

SOMERTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1st MARCH 2022 AT

THE VILLAGE HALL, COTTAGE ROAD, SOMERTON AT 7.00 P.M.

Councillors present:

R Starling (Chairman)

R Walters (Vice Chairman)

T Jones

B Barker

D Crane

I Wright

J Clift

Minutes Taken by: B Barker

Also present: 9 Residents. Cllrs Bensly and Galer had sent their apologies

Chairman's Announcement:

- a) Complaint received from a resident that the virtual attendance by a councillor at the Parish Council meeting of the 4th January was in breach of regulations and that the vote on Item 10, i.e. Flegg Community Land Trust proposal, was therefore invalid. The complaint was upheld due to advice from the NALC, who advised that, although there had been no intention to mislead, the most appropriate approach is for the Parish Council to agenda the item again and call for a new vote.
 - b) Parish Clerk. The Clerk has resigned from the Council. Brian Barker offered to take the minutes in conjunction with the Chairman, The meeting will also be recorded. The Clerks resignation was read to the meeting.
- 1) To consider apologies for absence – No apologies.
 - 2) Declarations of Interest: Chairman declared items 10 and 14 as a boat owner.
 - 3) To consider a motion to suspend the meeting to allow members of the public and the Borough/County Councillors to inform the meeting. Public Discussion 15 minutes allowed.
 - a) A question was raised at to the cost of the new kissing gate, and whether there had been a tender, plus how it had been disposed of. The public were informed that a quote had been accepted, and that the old gate had been given away. The question of the cost would be addressed as an agenda item at the next meeting.
 - b) A statement was made by a member of the public that the Staithe Trust Scheme was out of date and needed amending. This would have to be put on the next Staithe Trustee meeting. Also, that the Parish Council has no powers other than to appoint Trustees, and if it continued to influence the management of the staithe it would be reported to the Charity Commission. This was noted.
 - c) Comment was received regarding the vote on the Community Land Trust, in that the Parish Council and those at the meeting consisted of only about 6% of the village and that input should be sought from a wider survey before any further vote. It was explained that the Trust had sent out a survey to the whole village, the item had been on the agenda before the meeting of 4th January, and will now be again on the agenda for the further meeting on 8th March in which the public will have a right to have their say.
 - d) Comment received regarding the current complaint from a member of the public in that it was felt it had been acknowledged and reworded to suit the Parish Council before their response. It was explained that the Council's response had been in accordance with advice from the NALC.
 - 4) Report from Borough Councillors – None present.
 - 5) Report from PCSO – None present
 - 6) To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4th and 24th January.

