

A MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL

Held on Tuesday 19th March 2024 at 7pm.
Room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Leigh Road, Street.

Members Summoned and Present: Members Summoned and Present: All Councillors; Pam Birch, Simon Carswell, Jean Howard, Nicholas Kellett, Bryan Knickerbocker (Chair), Nina Swift (Vice Chair), Peter Goater, Neil Howiantz, Andy Leafe, Terry Napper, Bruno Reina, Heather Shearer, Nicola Smith, Adrian Sparkes, and Laura Wolfers.

Absent: None

Officers Present: Jenny Service, Parish Clerk.

In attendance: 7 residents.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public question time

Two residents spoke during public question time. Topics included public toilets, CCTV, and flooding.

Public toilets

A resident spoke in support of keeping the public toilets open at Southside Car Park, Vestry Road adding that it was imperative we keep these available particularly for elderly and disabled residents. *Somerset Council have announced the closure from 1 April and offered the toilets to Street Parish Council to run and maintain on leased basis.*

CCTV

A resident raised concerns around crime and anti-social behaviour if the CCTV service is not supported. *Somerset Council are asking town and parish councils to pay for the cost of cameras for the service to continue to run at Bridgwater House CCTV control room.*

Flooding

A resident spoke about ground water flooding they experienced in 2024 and raised concerns around possible impact of the proposed Somerton Road development (particularly around surface runoff and groundwater) and associated flood risk to Street residents. *Outline permission was granted by Somerset Council Planning Officers in 2018 and the development is now being considered by Somerset Council Planning Officers at a reserved matters stage.* The resident provided photographs of flooding and maps highlighting areas deemed to be at risk and urged the Parish Council to support residents' concerns.

Somerset Councillor reports

Short reports were provided by Somerset Councillors, regarding matters affecting Street and the wider local community.

Cllr. Liz Leyshon

Deputy Leader of Somerset Council and Lead Member for Resources and Performance.

Cllr. Leyshon apologised for her absence at the last meeting due to Somerset Council's budget setting and provided an overview of the financial challenges facing Somerset Council despite passing a legal budget Cllr. Leyshon spoke

about the difficult times ahead and issues for Mendip which included flooding and devolution of assets and services.

Cllr. Heather Shearer Associate Lead Member for Children's Social Care & SEND, Mendip West Division.

Cllr. Shearer provided an update on her day-to-day work. Topics included:

- Foster caring.
- Home/school transport.
- Most vulnerable children open to the risk of criminal exploitation.
- Somerset Council offices under pressure due to originally COVID then Somerset One unitary and now the financial and budget constraints.

Cllr. Simon Carswell Chair Licensing and Regulatory Committee, Street Division.

Cllr. Carswell provided a brief update about his roles and responsibilities at Somerset Council.

The full council meeting commenced at 7.22 pm.

MINUTES

200. Apologies for absence

The Clerk provided a precis of the guidance circulated on disqualification by absence. The Clerk recommended the Parish Council 'note' apologies as a general approach for all full council and committee meetings with discretion at the 5-month mark consider approval of apologies for absence in exceptional circumstances. There were no apologies for absence. The Parish Council is currently carrying one vacancy which may be filled by co-option.

201. Declarations of interests and grant of dispensations

Councillors were reminded of their duty to declare any interests in the business to be transacted.

Cllr. Napper declared an interest – Glastonbury Town Council.

202. Confirmation of minutes

RESOLVED - The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 20th February 2024 were approved for signing as a true record of the decisions (subject to 2 corrections agreed).

203. Reports

i. Chairman's Report

The Council received a verbal report from the Chair which included updates on activities and events since the last Council meeting. *The Chairman's Report will be published alongside the minutes on the Parish Council website.*

ii. Clerk's Report

The Clerk updated members on activities since the last meeting and updates to note.

- Dog bin installed Grangefield Park.
- Replacement trees and tree guards delivered to be installed at Merriman Park on Friday.
- The border between Crispin Shopping Centre and the Parish Council Offices – works booked in for the border to be tidied up and plants cut back / shaped. Spring bulbs will be planted ready for next year.
- Councillor wellbeing – work underway in conjunction with SALC and Cllr. Smith.

204. Parish Council Vacancy

Members received co-option questionnaires and considered parish council co-option. A paper ballot took

place.

RESOLVED: Alison Horgan was successfully co-opted onto Street parish council.

Declaration of acceptance of office to be signed at the next meeting.

