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# GREAT SOMERFORD (INCORPORATING STARTLEY) PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the virtual meeting held Wednesday 2 September 2020 @ 7.30p.m. using Zoom Video Conferencing software

**Present** Cllr S Mansfield (Chair) Cllr D Butcher Cllr M Griffiths  
Cllr C Blount Cllr H Cole Cllr M Hourigan  
Cllr S Binstead Cllr A Gravell Cllr F Hyde

**In attendance** T M Chapman (Clerk) Wilts Cllr Sturgis (to item 4.7) 1 member of public

**Public Question Time** – There were no questions.

### Reports from Unitary Cllr and Council Representatives - Wilts Cllr Sturgis

Cllr Sturgis informed the meeting that

WLS

- **20/03/& 20/07/WCR West Street footpath.** Wilts Cllr Sturgis stated that the grass has now been strimmed, the pipe and gravel loaded on the trailer so work should be completed the first week-end in September;
- Wiltshire Council is hosting a meeting for Parish representatives about the 5 Year Land Bank issue and negotiations with the Secretary of State; minute 20/09/4.8 refers;
- Planning legislation is being flexed to extend site working hours to speed up construction projects.

### 20/09/1 **Apologies for Absence & Declarations of Interest**

Declarations of interest were noted from Cllr Blount, being the householder, re planning application 20/06247/FUL and from Cllr Binstead re planning application 20/06760/TCA, being a relative of the householder. See agenda item 20/09/4.3.

### 20/09/2 **Minutes and Matters Arising**

- The Minutes of the Parish Council both held on 1 July 2020 were **approved** and **signed** by the Chair as a true record. Proposed: Cllr Binstead; seconded Cllr Hourigan.
- Action Register of Matters Arising**

This was noted without detailed comment and it was pleasing to note that all actions regarding the opening of the Winkins Lane Play Area had been completed. Matters arising that were discussed were

  - **20/06/6.3 Changing the lock to the Community Room & Setting up a Key Register** after it was thought persons unknown had accessed the kitchen. Cllr Butcher reported that the lock had not been changed because the School was not supportive. The Parish Council felt that, for its insurance purposes, it should progress the lock change and tasked Cllrs Mansfield & Butcher to contact the School and seek to resolve their concerns.

**Action: Cllrs Mansfield & Butcher**
  - **20/01/5.3 Clerk access to set up online payments for Councillor authorisation:** The Clerk reported that Lloyds Bank has now advised that they can only do this if the Clerk is made a full cheque signatory, something currently

not permitted by the Parish Council's Finance Regulations. After a brief discussion of the pros and cons for online banking it was **decided** to amend the Finance Regulations so the Clerk could be made a cheque signatory, set up online banking for three signatures required (one to set up and two Councillors to authorise) and to ensure that the Clerk never signed a paper cheque.  
Proposed: Cllr Mansfield; seconded: Cllr Blount.

**Action: Chair & Clerk**

20/09/3 **Coronavirus Pandemic**

i **The Covid 19 Support Group & Parish Council response**

STUE

Two reports from the Covid 19 Group had been pre-circulated and were included in the meeting pack. The first reported on the beneficial activities of the Street Champions and other volunteers. The second was a briefing from the Wiltshire Covid 19 Support Groups' Community Network Meeting on 18 August which, inter alia, recommended updates to Emergency Plans to include pandemics, highlighted the challenge faced by the high average age of Parish Councillors across the County who were having to shield when an agile response was needed to a rapidly developing situation and stressed the need for wider adoption of modern technology for communication purposes. Questions put to the Parish Council asked if they should

- Consider a wider/longer use of the 25 Street Champions?
- Analyse the general age profile of all the named volunteers in the Emergency Plan?
- Expand a Telephone Network Scheme more widely as had been done by the Parochial Church Council?
- Use other social media, such as WhatsApp, as well as the PIE and Facebook?

It was **noted** that Cllrs Griffiths, Blount and Mark Hammond were drafting a response to these recommendations which would be brought to the October meeting for full consideration by the Parish Council.

**Action: Cllrs Griffiths & Blount**

Mark Hammond would be invited to attend the October meeting.

**Action: Clerk**

ii **Community Room Re-opening**

The Clerk had circulated Government Guidance on how safely to open village halls and other facilities and asked the Parish Council to consider whether the Community Room should be opened for (a) Parish Council meetings (b) public hire (as has been done at Gosscroft Hall and Little Somerford). Details of the Covid related precautions that would need to be taken had been provided to Cllr Butcher.

