

## MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

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Held on	Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 7pm. Room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Leigh Road, Street.
Members Summoned and Present:	Cllrs Peter Goater (Vice Chair), Nina Swift, Simon Carswell, Jean Howard, Neil Howiantz, Nicholas Kellett, Andy Leafe, Terry Napper, Bruno Reina, Heather Shearer, Nicola Smith and Adrian Sparkes.
Absent:	Cllrs Pam Birch, Alison Horgan, Bryan Knickerbocker (Chair) and Laura Wolfers.
Officers Present:	Jenny Service, Clerk.
In attendance:	Three residents and Somerset Councillor Liz Leyshon.

Cllr Goater (Vice Chair) chaired the meeting in the absence of Cllr Knickerbocker.

### Public Question Time

*Parishioners were invited to direct questions or comments to the Chair who invites each person to speak for up to 3 minutes on any subject/s of concern. Please note that the Council is unable to make formal decisions under this item.*

Michaela Edmunds spoke about the Crispin Community Centre grant application and answered questions.

- The Soup Kitchen has been the most used since it started in 2020.
- Volunteer Driver Scheme. – lost some volunteer drivers recently. One person committing to one journey once per week would make a massive difference.
- Community Centre is now back to pre-covid levels for groups being full and rooms hired.
- Pursuing grant application following an energy assessment to future proof the building.

A resident spoke about meeting recordings. Clerk to check resolution and put on the agenda for the August meeting if a decision from council is required.

### Somerset Councillor Reports

*Short verbal reports were invited from 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) provided an update on Somerset Council. This included:

- Progress against deficit budget.

Cllr Heather Shearer (Associate Lead Member for Children's Social Care & SEND, Mendip West Division) provided a brief update on her role at Somerset Council. This included:

- Fostering and the need to find new foster places. You need to have a spare room, be over 25 and be of good character.
- New funding opportunity released for sport and sporting activity (crime prevention through sport) through the OPCC (Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner).

Cllr. Simon Carswell (Chair Licensing and Regulatory Committee, Street Division) had no new updates.

The Chair closed public question time at 7.18 pm and opened the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council.

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

### 24/25.FC.056. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Birch, Horgan, Knickerbocker and Wolfers. Apologies were noted.

*LGA 1972 s85(1)*

### 24/25.FC.057. Declarations of Interests and Grant of Dispensations

Councillors were reminded to make any Declarations of Interest, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, SI No. 1464.

*Declarations of interest were made by:*

*Cllr Carswell – Merriman Park (voting member)*

*Cllr Smith – Merriman Park (non-voting member)*

*Cllr Howard – Crispin Community Centre (Trustee).*

### 24/25.FC.058. Confirmation of Minutes

i. RESOLVED – The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024 (circulated) were approved as a correct record and direction given to be signed by the Vie Chair.

*Any changes to the minutes must be agreed by resolution of the council.*

ii. The Clerk advised that previous minutes needed signing:

a. for 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024 (not signed at the May meeting).

b. and 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 (re-printed with changes agreed).

*The Chair moved to item 6 on the agenda. Crispin Community Grant Application.*

### 24/25.FC.059. Grant Application – Crispin Community Centre

Members were asked to consider a grant application from Crispin Community Centre for £15,000 to support the running of the Community Centre, the Volunteer Driver Service and Soup Kitchen.

The Clerk provided information around budget and grant awarding process in accordance with the new grant policy.

RESOLVED – to approve the Crispin Community Centre grant request for £15,000 (monies to be paid immediately from the 2024-25 budget).

### 24/25.FC.060. Chair's Report

There was no report.

### 24/25.FC.061. Clerk's Report

The Clerk provided a short verbal report. This included updates/actions on behalf of the office (by exception).

- *A short report on Freeman Status (circulated).*
- *Community Payback (first session to clear an overgrown footpath was completed at The Mead on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024).*
- *Energy / broadband comparisons.*
- *Policies and governance.*

### 24/25.FC.062. Play Area Proposal

Cllr Howiantz provided a short report on the importance of providing well equipped and maintained play areas in the village. Members were asked to consider a proposal drawn up by Cllr Goater and Cllr Howiantz in relation to Street Parish Council's strategy for Play Areas in response to Somerset Council's Asset and Service Devolution.

RESOLVED – the Parish Council approved the Play Area strategy to take on several Play

Areas from Somerset Council and discuss next steps regarding rationalisation of the remaining play areas that Somerset Council are looking to devolve. The strategy will ensure that no resident is more than a 10-minute walk from any given play area. Skate Park to be added to the map.