205. Annual Village Meeting

The Chair introduced arrangements for the Annual Village Meeting. The Clerk advised that Marilyn Fletcher from Friends of Street Library will be attending as guest speaker and ran through the agenda for the evening.

206. Committee Minutes

The Parish Council noted the receipt of draft minutes of recent committee meetings.

Please note: These minutes have been circulated and will be approved at the next meeting of the respective Committee.

- i. Culture and Events (31 January 2024 & 28 February 2024).
- ii. Planning Committee (Extraordinary Planning Meeting 8 January 2024, Extraordinary Planning Committee Meeting 15 January 2024, Planning Committee Meeting 16 January 2024, and Planning Committee Meeting 12 March 2024).
- iii. Policy & Finance Committee (6 February 2024).
- iv. Highways Committee (5 March 2024).

207. Probation – Community Payback

Probation Services are keen to expand their services in Street, all work must be not for profit. Probation run groups of supervised individuals to complete their unpaid work sentenced by the courts. This often comprises of gardening, decorating, litter picking and graffiti removal.

- i. The Parish Council was asked to consider a proposal from Probation Services to engage with Community Payback and received a report from Cllrs and the Clerk following a meeting with the Community Payback supervisor.
RESOLVED – that Street Parish Council accept the proposal from Probation and host Community Payback.
- ii. It was noted that the work that has been suggested may negate the need for some aspects of a Highways Steward role when considering Somerset Council's asset and service devolution.
Cllr. Carswell will approach Wincanton Parish Council for feedback as they host a similar Community Payback scheme. Note: A memorandum of understanding will need to be completed as host partner.

208. Somerset Council closure of Public Toilets

Street Parish Council have received notice that Somerset Council will close the Public Toilets at *Southside Car Park, Vestry Road* from 1 April 2024.

- *These toilets are open WINTER October to March (inclusive) 7am to 6pm and SUMMER April to September (inclusive) 7am to 8pm.*
- *Town and Parish Councils are free to negotiate leases with Somerset Council free from any contractual obligations and make servicing arrangements at their own cost. Cost provided by Somerset Council estimated as £23,000 per annum per toilet block under the previous contract.*

Members debated the announcement of the closure of the public toilets Southside carpark and discussed impact to residents. Cllrs discussed how quickly we could take on the management of the public toilets, costings of maintenance, upkeep, and capital costs. The Parish Council also considered short-term and long-term impact, arrangements, and implications. The Clerk advised of two further issues. A contractor uses the toilets when maintaining Merriman Park and market traders arrive at 6.30am - the other nearest set of public toilets open at 8.30am.

RESOLVED – Street Parish Council agreed a rolling 1–3-month lease (with break clause) with Somerset Council to keep the toilets open as a short-term measure.

RESOLVED – Officers delegated authority to office to obtain a 1–3-month solution to get cleaning in place to keep toilets open on a short-term basis.

RESOLVED – That the Office put up notices to inform residents that Somerset Council will close the public toilets 1 April 2024 and advise that Street Parish Council are working hard to keep them open.

Street Parish Council will defer a long-term decision until the full financial position is known and more information obtained.

209. Somerset Council CCTV

The Parish Council received a report from the Clerk on CCTV and was asked to consider the Somerset Council request to fund 5 CCTV cameras for Street at a cost of £14,174 to keep the CCTV monitoring going.

Note: Mendip cameras will feed directly into Bridgwater House and will be monitored from one central control room from 1 April 2025. Somerset Council are currently undertaking work to upgrade the system and ensure all cameras are fully operational. The Clerk reported on the Somerset Council Bridgewater House control room CCTV offering including hardware/camera footage quality, current faults, draft SLA, reporting lines and meeting frequency.

RESOLVED – That the Parish Council fund 4 cameras once operational at a cost of £11,339 with the first payment to be made at 3 months. Subject to review of SLA by Policy and Finance Committee. Clerk to check insurance obligations.

The Chairman moved to item 12 on the agenda.

210. Motion Request – Flooding

The Parish Council was asked to consider the following motion requests from Cllr. Andy Leafe relating to Flood Risk and proposed development at Somerton Road. *Note: Motion request form detailing supporting information supplied.* The Parish Council were asked to revisit flooding and the potential impact of the Somerton Rd development. Members discussed concerns about flood risk to residents in Street. A partnership / multi-agency approach was suggested with engagement from The Environment Agency, Drainage Board, Somerset Rivers Authority, Somerset Council, and experts.

