
GREAT SOMERFORD (INCORPORATING STARTLEY) PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 1 May 2019 at 7.00 p.m. Community Room at Somerfords Walter Powell School

Present Cllr S Mansfield (Chair) Cllr M Hourigan E Blacker (Health & Wellbeing)
Cllr S Binstead Cllr M Griffiths R Jefferson (School Governor)
Cllr C Blount Cllr F Hyde T Sturgis (Wiltshire Councillor)
Cllr H Cole
Cllr A Gravell T M Chapman (Clerk) 16 members of the public

Copies of all reports marked # are available on the Parish Council website
www.greatsomerfordparishcouncil.co.uk

*** Wiltshire Council report was highlights from its "Annual Town & Parish Council Report 2018/19", which is also on the website.**

- 19APM.0. **Dementia Friendly Presentation – Ellen Blacker, Health & Wellbeing Champion**
- i Mrs Blacker spoke about the high percentage of persons (not necessarily elderly) who would suffer from dementia or be the carer of a dementia sufferer. She stressed that dementia is not a natural part of ageing and that it not only causes problems with memory loss and self-awareness but also with co-ordination and mobility. Key messages were, that to help a person "live well" with dementia, family and friends should slow down, listen, maintain eye contact and use visual aids such as photographs to stimulate inter-action.
- ii **Proposed design for new playground facilities – Cllr Hyde**
The long standing equipment in the play area is 40 years old. This was supplemented in April by two new items funded by a grant from Wiltshire Council. The Parish Council is looking to carry out a comprehensive refurbishment and is holding a public consultation in the Community Room on Saturday, 18 May, to seek feedback on its proposed design. It will need to supplement the Parish Council contribution with grant applications and fundraising.
Post Meeting Note: Public consultation now 10.30h Winkins Lane Play area
- iii **Defibrillator report – Cllr Griffiths**
Cllr Griffiths publicised a Defibrillator training session being run by SW Ambulance Trust (SWAT) on 11 June at 7p.m. in the Community Room. She advised villagers that the lease on the current device expires in December and that the Parish Council will be taking out a new lease with SWAT, cost £1,800. It has applied for a £1,500 grant from Malmesbury League of Friends and the balance will come from monies received and hopefully receivable from the Defibrillator collection tin in the village shop.
- iv **GSPC Website – Cllr Mansfield**
The Parish Council currently "piggy backs" onto the village website but, because of stringent publication requirements under the Transparency Code, the Council has decided to set up its own website. This was unveiled as www.greatsomerfordparishcouncil.co.uk and there will be a link to it from the village website. Historic documentation has been transferred. Residents were assured that the Council agendas and minutes will continue to be posted on the village noticeboards.

- 19APM.1. **Apologies for Absence**
Cllr Butcher; Adrian & Christina Johnson

19APM.2. **Declaration(s) of Interest**

There were no new declarations. The members' register of interests is up to date.

19APM.3. **Minutes and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the 2018 Annual Parish meeting were **approved** and signed by the Chair. Proposed: Cllr Hourigan; seconded: Cllr Blount.

The one Matter Arising concerned legal ownership of the Play Area. This was confirmed to be Wiltshire Council who has granted a long lease to the Parish Council.

19APM.4. **The Chairman's Report #**

Cllr Mansfield advised those present that the Parish Council had met monthly, except August and December, during the past year and members of the public and press are welcome to attend. He thanked Councillors and various members of the public for their work during the past year and warmly welcomed Cllr Meriel Griffiths to the Council.

Meriel

Key activities during the year had centred on the War Memorial project, the Village Litter pick, the upkeep of Startley Cemetery, the introduction of the Parish Information email, the setup of the speed camera, replacing of signposts and planning of works in West Street and to the play area. Councillors also underwent training in core governance provided by Community First and have a planning training session scheduled this month.

Potholes are a perennial issue and residents were encouraged to report these via the Wiltshire App.

19APM.5. **Financial report for the year to 31 March 2019 and the 2019/20 budget #**

In 2018/19 the Parish Council ended the year with a deficit of £4,029 (more spend than income). This was planned in its budget as it invested £2,246 on a speed camera (using Community Interest Levy receipts from 2017/18), £555 on two new signposts and £3,144 on new play equipment, funded by a Wiltshire Council grant in a previous year. Its main recurrent costs continue to be grass cutting and salaries. Income was drawn primarily from the precept (Council tax) supplemented by donations to restore the War Memorial for which the Council is very grateful.

Looking forward into 2019/20, the Parish Council has again set a deficit budget with £5,000 (net of any grants or fundraising) set aside for special projects being work to the verge in West Street and a redesign of the play area plus £1,800 to renew the lease on the defibrillator. The original budget deficit of £3,969 will increase by virtue of the £1,400 budgeted spend on the War Memorial which did not take place in March as planned but has fallen into this new financial year with the work taking place over April and May.

As a consequence its cash reserves, which were £14,727 at the start of April 2018, are projected to fall to just over £5,000 by the end of March 2020. Whilst it pegged its precept uplift to £1.94 per band D house this year the Parish Council will be unable to invest so heavily in the village beyond 2020 without new sources of income or further precept increases.