24/25.FC.063. Somerset Council Asset and Service Devolution

- i. Cllr Goater and The Clerk provided an update in relation to the Somerset Council Asset and Service Devolution. Cllr Goater has conducted an audit of open spaces against the Somerset Council list of grass cutting. The Parish Council will need to develop a strategy on how these open spaces would be maintained if the Parish Council take these open spaces on. A meeting has been arranged for 24<sup>th</sup> July to discuss next steps with Somerset Council.
- ii. RESOLVED – to approve the request for Cllr Knickerbocker to join the Somerset Council Outsourcing / Asset and Service Devolution Task and Finish Group.

24/25.FC.064. Parish Council IT Support / Office IT Infrastructure Audit

The Clerk provided an update on the current IT Support provision (ad hoc and non-contract) the planned Office IT Infrastructure Audit and printer installation. The Clerk will bring a briefing paper around IT strategy/support to the August Parish Council Meeting.

24/25.FC.065. Tree Survey

Members were asked to consider Merriman Park Decay Test Survey.  
RESOLVED – that the Parish Council approve necessary steps to mitigate risk by obtaining a quote for the works required and carrying out the works. Clerk to investigate whether the wood can be used or repurposed and seek expert guidance.

24/25.FC.066. Letter to Central Government and MPs - remote attendance / voting rights

- i. The Clerk introduced a proposal to write to central government and local MP to ask powers of remote participation to be reinstated. Members discussed accessibility, barriers to participation and the Equality Act and specifically section 149. Cllr Carswell advised a change in legislation had recently allowed for remote attendance and voting at licencing.
- ii. RESOLVED – that the Parish Council write to central government and local MP to ask powers of remote participation to be reinstated with the inclusion of video account from Cllr Birch outlining barriers to attendance. Clerk to link up with Shepton Mallet Town Council.

24/25.FC.067. Working Groups and Representations on Outside Bodies

- i. The report from the Task and Finish Group relating to Working Groups & Parish Council Representation on Outside Bodies was deferred to the September Parish Council Meeting.
- ii. A short update was provided on the formation of a new Community Safety Working Group (*The Parish Council previously resolved in April 2024 to create a Parish Council, Neighbourhood Policing and Partnership Working and agreed a Task and Finish Group to prepare terms of reference and propose membership*).
- iii. RESOLVED – the Parish Council rename the new Working Group ‘Community Safety Working Group’. *YMCA to be invited*.
- iv. The Clerk provided a short update following meetings with Neighbourhood Watch. It was raised that there had been no Neighbourhood Police Team participation at council meetings since April.

24/25.FC.068. Training and Development

- i. Members were asked to consider the need for Equality & Diversity & Inclusivity (EDI) Training. It was agreed that this will be revisited in September.
- ii. The Clerk advised that as previous resolutions have been deferred several times, a DRAFT / model EDI Policy will be taken to the next Policy & Finance Cttee Meeting.
- iii. The Clerk introduced a training opportunity following a previous request - Parish Councillor Wellbeing Training - Resilience and Wellbeing for Councillors run by South West Councils. The cost is £66+VAT per learner (22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 3-5pm online). *The*

*remote, inhouse delivery option was not considered to be necessary at this time.  
Members to contact the Clerk if they wish to secure a place.  
Skills audit raised as part of Parish Council strategy around Training and Development.*

24/25.FC.069. Request from Merriman Park Community Group (MPCG)

- i. The Clerk introduced a request from the Merriman Park Community Group relating to taking on the financial aspect of the Sensory Garden Project including groundworks. The Clerk provided advice and outlined the recommended terms.
- ii. RESOLVED – that the Parish Council agree to use of ‘Sensory Garden Earmarked Reserve’ to support this project.
- iii. RESOLVED – Parish Council to take on financial aspect of Sensory Garden Project with risks being mitigated in line with Clerk’s advice (monies transferred prior to works commencing, invoices to Street Parish Council, no fragmentation of contract. Quotes/price comparisons provided by MPCG where possible.