RESOLVED - That Street Parish Council ask Somerset Council Planning Officers and developer Curo to revisit flood risk and water displacement since outline planning permission was granted for the Somerton Road development in 2018.

RESOLVED - That Street Parish Council to ask central government to review flood mitigation approach and policy for new developments in the Somerset area.

RESOLVED – Street Parish Council to set up a Working Group to progress flooding concerns membership to include Counsellor Reina, Smith, Birch, Wolfers, Leafe and Kellett (plus outside bodies and non-Parish Council members / experts). *Cllr. Leafe to bring together membership.*

RESOLVED - Clerk to obtain timeline from Somerset Council Planning Officer in relation to the Somerton Road development - updates for the reserved matters application have gone quiet and it is essential for the working group to understand the timeline.

At 9.15pm, Cllr. Leafe left the meeting.

211. Somerset Council Asset and Service Devolution

Cllr. Goater provided an update on the work underway by the Somerset Outsourcing Task and Finish Group. The Group have been discussing the idea of rationalising play equipment devolved to Town and Parish Councils by Somerset Council. The Clerk advised that Somerset Council have asked for Town and Parish Councils expression of interest / indication of scale of ambition.

There was discussion about Markets being out of scope from Somerset Council, Parks and Open Spaces being devolved and members briefly discussed the Highway Steward Scheme and considered that some tasks may be suitable to be undertaken by Community Payback.

- i. RESOLVED – The Parish Council support the Highways Committee’s recommendation to register interest to explore employment of Highways Steward. *Note: Community Payback may negate the need for some of these tasks.*
- ii. Members noted the S106 monies available for Anthony Road/Church Road play area. The Clerk will ask Somerset Council whether any of the play areas were funded by 106 monies and whether there is a limit to the 106 provision.

*Cllr. Birch left the meeting 9.20pm and the meeting was suspended for a short break.
At 9.30pm the Chair reconvened the meeting.*

212. Deferral of agenda items

RESOLVED – that Items 15 -24 be deferred.

213. Fire Inspection Report

The Clerk introduced the 3-yearly Fire Inspection Report and actions underway by Officers. Members were advised of changes required to fire doors and asked to consider booking of Parish Council meeting rooms. RESOLVED – That the Parish Council devolve powers to the Clerk and officers to put in place all that is required for legal compliance.

RESOLVED – Room bookings and the use of evac chair will be considered by the Disability Working Group.

214. Finances

i. Report from the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

Members noted the report from the RFO.

ii. Accounts for payment and bank reconciliations

RESOLVED – The Parish Council approved the income and expenditure for February 2024 and note the bank reconciliation.

The latest bank reconciliations for all accounts at 29 February 2024 have been prepared. A detailed income and expenditure report, bank reconciliation report and balance sheet have been sent to Members. Receipts and, payments to be authorised for February are detailed on the pages circulated and will appear as an annex to the minutes in the Minute Book. Each reconciliation and original bank statement will be signed by two Councillors as part of the monthly check of accounts and Councillors operating the Bankline payments system will also conduct an online check.

iii. CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) Account

RESOLVED – Street Parish Council approve retaining funds in the PSDF account.

The CCLA PSDF factsheet 1t 31 January 2024 and statement for February 2024 has been circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman moved to item 22.ii. on the agenda.

215. Correspondence

ii. Amulet Theatre, Shepton Mallet

The Amulet Theatre, Shepton Mallet wrote seeking expression of support from Street PC as part of grant funding application to COF Community Owned Funding). The Amulet is currently on the Theatres at Risk register, but the vision is to reopen the building as a versatile venue hosting theatre productions and interactive space for diverse community groups across the local area. <https://buytheamulet.org.uk/>

RESOLVED – Street Parish Council support grant funding application to COF Community Owned Funding for the Amulet Theatre, Shepton Mallet.

216. Date of Next Meeting

The Annual Village Meeting for electors will take place at:
6.30pm on Tuesday 26 March 2024 in room 6, Crispin Community Centre.

An **extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council** which will take place at:
7.00pm on Tuesday 9th April 2024 in room 6, Crispin Community Centre

The next **ordinary meeting of the Parish Council** will take place at:
7pm on Tuesday 16th April 2024 in Room 6, Crispin Community Centre.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 10.00pm.

These minutes were approved on 16th April 2024. under minute reference TBC. as a true record of the decisions taken and are duly signed below by the Chair of that meeting.

Signed: _____