19APM.6. **Planning Report – Cllr Cole**

There were 37 planning applications in 2018/19, split fairly evenly between work on trees (19 applications of which 3 were tree preservation orders) and buildings (18 applications including one listed building consent and one variation to an existing consent, two new house builds and one regarding the ongoing Broadfield Farm development.

In general the Parish Council's response and the decision of Wiltshire Council have been the same.

19APM.7. **Village Matters**

i **Church & PCC #– Anna Sturgis**

In 2018/19 the focus has been on Phase II of the Great Somerford 2020 Vision” - the internal reorganisation and refurbishment of the church.

There were 5 weddings and two baptisms. Normal services are well attended and over 300 people came to the Great Barn Nativity.

The PCC is looking for somebody to come forward to organise the popular Church Fete in 2020 as its long standing organiser, Tricia Morris, is standing down after the 2019 fete.

ii **Coffee Pots - Jean Hopkins**

This group of ladies has been meeting for 50 years in individual's houses for coffee, cake and a chat on Wednesdays, 10.30 – 12.00h. Speakers are also invited. Dates and venues are in the Signpost magazine. New ladies are warmly invited to come along.

iii **Free Gardens # – Cllr Mansfield**

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The Chair thanked Cllrs Butcher and Hourigan for their stalwart service overseeing the maintenance of this facility. The Free Gardens and allotments were once again included in the National Gardens Scheme and will be included in the future. They also appear in a book “A History of England in 100 Places”. The Free Gardens capital has been invested in a managed fund (COIF Charities Investment Fund) and the interest earned is currently sufficient to cover the annual costs of grass cutting.

iv **Neighbourhood Watch # – Kyle Hourigan**

The report was read, in absentia, by the Chair. The main concern this year has been the proliferation of on-line scams. Mr Hourigan thanks villagers who have contacted him during the year to report “suspicious” persons but he would urge them either courteously to approach such persons as “Can I help?” makes them realize they have been noticed and go away or to ring 101 themselves otherwise he is trying to give third hand descriptions to the Police. The biggest deterrent appears to be a camera affixed to a building.

v **School Report # –Richard Jefferson**

Community Governor, Richard Jefferson, advised the meeting that the School is rated “Good” in both its OFSTED and SIAMS inspections. The School is an Academy, part of the Diocese of Bristol Academy Trust, and the Board of Governors covers the three schools in the Somerfords, Seagry and Christian Malford. The new Headteacher is Andrea Kaye.

There are 47 children on roll but the pre-school numbers look low. Funding is tight but the School still manages to provide a broad curriculum to pupils.

vi **Somerford Art Circle – Lindy Lydiate**

Meeting every Tuesday in Little Somerford Village Hall for the modest sum of £2.50 this group has managed to produce a wide range of talented work, samples of which were shown to those present. The Group also brings in outside artists to run workshops on different techniques. It has now been going 12 years.

vii **Signpost Magazine #– Peter Oliver**

The report was read, in absentia, by the Chair. The magazine is 10 years old and its 965 copies are delivered free to every household in the villages. It is funded by advertising and donations.

The magazine team sees itself as a community link service by publishing details of local events and featuring regular poetry and prose contributions. The Editorial Team is seeking new volunteers to help with proof-reading, compiling etc.

viii **Wiltshire Rural Arts – Maris Cole**

The next performance at Great Somerford School on 18 May, 7.30pm, is "Captain Swing & the Blacksmith", a folk musical about the 1840 agricultural protests. The Wiltshire Rural Arts Touring scheme brings live entertainment to the villages.

The St Marylands Trust has provided a grant to cover the costs of venue hire. 20% ticket sales revenue stays in the village and has been used, in the past, to make donations to the pre-school, church and the Signpost magazine.

ix **WI #– Fiona McDowall**

The WI covers the villages of Little and Great Somerford and the local branch was formed in 1941. It meets monthly in Little Somerford Village Hall with a range of diverse speakers and activities. It also participates in Federation (county wide) events. The group supports the Malmesbury Food Bank.

Membership is currently rather low so new members would be welcomed.

19APM.8. **Public Bodies**

i **Wiltshire Council Report * - Wiltshire Cllr Sturgis**

Wiltshire Cllr Sturgis reported on the priorities of Wiltshire Council as being to protect the vulnerable, boost the economy and support local communities. The library service, for example, which offers digital access opportunity, has been maintained. 180 council houses were built in 2018/19 with 49 started this year. 4 contracts for broadband are rolling out fibre optic connectivity across the county.

The Wiltshire Council budget is now substantially funded by domestic council tax and business rates with little reliance of government grants. The increase of digital gives 24/7 access to Council services and is cost-effective.

He spoke of the ongoing investment in roads, the problems of litter, 16% waste to landfill and other issues, all of which are covered in the comprehensive "Annual Town & Parish Council Report 2018/19" which will be accessible from a link in the Reports Appendix of these minutes.

ii **Wiltshire Police #**

There had been eleven incidents involving the police in the Great Somerford area during the period April 2018 and January 2019. The statistics were taken from <https://www.wiltshire.police.uk/article/848/Crime-Map-for-Wiltshire-North>.

19APM10 **Public Questions/Any Other Business**

There being no further questions or matters arising the meeting closed at **9.38** p.m.



Approved

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Chair

Date

5/5/21
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