24/25.FC.070. Committee Minutes

There were no DRAFT minutes to note for recent committee meetings:  
Highways Committee (20<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – minutes to follow).  
*Planning Advisory Committee (scheduled for 9<sup>th</sup> July cancelled due to being inquorate).*

24/25.FC.071. Finances

- i. RESOLVED – to approve the payment schedule for July 2024. This included: payments not previously reported to Council (£745.36), Transfers between accounts, Direct Debits and Regular Statutory Payments (£19,546.55), and July 2024 payments for authorisation (£16,641.81). Total payments for the month £36,188.36.
- ii. RESOLVED – to approve the accounts for payment (income and expenditure for June 2024) and bank reconciliation. *(Circulated separately). Note: The latest bank reconciliations for all accounts at 30 June 2024 have been prepared. A detailed receipts and payments report, bank reconciliation report and balance sheet have been sent to Members. Receipts and payments to be authorised for June 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. At the end of each financial quarter the RFO shall provide the Policy & Finance Committee and Full Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget and shall show explanations of material variances.*
- iii. CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund (PSDF) Account  
RESOLVED – the parish council approved retaining funds in the PSDF account.  
*The CCLA PSDF statement for June 2024 has been circulated with the agenda. Factsheet at 30 June 2024 not yet available.*

24/25.FC.072. 20mph Zone

Members discussed and considered a recommendation from the Highways Committee who on 20th June 2024 RESOLVED – to take an ‘In Principle’ recommendation to Full Council to investigate expanding the 20mph speed limits across the village of Street to create a slow zone. *(Circulated to members previously and considered at the Highways Committee Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024).* It was noted that Cllr Swift has also prepared a MOTION REQUEST FORM ‘To CONSIDER the proposal from resident to consolidate and enlarge Street’s network of 20 mph roads.

At 20.28 hours, the Chair closed the meeting and invited Cllr Leyshon to speak. Cllr Leyshon introduced that Glastonbury had successfully implemented a larger 20mph zone and spoke about some of the challenges and correlation between increased size of zone, signage and cost. At 20.30 hours the Chair re-opened the meeting.

RESOLVED - to accept the recommendation from the Highways Committee to investigate expanding the 20mph speed limits across the village of Street.

24/25.FC.073. Merriman Park Fun Day

- i. RESOLVED – that the budget of £6,600 set aside for the Fun Day be spent on infrastructure items.
- ii. Members considered what support the Fun Day organisers require from the Parish Council. Cllr Carswell to ask the Merriman Park Community Group at the next Fun Day meeting and report back to the Community & Events Committee.

24/25.FC.074. Parish Room Flags

This item: To consider approval of a budget to replace Parish Room flags, was DEFERRED to the August Parish Council Meeting.

24/25.FC.075. Parish Council Newsletter

- i. Members received a DRAFT Newsletter.  
RESOLVED – a final draft will be circulated to members on 19<sup>th</sup> July with comments to be sent to Community Engagement Officer.
- ii. RESOLVED – Officers to publish Newsletter electronically and print 500 copies for key community hubs. Budget of £200 approved.

24/25.FC.076. The Library Gardens

- i. The Clerk advised that the library gardens murals have been retouched, (Work took place on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024).
- ii. The Clerk asked Parish Council for direction relating to maintenance works to protect the murals at the library Gardens including downpipes etc (four murals are Parish Council owned assets). Clerk to progress.

24/25.FC.077. CONFIDENTIAL SESSIONS

*RESOLVED - in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 amended by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, a resolution was passed at the meeting to exclude the press and public for the following items as they involved confidential information on legal/contractual matters and HR/staffing matters.*

24/25.FC.078. Admin Officer Role

The Clerk provided an update. A proposal will be taken to Staffing Committee and Policy and Finance Committees following advice from SALC (Somerset Association of Local Councils) and South West Councils.

24/25.FC.079. DRAFT 2024-27 Grounds Maintenance & Horticultural Contract

- i. Members noted the timeline and process for the invitation to tender.
- ii. The council received and considered a DRAFT invitation to tender letter, Schedule of Works / Specification and Standards Management Guide.
- iii. RESOLVED – The council approved the DRAFT documents and agreed to delegate seeking legal advice relating to SLA including contract management and performance clauses to the Clerk/Officers.

24/25.FC.080. Somerset Council – Somerset East Planning Committee

Cllr Goater provided an update in relation to the proposed Churchill Development. Planning Officers have refused the proposed development at Somerset East Planning Committee.

24/25.FC.081. Items to Raise for Consideration at the next Meeting

*Library Building and Post Office.*

24/25.FC.082. Items to Consider for Press Release

*None raised.*

24/25.FC.083. Date of Next Meeting

The next ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council will be the take place at: 7pm on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at Room 6, Crispin Community Centre, Leigh Road, Street.