
GREAT SOMERFORD (INCORPORATING STARTLEY) PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2 May 2018 at 7.30 p.m. Community Room at Somerfords Walter Powell School

Present Cllr S Mansfield (Chair) T M Chapman (Clerk)
Cllr C Blount R Jefferson (School Governor)
Cllr D Butcher 11 members of the public
Cllr M Hourigan
Cllr F Hyde

Copies of written reports presented at the meeting can be seen on the village website <http://greatsomerford.info/parish-council/>

Minute ref

- 18APM.1. **Apologies for Absence**
Cllrs Binstead, Cole & Gravell, Wiltshire Cllr T Sturgis, M Cole
- 18APM.2. **Declaration(s) of Interest**
There were no new declarations. The members' register of interests is up to date.
- 18APM.3. **Minutes and Matters Arising**
The minutes of the 2017 Annual Parish meeting were approved and signed by the Chair. Proposed: Cllr Blount. Seconded: Cllr Hyde.
- 18APM.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 all 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 highlighted the contributions of the three Council members who had left during the year, Sid Jevons, Christine Butler and Arthur Scott. He welcomed new Council members, Fuchsia Hyde and Chris Blount.
- He advised that Neighbourhood Watch is still active but with notices now being replicated on Facebook and sent to the Watch e-mail list, not being posted through letterboxes.
- Key activities during the year had centred on the installation of the Defibrillator, Carols around the tree, upkeep of the cemetery, plans to revamp the recreation area and the Neighbourhood Plan now in place so the Steering Committee had been stood down. Work was ongoing concerning Highways (white lines now repainted, some potholes being filled but the "Slow" signs still need replacing).
- The Free Gardens and allotments were once again included in the National

Gardens Scheme and will be included in the future. In an era of low interest rates the Free Gardens income does not cover the cost of cutting the grass even though its capital has been invested in a managed fund (COIF Charities Investment Fund) with the intention of providing sufficient interest to cover annual costs together with capital growth such that the real value of the principle falls no further.

- 18APM.5. **Financial report for the year to 31 March 2018 and the 2018/19 budget**
Total income amounted to £11,982 of which the majority was provided by the Precept of £7,822 (up 2% from last year) and Community Interest Levy receipts of £2,204. Expenditure amounted to £12,734 so the Parish Council spent £752 more than it received. This deficit was more than covered by its cash reserves which ended the year at £14,727. The main areas of spend were on maintenance of footpaths and grants to the PCC, the Signpost Magazine and the Free Gardens.

The Council has set a deficit budget for 2018/19 with expenditure planned to exceed income by £5,480. This policy arose from the decisions to peg the increase in the Precept to an inflationary uplift of 3% and projected spend on new equipment for the playground in Great Somerford and a speed awareness camera for Startley.

- 18APM.6. **Planning Report**
This was presented by Cllr Mansfield in the absence of Cllr Cole. There were 36 planning applications in 2017, the majority for work on trees but three for new dwellings in Frog Lane (2), Brook Farm (8) and Broadfield Farm (20); the latter is still under discussion.

- 18APM.7. **Proposals for new playground facilities**
Cllr Fuchsia Hyde presented the Parish Council's outline plans to create a play area that would appeal to a wider age range (from toddlers, through teenagers to older adults) with disability accessible equipment. She is negotiating with three suppliers. The plans will be displayed on the village noticeboard, in the Community Room and on the website. Such a revamp could cost up to £60,000 over three years. Cllr Hyde is looking to set up a Fundraising Steering Committee to obtain grant funding.

Parishioners were urged to send suggestions and feed-back on the plans to the Clerk.

Some of those present would like to see the Parish Field made available for football. Some felt teenagers would prefer a separate site to toddlers.

The Parish Council has Land Registry title to the Play Area and the Clerk was tasked to verify with Wiltshire Council that the asset transfer is complete.

Action: Clerk

- 18APM.8. **Wiltshire Council Report**
This was read by Cllr Mansfield in the absence of Wiltshire Cllr Sturgis who had a meeting clash with Malmesbury Area Board. The report identified the challenges being faced by Wiltshire Council in delivering increasing demand for services given its £26 million reduction in central government funding. The importance of working with Area Boards is well illustrated by the £1.25 million of funding provided through the Area Boards to strengthen local communities across Wiltshire. Central investment continues on Wiltshire roads to the tune of £21

million spent on major maintenance and resurfacing.

18APM.9. **Wiltshire Police**

This was read by Cllr Mansfield in the absence of its author, PCSO Juliet Evans. There had been eight incidents involving the police in Great Somerford during the past year. It was unclear whether this statistic included Startley or not.

18APM10. **School Report**

Community Governor, Richard Jefferson, advised the meeting that the School has received a rating of "Good" in both its OFSTED and SIAMS inspections. The School is now an Academy, part of the Diocese of Bristol Academy Trust, and the Board of Governors covers the schools in the Somerfords, Seagry and Christian Malford.

As the local school only has 45 children (plus 18 in the pre-school) it is squeezed for funding which is allocated on a per capita basis; it is forced to rely on fundraising for school trips and needs volunteers for maintenance.

Jill Rowe, Executive Principal is retiring at the end of the summer term. Her current Deputy Executive Principal, Andrea Kaye has been appointed Acting Executive Principal.

Regular updates on school life are published in Signpost and on the school website. The governors publish an update at Christmas, Easter and Summer.

18APM.11. **St Peter & St Paul Church**

This was read by Cllr Mansfield in the absence of any current member of the PCC. There were 52 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll as adopted at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 29th March 2017, five of whom were not resident within the parish. The average weekly attendance in church on a normal Sunday when there is a service is 20.

The PCC has been focussing effort on the "Great Somerford 2020 Vision", Phase I being the re-roofing of the Church (completed January 2017 at a cost of £150,000) and Phase II being the internal reorganisation and refurbishment.

It has also adopted new Churchyard Rules and Regulations, a Baptisms policy and Safeguarding Policies with regard to all aspects of 'church life', as well as for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

18APM.12. **Health & Wellbeing Champion**

This very interesting report was read by Cllr Mansfield in the absence of Ellen Blacker, who was attending the Malmesbury Area Board. Four case studies outlined her role in championing the needs of older and vulnerable members of the community which primarily involved assisting them to apply for state benefits or mobility aids to which they were entitled. There was interest from the floor in the Wiltshire "Keeping Warm" grant scheme.

18APM.13. **Village Activities**

This was read by Cllr Mansfield in the absence of its author, Maris Cole. The report centred on the two Wiltshire Rural Arts Touring Shows staged in the village, "As the Crow Flies", live music and drama and a performance by Opera Dudes. 20% of the ticket sales stay in the village and have been given to the pre-school,

school, church or The Signpost magazine.

Wiltshire Council has cut funding to this group by 20% and part of a phased reduction to nil within four years. Mrs Cole urged villagers to support these performances and several persons present commented on the high quality thereof.

18APM.14. **Any Other Business**

An individual highlighted the challenge to pedestrians when walking along West Street and Manor Park due to the digging up of the roadside ditch and depositing of the contents on the verge. She urged the Parish Council to take action.

Cllr Mansfield advised that the Council was already aware of the issue and taking steps to address it by exploring the possibilities of installing a footpath alongside Quack Quacks field and applying for a CATG (Community Area Transport Group) grant.

There being no further questions or matters arising the meeting closed at **8.45** p.m.

Approved

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Chair

Date

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