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# GREAT SOMERFORD (INCORPORATING STARTLEY) PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 6 March 2024 Community Room@ 7.30 pm

<b>Present</b>	Cllr T Barker	Cllr T Harrison
	Cllr H Evans	Cllr T Sturgis
	Cllr H Gravell	Cllr D Todd
	Cllr M Griffiths (Chair)	
<b>In attend'ce</b>	H Wallace (Clerk)	2 members of the public

PQT                    **Public Questions**

Members of the public raised the issue of vehicles parking on the grass verge to the east of the school entrance which has caused mud to go on to the footpath and create a hazard outside the school. It was also noted that a nearby drain has been crushed which could exacerbate flooding. Various possible solutions were discussed. **Action:** Cllr Evans to liaise with the school to move forward solutions. The gully will be unblocked in the meantime.

WCR                    **Reports from Unitary Councillor and Council Representatives**

Cllr Threlfall has continued to put pressure on the pothole situation in West Street and the clearance of the ditches and drains as a flood prevention measure. Frog Lane being jetted next week. The broken drain on West Street needs to be fixed as a priority. Highways have agreed to resurface West Street.

**Apologies for Absence**

Cllr J Harper  
Cllr E Threlfall

It was noted that Cllr Ian Vout has handed in his resignation from the Parish Council and the relevant sub-committees. The Parish Council members expressed their appreciation for Ian's work over the past few years.

**Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Griffiths declared an interest in the fence replacement in progress at Winkins Lane Playground (which had been dealt with by Cllr Vout) **Action:** Cllr Evans will contact the contractor about the works in progress. It was noted that a member of the public will check the playground equipment weekly and report any issues to the PC.  
Cllr Gravell declared an interest in one of the planning applications discussed.

Intro                    **Minutes and Matters Arising**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held 7 February were **approved** and **signed**

**Actions:**

The action register was reviewed and there were no urgent actions. An update regarding gully clearance was reported by Cllr Sturgis who has plotted the information on the parish map to put with the flood plan and is chasing an Area of Operations (AO) plan from Wiltshire and will send to Cllrs for review.

3. CIL

**CIL Projects and proposals were discussed**

Regarding the proposed recreation area within the Diocese of Bristol's Glebe Field, Cllr Sturgis has heard further from the Diocese Land Agent with a request for GSPC to clarify the location of the pylons, which he has done and asked for another update by next meeting.

The school and community noticeboard for Somerfords Walter Powell School is going to be purchased (by SHASA and rebated by the PC) from The Noticeboard Co at £1042.80  
**Proposed:** Cllr Evans, **Seconded:** Cllr Griffiths

Quotes are being sought for the Pre-School garden, and prices for grit bins are in hand, but will be approved and then installed later in the year.

4. Planning Applications received since the last meeting:

PL/2024/01430 THE BEECHES

Proposal: T1 - Crown reduce Horse Chestnut tree next to gate by approximately 3m

PL/2024/01261

THE BEECHES

Proposal: T2 - Crown Lift Beech to no more than 5m & prune clear of utility cables by no more than 1m

PL/2024/01205 THE MANOR HOUSE, WEST STREET

Proposal: T1 Horse chestnut tree - Fell. T2 English Lime tree – Fell.

PL/2024/01566 The Hawthorns, Frog Lane

Proposal: Loft conversion

PL/2024/01387 - Lawful Development Certificate for an Existing Use

The Stables, Marsh Farm, Startley. Proposal: Erection of building and use as a dwelling  
The matter was discussed and the PC has no comment to make to the application.

PL/2024/01828 - Householder Application. The Quacks, Manor Park. Proposal: Single storey side extension (retrospectively) - Resubmission of PL/2023/01809  
The PC has no comment to make to the application.

PL/2024/01768 THE OLD MASONS ARMS

Proposal: T1 Ash tree - Reduce to a structural pollard of no more than 6 metres in height from ground level. Structural branches will be reduced, retaining a canopy form.

