KINGSTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD VIRTUALLY ON 12th OCTOBER 2020

Item No	Item	Action By
1.0	**Attendance** In attendance: Cllr P Townsend (Chairman) Cllr S Hancock Cllr N Townsend Cllr D Stripp Cllr D Taylor Cllr A Wilcox Mrs K Gibbins (Parish Clerk) Cllr R Williams (SCC) Cllr D Darch (SWT) 4 members of the public attended the meeting	
2.0	**Councillors' Declarations of Interest –** None	
3.0	**Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 7th September 2020 -** **Resolved:** The minutes were approved and will be signed as a true record at a future date.	
4.0	**Planning -** **a) Applications:** **Case Ref: 20/20/0026/CQ** - Prior approval for proposed change of use from agricultural building to dwelling house (Class C3) and associated building operations at The Greenhouse, Newtons, Nailsbourne. The Council considered the above planning application and has no objection to the application.	
5.0	**Resident's Concerns -** **Flooding in Lodes Lane** – A local resident made the Council aware she had dug out 7 of the storm drains up Lodes Lane on Saturday last to assist with water runoff. She stated the drains have not been cleared for years but historically had been flushed annually. She wrote to SCC in 2016 about this and was advised they would reinstate the annual flush. This does not appear to have happened. She feels preceding with drainage repair at the bottom of Lodes Lane is all well and good, but water will continue to run down the lane because it cannot drain away. She was pleased to say SCC sent engineers out and they have contacted her to let her know what their plans are. She is hoping they will agree to clear out the blocked drains and reinstate the annual flush which will also allow the new system at the bottom of the lane to work. Cllr R Williams said he will follow this up with Highways. He agreed the work being done currently was focused on the bottom of Lodes Lane. Cllr Williams asked the resident to continue to apply pressure to SCC Highways regarding the problems at Lodes Lane and the resident agreed to contact Cllr R Williams to follow up the issue. Cllr Wilcox agreed the gullies have been blocked for many years and that it was a waste of time repairing drainage at the bottom of the lane as the water does not get into the drains in the first place. He stressed that the gullies need to be cleared. **Traffic Calming Measures** – The Chairman invited a local resident objecting to the traffic calming measures to speak. The resident wondered what benchmark for safer roads had been used as there appeared to be no hard data on traffic incidents/accidents on the roads in the parish of late. It would appear the mandate for lower speed limits was mainly based on responses to the Community Survey of 2016. He felt only a small proportion of residents responded to the survey and interested road users outside of the parish were not consulted. He felt the existing speed limits were in line with SCC guidelines and that imposing stricter measures could mean less compliance on the one hand and/or increased volume of traffic on the other. He felt a dedicated cycle route may be a better solution. He also felt	

	with the likely introduction of more vehicles with speed limiting devices and autonomous vehicles in the future it was important to consider future generations who will be stuck with lower speed limits unnecessarily if the plan is implemented. The Chair responded to the resident's concerns and said the PC was advocating lower speed limits in KSM as the roads did not warrant the current limits imposed on them and the safety of walkers and cyclists was very important. He went on to say Somerset County Council is advocating a 20mph speed limit outside of all schools. Cllr D Taylor referred to several major arteries in Taunton with lower speed limits enforced on them than the Kingston Road although they were wider roads where 2 cars could pass safely. He went on to say the Kingston Road was particularly problematic as it is too narrow in many places for two wide vehicles to pass safely. He also said there is no footpath which forces pedestrians to walk in the road. As we cannot get a footway through the village the way to share the road safely is to reduce the speed limit to 20mph. Cllr N Townsend said he shared a similar opinion to the resident and was against a blanket reduction in speed limits throughout the parish. The resident asked about a timeline for further action which the Chair said would be discussed in the next agenda item. **Brantwood Development** - Brantwood Development - The Chair addressed the question posed by a local resident regarding the Brantwood Development. Following a discussion, the resident was encouraged by Cllr N Townsend to write to SW&T with his concerns about this development giving access, via Lodes Lane, to consented scheme 20/18/008.	
6.0	**Traffic Calming Measures –** Cllr Taylor confirmed the PC had put forward a proposal to SCC Highways regarding traffic calming measures which included relevant data. He said SCC had continued to collect data to have more detailed data for analysis. SCC has now got enough supporting data and will start the design work as the data collected by SCC supports the Council's proposal to formalise lower speed limits in the parish. SCC Highways are satisfied lower speed limits are justified and will improve safety. The following speed limits are likely to be set: Kingston Road – 40mph; Kingston Road through much of the village – 20mph and Nailsbourne, Fulford and Yarford – 30 mph. Cllr R Williams confirmed it was SCC's policy to impose 20mph speed limits outside of schools and as Kingston has two schools, Taunton International School and the Primary School, and as a result of the character of the centre of the village, it lends itself to a 20mph section. He said whether a 30mph limit was necessary through Yarford could be examined and residents of Yarford may wish to express an opinion but the Council could only make a judgement based on those people who responded to the questionnaire. He went on to say the engineers had completed gathering data and the next stage was for a detailed design to be done proposing where the new speed limit posts should be sited. Highways will then cost the project and inform the PC. Once 20% of the cost has been paid up front, SCC will commission contractors to undertake the work. When it happens is subject to contractor availability, but he hoped it could take place in January/February 2021.	
7.0	**Playing Field –** The Chair advised there had been little activity around the playing field. He did offer thanks to the members of the community who had successfully sourced 12 replacement chairs for the pavilion.	
8.0	**Local Government Reorganisation –** The Chair asked Cllr D Darch for an update on this topic. Cllr Darch advised the Council SW&T's Stronger Somerset proposal was going to be submitted to the Secretary of State as had the County Council's One Somerset proposal. She was of the opinion there will be some sort of consultation but ultimately the Secretary of State will make the decision.	

