KINGSTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, HELD ON 13th FEBRUARY 2024
AT THE VILLAGE HALL, KINGSTON ST MARY, STARTING AT 19.00

Item No	Item	Action By
1.0	**Attendance and Apologies -** In attendance: Cllr P Townsend (Chairman) Cllr P Boyce Cllr P Chicken Cllr A Simpson Cllr D Stripp Mrs K Gibbins (Parish Clerk) Cllr D Darch (Somerset) Apologies: Cllr S Hancock No members of the public were in attendance.	
2.0	**Councillors' Declarations of Interest** - None	
3.0	**Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 9th January 2024** **Resolved:** The minutes of the meeting were approved and will be signed as a true record at a future date.	
4.0	**Planning** **a) Applications -** There were no applications for consideration.	
5.0	**Matters Outstanding from Previous Minutes -** **i.** **Noticeboard - Staplegrove Rural Area** The Council agreed to push this agenda item forward to the next meeting. **ii.** **D-Day 80th Anniversary Beacon and Fete - 8th June 2024** The Chair and Cllr Stripp updated the Council on village fete progress. **iii.** **KSM Village Gateway -** The Chair said he met with Quantock Hills National Landscape (QHNL) regarding the existing signage, as QHNL are concerned the signage is cluttered and too urban. The Chair emphasised it was proving successful in slowing the traffic down and it would be a shame to remove the signs and potentially the benefit. QHNL agreed to send through examples of other signs which may be suitable and more in keeping with the rural nature of the village. **iv.** **Internet Banking -** The Chair explained how internet banking works and said he and the Clerk would visit the bank in March to get the process started. v. **Kingston Road** –The Parish Council expressed its thanks to Somerset Highways for the prompt actions taken to ensure the road was safe during the recent icy conditions.	Chair/Cllr Stripp Cllr Stripp Chair/Clerk
6.0	**Mill Meadow Planning Applications and Affordable Housing** The Chair advised the Council the two applications have been refused mainly due to being outside the settlement boundary. The Planning Committee will review the applications on Monday 29 February and the Council would like to put forward Rod Williams to speak on behalf of the Council as no Councillor is able to attend. The Council agreed to ask Rod Williams to speak on behalf of KSM PC.	

7.0	**Speed Indicator Device** - Maintenance & upgrade A proposal has been put forward to convert the SID to a solar powered unit. This means the existing batteries will not need to be changed making management of the SID easier and potentially less dangerous as it is sited on the roadside. Another matter raised was that the existing operative may not renew his certification allowing him to work on the roadside. The operative has agreed to get a quote for the work and comeback to the Council.	
8.0	**Community Defibrillator Scheme** - Mill Cross The Chair advised the Council there is currently a scheme available to local Councils where they can purchase a community defibrillator for half price (£750.00). The Chair felt it would be a good idea to have a second defibrillator in the village and site it in the Mill Cross area. Mill Meadow has agreed to host the defibrillator at its site in a secure area which is accessible 24/7 by the public. Mill Meadow will also provide the power supply. Cllr Simpson has researched first aid training and defibrillator training. The Council discussed the purchase of a second defibrillator and where it could be located. They also discussed whether it would be a good idea to train a few Councillors as first aiders particularly as the Council is now holding an annual fete. The Council agreed to purchase a second defibrillator for the community to be sited at Mill Meadow.	Chair
9.0	**Mill Cross** - Car parking The Chair received a complaint that cars parking at Mill Cross are obstructing the junction and creating a hazard which is dangerous. The Highway Code states the nearest you can park to a junction is 10 metres. The Chair agreed to take this matter up with PCSO Marshall Bernhardt.	Chair
10.0	**Taunton Brewhouse** - Funding request The Chair advised the Council that it had received a letter from the Brewhouse requesting donations to help fund its community outreach projects. The Council discussed the request and decided it was not able to provide a donation as it was not in line with the Councils Grants & Donations Policy. The Council agreed to consider the request in the next budget period under Asset and Service Devolution. The Clerk will respond to the Brewhouse.	Clerk
11.0	**kstm.uk Website** – Hosting of The Chair advised that the webmaster has asked the Parish Council if they will pick up the cost of hosting the kstm.uk website as the funding for this has run out. The Clerk agreed to speak to the Webmaster and clarify exactly what the Council is currently paying for and what the additional cost will be. The Council agreed to pick this cost up moving forward as it uses the website to communicate with members of the parish and it is a very important and effective communication channel.	Clerk
12.0	**Biodiversity Duty & Policy** The Chair said that the Parish Council are required to have a Biodiversity Duty & Policy. The Council agreed that the Neighbourhood Plan incorporates biodiversity in many of its policies and discussed the many good and varied initiatives in the parish to promote biodiversity. Cllr Stripp provided an update about the Neighbourhood Plan and said that feedback from the Regulation 16 Consultation was on Somerset Council's website. He said	Chair