It was **decided** to try and hold the October meeting in the Community Room if there was sufficient space to comply with Covid 19 Regulations regarding social distancing in community facilities. Cllrs Butcher & Hourigan would measure up and report back between meetings.

**Action: Cllrs Butcher & Hourigan**

The majority were supportive of this.

It was further **agreed** that a written Covid 19 risk assessment and checklist for users should be drawn up for the Community Room to enable the Parish Council to decide if it could be made available for local village groups such as the Guides.

**Action: Cllr Butcher/All**

The Clerk **agreed** to re-circulate to all Councillors the information on Covid risk assessments for community facilities which Cllr Butcher had to hand.

*(Post meeting note: Emailed out 3 September)*

**i Annual report on Planning applications May 2019 – May 2020**

Cllr Cole was thanked for his report which summarised the Council's work during the previous year with 54 planning applications having been considered: 25 trees in Conservation Areas, 24 applications for full planning, 3 variations and one outline planning application.

**ii Planning Applications reviewed by the Parish Council between meetings**

**20/05767/FUL** The Old Church School - Replacement frames and roof to existing conservatory to the rear elevation. **Supported.**

**20/05859/TCA** Parsloe, Hollow Street - Crown Raise Cherry trees to 4 Metres From Ground Level (G1); Remove Lower 2 Limbs from Cherry Tree (T1); 3 Metre reduction to Horse Chestnut (T2); 3 Metre Reduction to Cherry Tree (T3). **Supported.**

**20/06025/TCA** The Beeches, Top Street – Fell 1 Mulberry tree. **Supported.**

**iii Planning Applications for consideration**

**20/05865/FUL** Brook Farm, Frog Lane – Creation of Groom's Accommodation. **Supported** provided it remains within the Brook Farm complex and is not sold off as a separate dwelling at some future date. It is suggested that the window in the gable end has obscure glass.

**20/05867/FUL** Stow House - Construction of 40 x 20m Outdoor Horse Riding Arena. **Supported.**

**20/06247/FUL** Church Farmhouse, Park Lane - Replacement Garage and Garden Store. **Supported.**

**20/06760/TCA** Endswell – Fell 1 dead birch tree (T1). **Supported.**

**20/06802/FUL** Land North of Startley Rd near West St Farm - Agricultural track and concrete apron on agricultural land - revised scheme to that approved under 20/01542/FUL. **Supported** provided adequate substantial provision is made to the piping of the ditch under the entrance.

**iv Applications Determined by Wiltshire Council since the last meeting**

**20/04094/FUL** Pinfarthings - Replacement single storey rear extension, conversion of garage and raising roof to create additional living accommodation, raising roof of garage to create additional bedroom and alterations to front porch. **Approved with conditions.**

**20/03564/TCA** 13 Winkins Lane - T1 Horse chestnut - 'Reduce crown by 1.5m - 2.0m back to previous pruning points. Works are to provide clearance and reduce encroachment on driveway, parking area and garage roof'. **No Objection.**

**v Received for consideration since the issue of the original agenda**

**20/07436/TCA** Pinfarthings – Fell 3 horse chestnuts. **Supported.**

vi **Planning Applications Determined by Wiltshire Council since the issue of the original agenda**

**20/05767/FUL** The Old Church School - Replacement frames and roof to existing conservatory to the rear elevation. **Approved with conditions.**

vii **Broadfield Housing Development**

The Parish Council confirmed that it had asked the developer to name the **new road** Broadfield Farm continue the existing house numbering. Backhouse Construction is happy with that name. It now depends upon Wiltshire Council.

Backhouse Construction Ltd had agreed to will look into creating a rear access route across the Free Gardens to the School but a site meeting with the Trustees proved this to be impractical. There will still be a pavement from Broadfield Farm entrance to the Shop.

It was **noted** that there is a lack of clarity about the northern boundary of the development site regarding ownership of the hedge and ditch that runs alongside the Free Gardens i.e. do the hedge and ditch belong to the developers, the Porter family or the Free Gardens Trustees? It is understood that the Free Gardens Trustees have disclaimed any responsibility or title to this.

STU

A complaint from a resident about contractors' vehicles speeding on the Seagry Road had been reported to Backhouse Construction 11 August. Backhouse emailed its drivers the same day reminding them to adhere to speed limits.

viii **Neighbourhood Plan**

A copy of the 2016-26 Neighbourhood Plan had been circulated to all Councillors and Cllr Hourigan reported that, of the four sites within the village earmarked for residential development, two houses had been built on NP3 Frog Lane, work was well underway on NP4 Land adjacent to Brook Farm, work had started on NP1 Broadfield Farm and an outline planning application had been submitted for NP2 Dauntsey Road.