Applications determined since the last meeting:

PL/2023/09139 - Full Planning Permission Barn off West Street. Proposal: Residential conversion of former agricultural barn Decision: Approve with Conditions

b) Housing developments  
No updates this time

c) Neighbourhood plan

The PC have received a grant to cover the cost of an adviser for the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan. There are three phases: Phase 1 is the initial decision about what is needed from the advisor,;Phase 2 will be the meeting with the Neighbourhood plan sub-committee, which will comprise three parish councillors and three volunteers; and Phase 3 will be the production of the report. Scale, character and variety of houses should be considered in the revised Plan.

5. Finance **Finance**

a) **Monthly Finance Report**

**The Finance report was received. The Parish Council ratified & approved** transactions processed since the last meeting (£836.21 payments). The Treasurer and account was reconciled to 29 February. This was signed by Cllr Barker, a non-signatory of the bank accounts. **Proposed:** Cllr Griffiths, **Seconded:** Cllr Todd.

Donations were discussed. **Action:** Cllr Griffiths will contact donation recipients to receive requests at the next meeting.

Balances were as follows:

Current Account 88,312.19  
Deposit Account 30,448.26  
Fixed Term Deposit Account 0  
Combined total **118,760.45**

6. Managed Facilities **Winkins Lane Playground**

Cllr Vout started the Winkins Lane playground work prior to his resignation and Cllr Evans will take that on, as well as looking at the potential replacement of the swing cross bar and the replacement of the toddler slide. Cllr Griffiths is meeting with a member of the public, Mrs Parr, and will discuss the 2023 ROSPA playground safety inspection report as well as discuss ideas for the planned new toddler slide.

Community Room – we need to make sure that the contractual position is clear. **Action:** Cllr Evans will re-iterate to the School and Cllr Sturgis has contact with the Diocese of Bristol Acacamy Trust (DBAT) land agent.

Community Room  
No updates this time

7. Environment

a) Any actions for the Parish Steward or Council  
Cllr Sturgis will liaise since Cllr Vout has resigned. **Action:** Cllr Sturgis will deal with the "low bridge" sign in Park Lane that fell over in the recent storms.

To receive:

b) An update on Footpaths in the Parish  
No updates at this time until the weather has improved

Local Speedwatch



**Action:** Cllr Harrison to assess whether the speedometers can be accessed without a ladder. Cllr Harrison arranging to meet up with previous Cllr A Lennox to discuss speedwatch.

8. Standing Items To discuss any updates regarding:  
Startley Cemetery – **Action:** Cllr Harrison will discuss actions required with Cllr H Lennox. It was noted that Cllr Griffiths now has the magnetic opening mechanism for the Startley Cemetery noticeboard.

Communications, Book Exchange; School's Liaison; Website; - no updates

Gt Somerford and Startley Defibrillators - batteries and pads replaced

The Telephone box will be painted in the next few weeks – **Action:** Cllr Todd.

The Emergency Plan and Flood Plan were discussed. Cllr Sturgis reported that once he receives the requested map (for gully clearance), it will be used to mark up flooding risks from rain or river overflow in the village. It was noted that the River Avon has capacity for 2 metres, yet has not gone above 1.6 metres in all the recent flooding. Cllr Sturgis has also spoken to the Clerk of Seagry Parish about the access road between Gt Somerford to Sutton Bengier and Chippenham, in efforts to resolve the flooding, which has made the road impassable at times. **Action:** Cllr Sturgis with the Clerk to write to Gt Somerford landowners who may be able to assist with improving drainage. **Action:** Cllr Threlfall will find out whom at Wiltshire Council to send the confidential version of Emergency Plan to and once completed, the Flood Plan will be added to it.

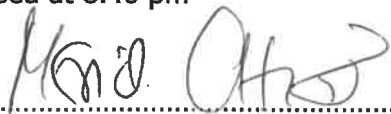
It was agreed that Cllr Barker would take the Minutes for the April GSPC meeting in the Clerk's absence. It was also discussed that former Cllr Sarah Binstead would be approached to complete the internal audit of accounts.

Notice

**Dates for Future Meetings @ 7.30 pm – 3 April 2024** in the Community Room.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Approved .....



Chair

Date

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024