- a) Cllr Jones said that a member of the public had offered to help with the sandbags (item 18) and proposed an amendment to reflect this. However it was felt that as the comment was made by a member of the public outside the time allocated to the public for discussion, that this should not be included as an amendment. No Councillor proposed to second Cllr Jones's proposed amendment and therefore it was not carried.
 - b) Cllr Jones said that he had asked the Chairman to distribute all the correspondence between himself and the NALC relating to the FCLT vote that was carried out incorrectly. Cllr Walters clarified if Cllr Jones intended to table an amendment to change the minutes. Cllr Jones declined to do so, however did suggest that the Chairman was not releasing all the relevant emails on this matter. Chairman informed that he had not included the actual complaint and the response to the complaint emails which had been sent to NALC. Cllr Walters asked Cllr Jones what his rationale for this suggestion was, however Cllr Jones did not respond.
 - c) "Hedging on behalf of Village Hall" Proposed: I.Wright, Seconded: D.Crane. All agreed.
 - d) In accordance with the above a proposal was requested to accept the minutes. Proposed: I.Wright, Seconded: D.Crane. All agreed.
- 7) a) Pollarding of the willows on the Horsey Road – This has been done.
- b) Coronation Lane/Mill Lane Permissive Path - Awaiting a response from the owners of the wind turbine - EcoTricity.
- c) The fence has been repaired in The Street – Footpath No: 5.
- d) Drain cover repaired as noted at the last meeting..
- 8) Accept accounts payments a) and b) . Proposed: I.Wright, Seconded: D.Crane. All agreed.
- 9) Planning Applications:
- a) BA/2021/0357/FUL - Change of use from agricultural to grazing & erection of stables, retrospective. Staithe Farm, Sandy Lane etc etc. No objections. Proposed: T. Jones, Seconded: J.Clift. All agreed.
 - b) 06/22/0068/TRE - Tree works at 3 & 4 The Street. No objections. Proposed: D.Crane, Seconded: I.Wright. All agreed.
 - c) BA/2022/0019/TCAA - Tree works, White House, Horsey Road. Approved 15.2.22. Noted
- 10) Appointment of 1 Trustee to the Somerton Staithe Trust. Mr Brett Hurrell. Elected for a 4 year term. Proposed: J.Clift, Seconded: R.Walters. All agreed.
- 11) Parking provision at ruined church. Proposal for no action, i.e. leave as it is. Proposed: R.Walters, Seconded: I.Wright. All agreed. To review in 6 months.
- 12) Fence /access at ruined church update. It is still consecrated land, but as private land no action can be taken, except that the fence is encroaching on the highway. To be reviewed again (R.Walters).
- 13) Flegg Community Land Trust. Chairman read out a clarification email from Terry Harper. No comments received. To be reviewed for second vote at special meeting on 8th March.
- 14) Report read out by Chairman on investigation into Parish Records from 1984 to 1989 regarding land to South of Staithe. On the 4th January meeting a member of the public raised the matter of the land at the South side of the staithe having been "given away" and that he had been told by the then Chairman to "shut up and sit down. The date was approximately between 1984 And 1989.. A copy of a map was given as evidence. The agendas and minutes of the meetings were investigated by the Chairman, and interviews carried out with former residents and with a Staithe property owner with legal experience. The results show no evidence of this and that all issues had been dealt with by the former Parish Council correctly. It was therefore agreed that no further action is needed. Proposed: D.Crane, Seconded: I.Wright. All agreed.
- 15) Vice Chairman (Cllr Walters) updated the meeting that funding was in place for a total of £343.20p. Baileys can supply and deliver 2 pallet loads of filled sand bags. Funding available from James Bensley and Noel Galer. We will need volunteers to receive and deliver the sand bags (no volunteers have offered so far). Cllr Starling withdrew his previous offer to do this due to other commitments. Volunteers should contact the Vice Chairman.

- 16) Parish Council Complaints Procedure: To seek advice from a Locum Parish Clerk and include on agenda for next meeting.
- 17) Training for Councillors: It was agreed that Cllr Walters attend the training course 'Being an Effective Councillor – Induction Training, 'comprising 2 evenings. Cost £60. Costs for group to be investigated for next meeting (R.W.). These may be able to be met by Parish Council reserves.
- 18) SAM2 road sign moved by Vice Chairman.
- 19) There have been 2 applicants for the Parish Clerk position. However, Stalham Parish Clerk has offered to assist with recruitment, as to act as a temporary locum. Proposal to put current applicants on hold: J.Clift, Seconded: T.Jones. All agreed.
- 20) Correspondence. None.
- 21) I.Wright asked for an update on the finances for the bottle bank. This will be on the next agenda.
- 22) Next meeting: 8th March 7.00pm - Vote on FCLT.
3RD May 7.00 pm - AGM
T.B.A. Meeting ref complaint

Complaint 12th December: Full complaint and subsequent investigation and response reported by Vice Chairman. Two of the co-complainants had responded that they were satisfied that the report had sufficiently addressed their concerns, however the lead complainant felt that the report had not addressed the complaint as far as he was concerned and had requested that it should be considered at a special meeting by the Parish Council (date TBC).

Meeting closed at 20.32.