Malmesbury Town Council letter of 1 July confirmed that the Secretary of State had declined to call in the application by Gleasons for development in Malmesbury on land not designated for housing and was content that the decision to approve was made by Wiltshire Council. Wiltshire Cllr Sturgis will circulate papers from Wiltshire Council's recent meeting with Malmesbury Town Council.

**Action: Wilts Cllr Sturgis**

It was **noted** that the Parish Council is a co-signatory to the Wiltshire Area Localism & Planning Alliance letter to Wiltshire Council, local MPs and the Secretary of State.

20/09/5 **Finance & Audit**

i **Finance Report**

The Finance report was **received** and the Parish Council **ratified** and **approved** payments of £1,132 and **noted** receipts of £50. This gives the Parish Council a combined bank balance at 25 August of £17,743. The report is included as an appendix to the minutes. Proposed: Cllr Butcher; seconded Cllr Mansfield.

Since the date of the meeting invoices totalling £178 have been received from T Butcher & J Derrick. These will be included on the next report.

ii **Receipts & Payments accounts to 25 August 2020**

The year to date surplus of £3,116 excess of income over expenditure was **noted** together

with the forecast outturn which indicated a surplus (as opposed to the budgeted deficit) if the assumption that Play Area Project 2 could not take place this financial year due to Covid 19 turns out to be correct. The explanations for outturn variances to budget were accepted.

The bank reconciliation appended was noted.

iii **Audit completion certificate for 2019/20 accounts**

The external audit completion certificate from PKF Littlejohn was **received** and has been displayed on the Parish Council noticeboards and website. It was pleasing to **note** that the audit was unqualified with no recommendations made.

6 **Update on ongoing Council Projects & on those parked due to Covid 19**

i **Play Park Re-opening in the Covid era & Ongoing Maintenance**

The Play Area re-opened 4 July and Cllr Butcher reported that it is functioning well but is often not well used. He did, however, draw attention to some maintenance issues, namely

- Left hand post on the rollover cracked to almost 9mm wide; Kompan has agreed to provide a new post under warranty for the rollover and this is in hand.

- The rubber needs some top soil around edges; Cllrs Butcher & Cole to resolve.

**Action: Cllrs Butcher & Cole**

- Cradle swing to be removed, 1 flat swing also to be removed; reason = social distancing. It was **agreed** to await the report from ROSPA after its September inspection.

ii **Play Park Development – the Zipwire project**

Playdale Ltd modifications of 12 August have allowed the Zipwire to be re-opened.

iii **Play Park Development – Project 2: Climbing Frame & Trampoline**

Cllr Butcher proposed, and the Councillors **agreed** that this project be restarted with the aim of having equipment installed this financial year. Cllr Griffiths will circulate the tender documentation between meetings for formal approval at the October meeting.

**Action: Cllr Griffiths**

iv **Outdoor Adult Gym Equipment**

A request from a local resident that the Parish Council should investigate the procurement of Outdoor Adult Gym Equipment was also deferred until this meeting. On 11 March the Parish Council had been provided by Dauntsey Parish Council with details of the 8 items they had purchased as a "Community Bundle" at a cost of approximately £10,750 + VAT. Reference minute 20/04/6.4. It was **agreed** to defer any consideration of this proposal until Project 2 (above) had been completed.

7. **Highway Matters incl Speed Indicator Device**

To **identify** matters for Wiltshire Council, for Parish action or for the Parish Stewards.

i Briefings on **current and emerging issues** (if any).

- West Street footpath. See minute 20/09/WCR.
- Lime Trees on West Street verge at the junction with Manor Park: Wiltshire Council is investigating whether or not they adopted the verge and are responsible. Cllrs Mansfield & Cole had offered to trim the trees in response to a resident's complaint but it is thought that these might be on Crown Land. Cllr Blount is ascertaining the position with Burgess Salmon.

**Action: Cllr Blount**

- Theft of the post box in Startley (emails to/from Royal Mail). This is still under police investigation and Royal Mail decline to comment in the interim. They appear

unwilling to replace the post box. The Parish Council will continue to pursue this.

## ii **Speed matters**

- Request to Wiltshire Council for a **Metro Count on the Dauntsey Road** & other sites. There has been no response from Martin Rose of Wiltshire Highways. Cllr Hourigan will chase.

