**SOMERTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON**

**TUESDAY 5th JANUARY 2016 IN THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.00 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Cllr R Starling (Chair) Cllr D Van de Bulk (Vice Chairman)

Cllr J Clift Cllr N Grayling

Cllr T Jones Cllr D Crane

G Lack (clerk) Cllr B Barker

The Chairman welcomed County Cllr Childs to the meeting together with five residents. Apologies had been received from Borough Cllr Weymouth.

1. **Apologies for Absence.**

None received

1. **Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda**

Cllr Starling noted an interest in Item 11 as a user of the Staithe.

Cllr Childs declared an interest in Item 14 since his sister lived in one of the properties affected by the proposed changes.

1. **To consider a motion to suspend the meeting to allow members of the public and the Borough/County Councillors the opportunity to inform the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Clift and unanimously approved.**
2. **Public Discussion – 15 minutes allowed**

* No issues raised

1. **Report from Borough Councillors/County Councillor if present**

* None noted

1. **Report from PCSO – not present**

* No issues noted.

1. **To confirm minutes of the previous meetings held on 3rd November, 1st and 15th December 2015.**

Cllr Grayling proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd November 2015 be confirmed and this was seconded by Cllr Van de Bulk and unanimously agreed by the Council. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman. Cllr Jones proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st December 2015 be confirmed and this was seconded by Cllr Clift and unanimously agreed by the Council. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

Cllr Grayling proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on the 15th December 2015 be confirmed and this was seconded by Cllr Crane and unanimously agreed by the Council. The minutes were duly signed by the Chairman.

1. **To report matters arising not already on the agenda, for information only.**

* It was agreed that further details regarding the redecoration of the Council House would be requested from Cllr Weymouth, including possible timescales.
* Cllr Starling noted that he had spoken to the individual causing late night noise outside The Lion and this situation had now been resolved.

1. **Finance: To agree payments in accordance with the budget.**

Cllr Grayling proposed a Motion that the following payment be made in accordance with the budget. This was seconded by Cllr Clift and unanimously agreed by Councillors. IT WAS RESOLVED THAT the Motion be carried

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| **Cheque No** | **Payee** | **Description** | **Amount**  **£** |
| 100688 | D Hobbs | War memorial railings | 235.00 |
| 100689 | G Lack | Clerk salary and expenses | 167.00 |
|  |  | TOTAL | 402.00 |

Opening balance 1.4.2015 3,121.14

Add receipts year to date 5,576.85

Less: Payments year to date (excl. above) (3,360.65)

Closing balance year to date £5,337.34

1. **Planning Applications and Decisions:**

**Applications:**

**06/15/0561/F.** Rear ground floor kitchen extension and first floor side bedroom extension, 7 Collis Lane. Approved

**BA/2015/0317/HOUSEH** Front porch, rear single storey extension and conversion of garage to studio. White House, Horsey Road. Approved

1. **Grass cutting 2016/17**

Cllr Starling noted the existing arrangements (14 cuts per year) as follows:

* War memorial
* Entrance to Collis Lane/Church footpath
* Around the seat bench/bus shelter (north side of The Lion PH)
* The Street to Horsey Road public footpath
* Sandy Lane to Staithe Road public footpath
* The Staithe area (south side including around car parking area)

Cllr Starling noted that Mr Bird estimated the above schedule could be done for £1067 which would still be over budget by £42.

However, some other changes could be considered:

* Cllr Van de Bulk suggested that there may be some assistance with cutting the area around The Lion
* Cllr Starling proposed that a contribution from boat owners could be requested to cut the area around their craft. Clause 11 of the Staithe agreement with boat owners states that “Owners are expected to take care of the small areas round their moorings”. It was agreed that a proposal that boat owners be requested to pay for 2 cuts per year would be put on the Agenda for the next Staithe Trustees meeting.
* Cllr Childs suggested that Young Offenders could be involved in grass cutting in the village as part of their reparation work and the clerk would email Cllr Childs to request further information. This would be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting once more information was available.