	the Environment Agency talked about habitats and biodiversity and suggested a couple of amendments to the policy regarding climate change and blue and green infrastructure space. The Council agreed to contact the individual who cuts the playing field grass and ask him to leave an uncut border around the playing field to promote more biodiversity in this space. The Council agreed to modify the Model Biodiversity Policy to reflect Kingston St Mary parish.	
13.0	**S106 & CIL Funding** The Chair advised the Council has received notification that it has S106 monies available in the amount of £4,112. These funds need to be spent by the 30th August 2028. It was agreed in principle to combine these funds with any CIL money the Council may receive from the development at Whitethorn. The Clerk agreed to investigate when this money could become available to the Council.	Clerk
14.0	**Asset and Service Devolution** The Chair said he had not received a response to the letter he sent. What the Parish Council needs is a schedule from Somerset Council of the services it is currently providing and what these services will cost should the PC wish to take them on. The Council agreed to continue to push for this information.	Chair
15.0	**Local Community Networks** – update The next LCN meeting is scheduled for the 21st February. The Chair said he won't be able to attend but County Cllr Darch and the Clerk said they will attend. The Chair emphasised how important it was that a schedule of services and costs was provided by Somerset Council for the Parish and Town Councils. The Council considered the budget it had set aside for Asset and Service Devolution of £2,500 and discussed in a bit more detail the possibility of using an external contractor(s) to do certain jobs around the parish, what this might look like and how it might be managed. The Council agreed there are many things it must consider in this regard, and it needs the list of services from County before it can take a view on what is required and progress these discussions.	
16.0	**Climate Change** – update The Chair advised they had a meeting with a representative from FWAG. This individual is looking at natural flood management and will look at Kingston St Mary and what the opportunities are for natural flood management within our catchment. Cllr Darch went on to say we have just had the 10-year anniversary of the 2013/14 floods on the Levels so there is a lot about this in the press. The Somerset Rivers Authority was set up on the back of these floods and all of Somerset pays a precept to the SRA. Discussion and examinations as to whether this system is working are currently being had. The Environment Agency says we have had the wettest year on record, May 2023 – January 2024, since 1919 and the Levels haven't flooded, so this work has made a difference. However, the records show that in 2014, 165 properties flooded on the Levels and between May last year and January this year, 311 properties have flooded across Somerset with only 11 of these being on the Levels. What we are seeing is an increase in flooding right across Somerset so there has been a refresh of the SRA's strategy. The strategy is now catchment based and looks at the rivers and the upper, middle, and lower catchment areas. The SRA are funding FWAG to look at natural flood management	

	in the different catchment areas and has recognised management of flooding is a combination of natural flood management, dredging, drains, etc. The next step is that FWAG will hopefully map the watercourses in our area. To be effective they will need to investigate ways of capturing and slowing water down on higher ground. FWAG will be talking to and hopefully working with farmers locally to see if there are measures which can be taken to achieve this.	
17.0	**Neighbourhood Plan** – update Cllr Stripp updated the Council on progress with the Neighbourhood Plan. He said there was feedback on the website following the Regulation 16 Consultation from both statutory consultees and residents. There was nothing material from the statutory consultees. The feedback from residents was about the active travel route and the practicality of it. Cllr Stripp said the Independent Examiner has now been appointed and they will familiarise themselves with the parish and then produce their first fact finding report. They will then submit their final report which will go to Council and then to Referendum. The Referendum must be within 10 weeks of the NP being approved. The Council agreed to submit an article for Link-Up to update the parish on the plan with particular emphasis on the Active Travel route.	Cllr Stripp
18.0	**Kingston Community Partnership** – update Cllr Simpson has now taken over and gave the Council a brief update on the KCP's activities. Cllr Stripp talked to the Council about the Kingston Black Apple trees and said it will soon be time to plant them. He would like to offer these trees to Kingston residents and needs to ensure he has enough trees from the supplier to meet demand. The idea is that he will take some of the seedlings and grow them on in case more trees are required later in the year.	
19.0	**Financial Matters -** The Council noted the monthly bank reconciliation and approved the following payments: • £228.70 – Somerset Council, Emptying of dog waste bins for Qtr 3, 1 October – 31 December 2023 • £4,053.00 – D Greenslade Landscape Gardener, 50% deposit for construction of wooden shelter on KSM Playing Field • £150.00 - Kingston St Mary Playing Field, hire of pavilion for PC meetings	
20.0	**Items for Next Agenda -** Please pass any agenda items to the Clerk before the next meeting.	
21.0	**Items for Link-Up and KSM Website -** The Chair advised the Council had missed the Link-Up deadline for March due to February being a short month.	
22.0	**Date of Next Meeting - 12th March 2024** The meeting closed at 20.41	
Signed:	**Dated:**	