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# GREAT SOMERFORD (INCORPORATING STARTLEY) PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 4 May 2022 @ 7.30 pm In the School Hall at Somerfords Walter Powell School

<b>Present</b>	Cllr J Botterill	Cllr A Lennox
	Cllr L Campbell	Cllr H Lennox
	Cllr M Griffiths (Vice Chair)	Cllr S Mansfield (Chair)
	Cllr M Hammond	Cllr I Vout
<b>In attendance</b>	T M Chapman (Clerk)	11 members of public
	Wilts Cllr E Threlfall	

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and thanked them for coming. He noted with sadness that Cllr Butcher has stood down due to ill health and thanked him (in absentia) for his valuable contribution over 15 years of devoted service.

### 22/APM/0. **Presentations**

- i Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies #  
Cllr Griffiths led a discussion on spending plans. The village stands to receive just over £100,000 from the new housing developments at Broadfield Farm, Brook Farm and on the Dauntsey Road. This money must be spent on capital infrastructure. The Parish Council has spent £1,606 on dog friendly stiles and kissing gates and has committed to purchase a defibrillator for Startley and a second speed indicator device.

Unfortunately its flagship project, a community use Recreation Area on the School field, has run into the ground due to onerous conditions in the School's lease (health and safety issues). A proper paved pavement on the West Street bend is believed to be unviable as the approval and spend time lines of Wiltshire Council mean the project could probably not be completed within the 5 year CIL spend window.

Other suggestions to date include a new slide and steps in the Winkins Lane Play Area, wooden planters to mark entrances to the village, a community gazebo and additional water pump in the Free Gardens (subject to Trustee consent).

Mr Sturgis asked if the Glebe Field could be resurrected as an alternate site for a community recreation area. The Parish Council explained that detailed cost analysis involving quotations from a number of contractors had been carried out and indicated that the annual maintenance costs involved would be prohibitive. Moreover, they pointed out that the concept had proved extremely unpopular with a number of neighbouring residents and local dog walkers. Mr Sturgis offered to work with the Recreation Working Group to see how it might be achieved in a cost effective manner without the free running of dogs in parts being inhibited. The Parish Council agreed to investigate.

**Action: Cllrs Griffiths & Vout**

He further suggested that the hedge and brambles bordering the Free Gardens and the Dauntsey Road be ripped out and replaced with a well laid hedge of native species and that the ditch be piped.

**Agenda May**

ii **Neighbourhood Plan (NP)**

Cllr Lennox is planning to consult within the village on the review and update of the existing plan. Plans more than 2 years old like this one now carry little weight in the planning process so it is important that it is refreshed. In conjunction with the team who created the original NP he will set up an online survey through Survey Monkey or similar.

Items that could be included in a reworked NP are designated green corridors and areas protected from any development. Mr Sturgis recommended that the Parish Council check the extent to which the new housing developments actually conform to the NP and the origin of residents in the affordable housing units. He felt professional advice be used to finalise the reworked plan. He thought external funding might be available to support this.

**Action: Cllr A Lennox**

22/APM/1. **Apologies for Absence – None.**

22/APM/2. **Declaration(s) of Interest** (Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007). None.

22/APM/3. **Minutes and Matters Arising from the 2021 APM**

The minutes of the 2021 Annual Parish meeting were **approved** and signed by the Chair. Proposed: Cllr Griffiths; seconded: Cllr Mansfield. The only matter arising, consideration of CIL spend plans, had been actioned and minuted in June 2021.

22/APM/4. **The Chairman's report # – Cllr Stephen Mansfield**

Cllr Mansfield advised those present that the Parish Council had met monthly, except August, during the past year and members of the public and press had been welcome to attend. Until May 2021 meetings had been via Zoom video conferencing software; since then they had been held in the Church but the Parish Council has now reverted to the Community Room.

There had been change on the Parish Council with Cllr Gravell resigning earlier in the year due to business commitments and Cllr Campbell being co-opted in March. He thanked Mrs Butcher for the way she maintained the Community Room and administered the bookings. The Parish Council is still actively seeking a replacement.

The bulk of the report (a copy of which is appended to the minutes on the website) consisted of updates from individual Councillors on their activities concerning the Best Kept Village Competition, the Community Room, the Cemetery, Comms, the Defibrillator, the Emergency Plan, Footpaths, Highways, the Play Area, Startley Post Box (eventually replaced), the Telephone Box Library and the War Memorial.

22/APM/5. **Planning & Housing Developments Report #**

Cllr Hammond reported on the 38 planning applications considered by the Council in the last 12 months of which 14 were for work on trees. Only 3 were refused by Wiltshire Council and in the majority of cases, the Parish Council was able to support the residents' planning applications.

Four planning applications gave cause for concern to residents:

- Broadfield Farm for an extra 21 houses;
- Dauntsey Road new dwellings' flood management & transport movements;
- West Street Farm agricultural storage units;
- 1 The Paddock, Startley, a large industrial storage building.

These four remain a concern for the Parish Council either from the perspective of being subject to a potential future appeal decision to grant permission for the application or from the perspective of being a development which is in the construction phase and which has the potential to cause a nuisance or disturbance to residents that live within the vicinity.

22/APM/6.