	Cllr R Williams added his comments to the discussion and said the two business cases would be assessed with a decision hopefully in the early part of 2021. He advised an online consultation was open, but which ended this week and 3 virtual briefings for Parish Councils were being held on Wednesday and Thursday this week at various times. If anyone is interested, he signposted the One Somerset website. He stated the view from the County Council was it would be very surprised if the Secretary of State did not approve the One Somerset proposal and following that a transitionary and consultation phase would commence probably lasting about 18 months Cllr Stripp asked if a balanced view between the two proposals could be found. Cllr Darch said a neutral balance was difficult to find but there is a FB group which has administrators from all camps from all over Somerset geographically who are expressing a whole range of views which on a whole are balanced. Cllr Williams said he had a direct comparison which he would be happy to share should anyone be interested. Cllr N Townsend felt the best way to compare the two was to talk to a Councillor who had worked as both a district and county councillor and he mentioned a few individuals. Cllr Taylor asked if there was a document which explained what the implications are for Parish Councils and how service delivery will be carried out at Parish level. A brief discussion around this followed.	
9.0	**Permissive footpath from Lodes Lane to the Church –** The Chair said he was awaiting a letter from the owner of the Sanctuary and asked the Councillors their views on what action the Council should take on this item. Cllr Stripp felt the Council needed to follow up correspondence with landowners and get their views. The Chair agreed to take this action. The Clerk pointed out that minutes from the previous meeting had stated Cllr R Williams would approach the Public Rights of Way Officer to determine the best way forward in this regard. Cllr Williams said he would go back to Rights of Way Officer and ask about alternate methods. He felt it would strengthen the case if evidence of public feeling was known. Discussion revolved around the history and use of the footpath and there was strong feeling the Council should continue to pursue this item.	Chair/Cllr R Williams
10.0	**'Changes to the Current Planning System' and 'White Paper: Planning for the Future' –** The Chair advised the Council Cllr Wilcox and Cllr Darch had kindly provided a response to the two consultations and the first had already been submitted. Cllr Wilcox was asked to discuss the papers. He started with the following quote, 'Do not be afraid of complexity however be very afraid of people who promise an easy shortcut to simplicity'. This sums up his feelings towards the white paper. He said the answers given to the consultation document were from a Parish Council perspective and he thanked Cllr Darch for her help. He said the initial consultation concerned fundamental questions relating to the planning process whereas the second related to the white paper itself and a deadline of the end of October was set for responses. He went on to say, the Government blames the present planning system for not delivering enough houses and being too complicated for public participation. Although he said there was not time to go into the paper in detail, he did feel there was one fundamental proposal and that was to allocate all land as either growth, renewal or protected. He felt local authorities had a short time in which to do this analysis with little or no background information. He also said any growth areas will be guaranteed planning permission upfront, local consultation would be at a minimum and any constraints brought to light would have very little effect. Another point he made is there is very much disquiet regarding the target of 300,000 homes per year mentioned in paper. This figure has been plucked out of the air by an algorithm and for the Taunton Deane area will equate to even more building than is currently being dictated. Apparently, there are about 1,000,000 outstanding planning applications being sat on by developers waiting for the right time to build. So he posed the question, Where is the hold up in house building? The paper is being coined as the developer's charter and Shelter feels this paper could mean the end of social housing. In essence, the	Cllr Wilcox