1. **Parish Council Minutes/Parish Records/minutes. To consider suggestions to make record more accessible for public use. R Starling**

Cllr Starling informed that a parishioner had requested to examine the Parish Council minute books to read/research village history. The existing arrangements were somewhat onerous and Cllr Starling suggested that all Parish records including Parish Council minutes should be made more readily available for public use. Cllr Clift proposed that these records be digitised and put on the website for public access. This was seconded by Cllr. Van De Bulk and unanimously agreed by Councillors. The Clerk agreed to find out how much space was available on the website. It was further agreed that the Clerk would email Cllr Childs to obtain information about the possibility of using the library service to scan in the documents, which could possibly be done by volunteers. Returning to the request to examine the Parish Council minute books, Cllr Clift proposed and Cllr Jones seconded that existing arrangements should remain unchanged i.e that individuals wishing to examine the Parish Council minute books/records can only do so in the village hall, at their cost and at a time when a member of the Parish Council is present. The books were stored in the village hall for safekeeping.

1. **Footpaths/Rights of Way**. To determine any further inclusions as part of the County Council’s review.

It was agreed that the Clerk would request a copy of the definitive map, including historical maps, from County Council Highways Officer Robert West.

1. **Conservation Area Review by Broads Authority**. To comment on the draft report and agree consultation procedures

Cllr Starling noted several anomalies and errors in the report including the fact that Bloodhills had been excluded and several points of history were incorrect. In addition concern from members of the public and Parish Councillors was expressed about proposed changes to the boundary of the Conservation Area particularly with regard to properties not currently included now being included and vice versa. This was particularly problematic for properties not currently included having to face more stringent planning controls. The following course of action was proposed by Cllr Barker, seconded by Cllr Grayling and unanimously approved by the Parish Council:

1. reply to the Broads Authority requesting a public meeting so that parishioners could outline their concerns and to allow for a full consultation process to take place;
2. request that the Broads Authority write to individual property owners explaining the proposed changes to their property status;
3. request that Cllr Childs check with the County Council law department, NP Law, to confirm the legal status of Conservation Areas and to have this information available before the public meeting;
4. publicise the public meeting with a view to holding an evening meeting so that as many parishioners could attend as possible.
5. **Norfolk Fire and Rescue Services draft integrated Risk Management Plan.**

<https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/consultation/re-imaginingnorfolkbudget/consultation/subpage.2015-10-08.4030492507/>

Great concern was expressed about the proposed reduction in services and Cllr Childs explained in great detail how Somerton and other surrounding villages would be affected particularly since the proposal was to reduce overnight services. Cllr Barker proposed that a letter be sent to the Norfolk Fire and Rescue Services outlining the concerns of the Parish Council. This was seconded by Cllr Jones and unanimously agreed by Councillors.

1. **Accounts: Sector led body for audit procurement (email from NALC 24.11.15)**

The Clerk explained that the Audit Commission had now been disbanded and that arrangements for external audit were now the responsibility of Parish Councils. The Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) proposed that they led a sector led procurement process for appointment of an external auditor but that councils could opt out of this if they wished. The Clerk recommended that the Council should **not** opt out of this process. This was proposed by Cllr Clift, seconded by Cllr Jones and unanimously agreed by Councillors. Under these circumstances no further action was needed.

1. **Community Fund: To consider provision of vehicle activated sign on Horsey Road. R Starling**

Cllr Starling noted that there were two options available, (i) to erect painted railings on either side of the road and (ii) to erect a flashing sign, in particular an SAM2 sign costing around £3,000. It was agreed that Cllr Starling would continue his dialogue with the Highways Department to verify costs, permissions etc.

1. **Correspondence**. *Additional Correspondence and* *Actions/Comments noted/made at the meeting are shown in Italic.*

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| **ITEM** | **FROM WHOM RECEIVED** | **CONTENT** | **ACTION REQUIRED** |
| 1 | Norfolk Age UK | Donation request |  |

* In addition, Cllr Jones requested the following items be reported to Highways:
* Dip in road C643 Horsey Road, north of commissioners drain bridge;
* Uneven Road Sign on west side of road, south of commissioners drain;
* 30mph sign on Horsey Road needs realigning;
* Staggered Junction Warning Sign, Martham Road needs realigning
* Pot hole Martham Road approaching Top Farm

1. **Items for Next Agenda**

* Speed Activation Sign
* Information Digitisation

1. **Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 1st March 2016 in the Village Hall at 7.00p.m.**

The Chairman closed the meeting at 20.27