### **Financial report for the year to 31 March 2022 & the budget for the year to 31 March 2023 #**

In 2021/22 the Parish Council ended the year with a substantial surplus and extremely healthy bank balance almost entirely due to the receipt of CIL monies in advance of spend. Only £4,636 cash in the bank is available for day to day recurrent expenditure. Excluding the investment in the Play Area (gazebo and benches), CIL monies spent on footpath improvements and donations to local organisations (Church, Free Gardens, SHASHA, Signpost) the most significant recurrent expenditure this year and next remains wages (just over £2,0000), grass cutting and cemetery maintenance. VAT can be recovered the year after expenditure is incurred.

The 2022/23 budget shows a £3,050 increase in the Precept to set aside money for a Road Safety Investigation, the next stage towards any traffic calming measures being approved should the metro counts demonstrate sufficient evidence of speeding. The budget also includes monies for potential CIL spend and the Parish Council's contribution towards the costs of the Platinum Jubilee Street Party which is free to residents.

22/APM/7.

### **Speeding in Our Community #**

The Parish Council is requesting metro counts at the four main entrance points to the village but has delayed those currently affected by housing development as traffic speeds are artificially reduced.

Cllr A Lennox delivered a comprehensive report on the statistics obtained from the speed indicator device (SID) positioned at the south end of Startley Village viewing Northbound traffic. There are nearly 40,000 vehicle movements going north through Startley every year and only 22% adhere to the posted 30 mph speed limit with 11% exceeding 40 mph. The highest recorded speed was 68 mph. 17 vehicles have triggered the speed indicator advice 12 or more times this year and disappointingly many of these are known to be residents of the village not commuter traffic. The Parish Council plans to install a new SID alongside the speed camera which will show actual speed driven and will monitor the effect this has.

Cllr A Lennox is in touch with the local Police & Crime Commissioner who is engaging extra Police Community Support Officers from July to work with local speed watch groups. At present Wiltshire Police only allow the submission of heat map data detailing the times of day that the camera records the highest speed. They do not allow vehicle registration or alleged traffic offence data to be passed to them, so at this time the camera is of limited use other than to remind the Police that the vehicle speeds through Startley are a constant source of concern to residents and the Parish Council.

22/APM/8.

### **Environment & Sustainability #**

Cllr Botterill reported on local actions (the Winkins Lane wildflower verge) and the set up of an Environmental Working Group which is considering projects such as recycling, rural car clubs and regular litter picking. The group is investigating funding to stage educational events and workshops on green issues.

22/APM/9.

### **Village Matters**

#### **i School Report**

The Head Teacher, Ms Christina Brugger advised those present that the School currently has 43 pupils on roll. She is Head of Schools across Somerfords Walter Powell, Christian Malford and Seagry primary schools, part of the larger DBAT Trust. The three schools work together to share resources and staff.

The School is well-supported by SHASA and community in fundraising events and have been able to invest in a new outdoor classroom, much needed improvements to the playground and resources. Somerfords Home and School Association (SHASA) has initiated a new Friday stay and play session for parents/carers and younger children and the School is now able to welcome volunteers to help with reading and other activities. There is an ongoing project to

install a much-needed audio-visual system in the school hall which, alongside installation of secure and lockable doors, could extend out of hours community use. The School is also working with its partner schools towards establishing a 20mph zone either side of the school entrance.

ii **The Free Gardens #**

Trustee Mr Mansfield spoke about the increased uptake of allotments over the past year on this 200 year old site and anticipates that all will be taken up within the next year. He highlighted the pressure on this small charity to engage in fundraising to cover the costs of site maintenance and the emerging need for work to the 20 year old trees in the Jubilee Gardens and elsewhere on site.

iii **The Great Somerford Community Fund #**

The Chair read out a report prepared by Trustee Mr Blount. This charity was set up in 2019 to enable private donations to the Winkins Lane Play Area Appeal to be gift aided and last April they were pleased to contribute £1,350 towards a new climbing frame. They are donating towards the costs of the Platinum Jubilee Street Party.

The developers of Somerbrook at Brook Farm have donated monies as seed funding for preliminary work for a proposed recreation ground. This project has currently stalled (see minute **22/APM/0.1**) unless the Glebe Field proves a viable alternative.

iv **Others as notified on the night** – None.

22/APM/10 **Public Bodies**

i **Wiltshire Council Report**

Wilts Cllr Threlfall has been liaising closely with the Parish Council on a range of matters such as speeding. Malmesbury Area Board has set up a Road Safety Group. Its Community Area Transport Group has been expanded to include footpaths and bridle paths and is being given more money. She flagged concerns over the risk posed by ash trees alongside roads and pavements failing suddenly due to ash die back.

One member of public questioned the ownership of ash trees along Hollow Street in the vicinity of Coppins. Wilts Cllr Threlfall will investigate.

**Action: Wilts Cllr Threlfall**

22/APM/11. **Public Questions/AOB**

Cllr A Lennox reminded those present that there is now a vacancy on the Parish Council and he would encourage any interested parties to step forward.

**#** indicates a written report has been provided and will be displayed after the meeting on the Parish Council website [www.greatsomerfordparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.greatsomerfordparishcouncil.co.uk).

The meeting closed at 9.03 pm.

**Approved**

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**Chair**

**Date** .....