	proposed changes would simplify the system but at the cost of less local involvement and paying much less attention to detail. Cllr Wilcox asked the Council if they had any comments to amend or change the response. The Chair proposed the Council accept Cllr Wilcox's response to the White paper and Cllrs Taylor, Stripp, Hancock and Townsend all agreed. Cllr R Williams asked to be copied in on the Council's view on this White Paper as he was keen to learn more about it. Cllr Darch added the Parish Council is very lucky to have a Councillor like Cllr Wilcox who is genuinely interested in planning and has got a really good grasp of it as the documents are very complicated and not user friendly.	
11.0	**Local Plan Involvement –** The Chair asked Cllr Taylor for his views on this. Cllr Taylor said his thinking was SW&T's local plan may be overtaken by local government reorganisation. He went on to say the majority of Kinston St Mary wish to stay separate from Taunton. Once the Taunton North Town development at Staplegrove happens it will bring the outer boundary of Taunton within a kilometre of Kingston. The land buffer between the two should remain open countryside but once this designation is lost in a local plan this area could be developed. In terms of maintaining separation, the only thing that stops this is the local plan and therefore we need to be engaged with the local plan process and make the argument that separation should not be lost. Cllr Darch will find out what stage SW&T is with the local plan and what the Parish Council can do to feed into it. She went on to say there is a bit of uncertainty around the local plan because of government re-organisation, current planning white papers and the phosphate crisis on the Somerset Levels.	Cllr D Darch
12.0	**Bid for Somerset Climate Emergency -** The Chair asked Cllr Taylor to update the Council on the bid. Cllr Taylor has communicated with the fund manager to confirm whether the Council's traffic calming measures are eligible, and he has said they are. Much information needs to be put forward and we need to have the support of our County Councillor Rod Williams which we do. The application needs to be in by 12th November and Cllr Taylor said working together with highways we should have enough detail to get the application in within the allotted timeframe. The Chair asked if Cllr Taylor could bring the proposal to next month's meeting for approval. Cllr Taylor proposed to circulate the application leading up to next month's meeting. Cllr Wilcox advised the Village Hall Committee are working on a ground source heat recovery system and are waiting for quotes so this is in progress and the VH could make its own application if need be. Cllr R Williams seemed to think the bid needed to come from the Parish Council. Cllr Darch has been approached by a community member who is doing a sustainability study. He is keen to support the community on ways of achieving more sustainable living and is currently designing a survey. Cllr Darch felt it would be good for the Parish Council to know about the survey and review it before it goes out to the community. She also suggested putting a working group together to help him with his study. The Chair said he will arrange a Zoom meeting with the community member and other interested parties to progress this project.	Cllr Taylor/ Chair
13.0	**Allocating activities and responsibilities to individual Parish Councillors** The Chair said he circulated a note with initial suggestions on activities that each of the Parish Councillors could take a lead on to make sure agenda items were owned and progressed. He suggested the Council trial this method and see how it got on with it.	
14.0	**Health and Wellbeing -** The Chair asked Cllr Stripp to talk about this item. Cllr Stripp said he had recently attended a Spark meeting on the topic and had circulated a note summarising the discussion. He asked the following question: Do we know enough about the needs of	

	the vulnerable members of our community? The area of health and wellbeing has been taken up by the community partnership and has not been a focus of the Parish Council and should the Council be taking a lead on this? Discussion revolved around this and it was agreed that the Kingston Community Partnership and Good Neighbours Scheme should continue to lead in this area liaising with the Parish Council and the Church on relevant matters.	
15.0	**Parish Council Link Up Representative** The Chair proposed to take on the role of Link Up Representative and there were no objections to this.	
16.0	**Parish Councillor Vacancies –** The Chair advised the Council had advertised on the notice boards, in Link Up and on the website and Facebook page but to-date no interest had been received. Cllr Stripp agreed to send a general message around on the Kingston Community Partnership communication channels to see if he could drum up any interest. The Clerk said she would approach the people who had expressed interest in the past.	Cllr Stripp/ Clerk
17.0	**Financial Matters** ❖ £165.40, HMRC – Clerk's PAYE payment for JUL/AUG/SEP 2020 ❖ £187.00, David Stripp – wooden slats for repair work to millennium bench **Resolved**: The Council agreed to make the above payments. ❖ £5645.00, Parish Precept 2020/21 P2 ❖ £1250.00, Parish Grant 2020/21 **Resolved:** The Council noted the above receipts. The Clerk advised the Council they budgeted in 2019/20 to pay the playing field £750.00 and this payment had not been made. The Council resolved to make the payment.	
16.0	**Items for Next Agenda –** Budget and Precept 2021/22 Climate Emergency Fund	Cllr P Townsend/ Cllr D Taylor
17.0	**Items for Link Up and KSM Website -** Chair to do a write up for both	Chair
18.0	**Actions from March 2020 Meeting – Not discussed but to be carried forward to a future meeting** **a) Playing Field** – The Clerk updated the Council on the ongoing efforts to get quotes for new equipment for the playing field which hopefully will be funded by available S106 funding. She advised she and Cllr P Townsend were completing the application and were hoping for assistance from the Chair of the Playing Field Committee. b) **Natural environment** – The Clerk advised that a meeting had been scheduled for 23 March with SWT. c) **Council Reserves** – i. Clearing of roadside verge on Kingston Road by the Grange and the Spinney ii. Furniture for the Playing Field Pavilion d) **Housing Needs Survey** – The Council agreed the existing wording for the covering letter and survey were fine.	Whole Council
19.0	**Date of Next Meeting – 9th November 2020** The meeting closed at 21.50	
Signed:		