**Action: Cllr Hourigan**

- The **annual report on speeding in Startley** (as pre-circulated 31 July) was received. Cllr Hourigan was sorry to report that the effect of the illuminated Speed Indicator Device has been minimal with a large number of dedicated speeders.

- The village has also been trialling one of the new **Auto Speed Watch Devices** on loan from Malmesbury Area Board. An excel spreadsheet detailing the number plates and model of vehicles exceeding 40mph in a 30mph zone in the week 7-13 August listed 200 vehicles! The effectiveness of this system is heavily dependent on the Police who are meant to write to the offenders and either mount their own check at the roadside or in the case of extreme speed visit the culprit. There is little evidence of this happening. The Police are hosting a Skype meeting with Ollie Phipps (Wiltshire Council) and Parish representatives. Cllr Hourigan will report back.

**Action: Cllr Hourigan**

## iii **Items brought forward by Councillors**

- Potholes on the Dauntsey Road.
- Slow signs in West Street.

Due to lack of time (Zoom constraints) these items were deferred to the October meeting.

## iv **Footpaths & Rights of Way**

The annual report compiled by Cllr Binstead was deferred to the October meeting due to Zoom time constraints.

## v **Malmesbury Area Board / Chippenham Area Transport Group (CATG)**

Meetings have largely been discontinued but details were circulated to Councillors of projects under consideration for funding; none within the village. Cllr Hourigan will press for the West Street footpath to be added to the list of fundable projects at the next CATG meeting.

**Action: Cllr Hourigan**

## vi **Best Kept Village competition 2020**

This has been cancelled by CPRE.

## 8. **Governance**

### i **Annual report on the Cemetery at Startley** (as pre-circulated 30 July).

This was **received** without comment and Cllr Hourigan was thanked for producing it. There have been no new burials this year, two grave plots have been reserved and Barry Johnson maintains the site in good order. A couple of Councillors repainted the gates.

### ii **Annual report on Communications (Website and PIE) including WCAG compliance**

Cllr Mansfield emailed this to all Councillors 23 August. It contains an appendix produced using Accessibility Insights for Web extension in Chrome which showed the site to be WCAG compliant. The PIE continues to be popular with 89% subscribers opening the email upon receipt. There have been over 1,100 visits to the website. Cllr Mansfield was thanked for his work in this area. He will add a statement to the website re WCAG compliance.

**Action: Cllr Mansfield**



iii **Emergency Plan and Village Land Drainage maps**

Consideration of this and any amendments to follow the Covid 19 Group recommendations were deferred to the October meeting due to Zoom time constraints.

iv **Annual report on the Community Room**

Cllr Butcher said there had been no problems at the latest inspection on 23 August but he pointed out that the shed needs a new felt roof & repainting. He offered to organise the work and this was agreed.

**Action: Cllr Butcher**

9. **Updates (if any) on Standing items – by exception only**

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| i Cemetery (See 20/09/8.1)               | ii Communications - PIE & Website (See 20/09/8.2)   |
| iii Community Room (See 20/09/3.2 & 8.4) | iv Defibrillator - Training dates - deferred. PPE should be in situ shortly.                                    |
| v Emergency Plan (See 20/09/8.3)         | vi Telephone Book Exchange – notice via PIE & Signpost to remind people it is for BOOKS only not toys or tins). |

10. **Correspondence between meetings**

The Parish Council **received** notification from the Somerfords' Walter Powell School on 29 July that the Admissions Policy for 2021 is being varied in respect of the over subscription criteria relating to church attendance whereby attendance requirements will only apply to the period when the Church or alternate premises were available for public worship and not to the period when it was closed during the Covid 19 pandemic.

An email from Dr Tuite re disruption caused by the Dauntsey Park Horse Trials had been passed by the Parish Council to the landowners and event organisers who had responded.

Complaint re a faulty street lamp on West Street: Wiltshire Council has been informed.

20/09/11 **Councillors' Observations and Items for Next Agenda - None.**

20/09/12 **Dates of Future Meetings**

The next meetings of the Parish Council in 2020 are Wednesday 7 October, and 4 November with 2021 meetings scheduled for 6 January, 3 February and 3 March. All @ 7.30pm. It is not yet known whether these will be via Zoom or take place in the Community Room. Residents are asked to check when the agenda is issued.

The meeting closed at 9 p.m.

<b>Approved</b>		<b>Chair</b>	<b>Date</b>	
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