary and this development would detract from the attractiveness of the area

Additionally smoke pollution from what appears in the plans to be wood burners in the log cabins and also the use of barbeques/firepits would be of concern

There is nothing to say what supervision/monitoring would be in place to keep noise, light and smoke pollution to a minimum and therefore reinforces the view that the proposal is unsuitable at this location

Road safety – this lane is used by all types of motorised vehicles (large and small), horse riders, bicycles, pedestrians (including local people and holiday makers) and when main A roads are closed is used as a cut through, causing more problems. Hinkley has also had a huge impact on the level of traffic using this road and there has been a large increase in road use overall through the hamlet over the last 5 – 10 years. Speeds are not always suitable for the lane and safety is already an issue

The proposed new entrance will not be suitable as the road is narrow and will increase the safety risk to all road users. In the application, it has been ticked as 'no' to the land flooding, but it does flood and stays waterlogged for long periods of time when there is heavy or persistent rain and there have been more instances of this over the last 3 – 5 years as the climate changes. Work has taken place in the past to mitigate this but has not been successful. In addition, the road floods and any runoff from the structures will add to this

There is a query as to where the treated water would go – does it go to a soakaway and into the stream, which then flows down to and through the village of Nether Stowey? There are serious concerns that the volume created will add to the level of flooding when it rains, with the potential for sewage pollution and both aspects of this would be unacceptable

With regards to D17 of the local plan:

It will not improve the quality and diversity of the current offering as there are numerous and varied levels of accommodation already in this area

The local job opportunities regarding the construction will end once the build is completed, so the employment is not sustainable, the two employment opportunities are only 2 part time roles equating to 1 FTE

There are already many opportunities for education within the locality and the potential for the uptake of the suggested experiences would be difficult to gauge and therefore potentially unsustainable

The impact on the natural environment cannot be mitigated against with the introduction of a few wildlife friendly homes/boxes. Whilst this may attract some wildlife, the fact that people will be present for, as stated in the business plan, 36 weeks of the year, will not encourage previous current resident species back. The noise and light pollution alone will deter much of the wildlife from returning to the area at all, which is enormously detrimental to the current eco-system

It will not enhance social cohesion as there will be a negative impact on local residents, the highways and the natural environment and the benefits to the local community will be minimal with over-development of the plot and for the locality as a whole

This is a highly unsuitable proposal and wholly inappropriate in this location, therefore the Parish Council strongly object to the planning application.

**Additional concerns/queries:**

No site notice at the location @20/04/23

Many people did not receive letters including three homeowners in close proximity to the location, others received them very late

There is a query from residents as to the boundary line as shown on the location plan

Query regarding the size of the toilet/shower block where it is shown on the plans as to whether the space available will be enough

Does the septic tank relate to the house or the proposed development?

Are the bike hub and recreation ground/barbeque area facilities intended purely for the use of the those staying at the location or are they open to the general public? If open to the general public, how would this be managed and what provision would there be for the additional parking?

A query regarding the permissive footpath for Hockpitt farm has also been raised – will this be an issue for the owner of the farm?

Although it is understood that the above are not material considerations, these concerns and queries regarding the application only confirm the view of the Parish Council that permission should not be granted.

**Appendix (ii) see below**

**Financial Matters (Item 10.a.)**



# Over Stowey Parish Council

## Reserves Balance

### As at 31/03/2023

<u>Reserve</u>	<u>Opening Balance</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Current Balance</u>
<b>Capital</b>					
Graveyard Reserve	6,708.61	317.03			7,025.64
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>6,708.61</b>	<b>317.03</b>			<b>7,025.64</b>
<b>Earmarked</b>					
Downing Legacy Funds	10,748.17	-2,755.00			7,993.17
Election Reserve	1,800.00	-1,450.00			350.00
Bincombe Green	250.00	-250.00			0.00
<b>Total Earmarked</b>	<b>12,798.17</b>	<b>-4,455.00</b>			<b>8,343.17</b>
<b>TOTAL RESERVE</b>	<b>19,506.78</b>	<b>-4,137.97</b>			<b>15,368.81</b>
<b>GENERAL FUND *</b>					9,222.05
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>					24,590.86

\* General fund breakdown - Current Account **£1136.92**/General Reserve **£8085.13**