KINGSTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, HELD ON 15th APRIL 2025
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 A Simpson Cllr D Stripp Mrs K Gibbins (Parish Clerk) Cllr N O'Donnell (Somerset) Apologies: Cllr S Hancock, Cllr D Perry (Somerset) 11 members of the public, including Ms D Darch, were in attendance	
2.0	**Councillors' Declarations of Interest -** None	
3.0	**Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 11th March 2025** **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 -** **Case Ref: 20/25/0011** - Erection of single storey and two storey extensions with alterations to reconfigure dwelling at West Hay Cottage, Kingston Road, Kingston St Mary The Council considered the above planning application and resolved to fully support it. **Case Ref: 38/19/0129** - Phased development of 292 no. dwellings with associated access, infrastructure, open space, landscaping and related works on land off Lyngford Lane, Taunton The Chair advised the Councillors the above planning application was approved at Committee today. **Appeals:** **Case Ref: 20/24/0007 - 20/24/0008 - 20/24/0009** – Mill Meadow, variation of tourism occupancy condition The Council considered the above appeals and resolved to reiterate its full support for these applications. **Case Ref: 20/24/0012 - 20/24/0013** – Mill Meadow, erection of plot 22 & 23 dwellings The Council considered the above appeals and resolved to reiterate its full support for these applications. **Case Ref: 20/24/0020 -** Mill Meadow, change of use annex to separate dwelling The Council considered the above appeal and resolved to reiterate its full support for this application. Please note that the Parish Council's full response to the above planning applications and planning appeals can be found on Somerset Council's website or by following the link below. https://www3.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/asp/webpages/plan/plapplookup.asp	
5.0	**Matters Outstanding from Previous Minutes -** i. **Internet Banking** – The Council agreed to carry this forward.	

ii. **Enhanced Highways Maintenance** – The Chair advised the Parish Council has still not received a quote from Kier for clearing the ditch at Mill Cross.

iii. **Finger Posts** – The Clerk advised she has requested grants from the CPRE for assistance with the cost of repairing the 2 fingerposts and is awaiting to hear back. She also said Somerset Council confirmed it currently owns the fingerposts and for insurance purposes is liable. If the Parish Council pays to restore a fingerpost and it is subsequently damaged the only way it would be covered for insurance purposes would be if the incident was a police matter and the person who caused the damage was known. It would be that individual's insurance that would be liable. Somerset Council has recently sent communication saying it is thinking about selling the fingerposts to the local councils for a nominal cost. The Clerk went on to say she felt the only other fingerpost requiring a bit of attention was the fingerpost at the Farmers Arms.

iv. **Condition of Kingston Stream** – A member of the public referred the Parish Council to the e-mail from him included in the meeting papers. He reiterated he is still not hearing anything back from the authorities. He still does not know what is going on and had hoped to find out what Somerset Council's policy is as he suspects they are the lead agency on this matter. The chamber should be used as a regulator and this time of year it should be diverting water down the Kingston Stream. There is a small flow but it isn't normal because the system isn't working properly. Last year there was no flow. He said the flow comes from ground water, spring fed from Buncombe Stream which is considered to flow year-round. He said it needs someone with access to the chamber to regulate the sluice and manage the flow regularly. Another member of the public said the Mill feed separates from the natural watercourse at Westhay and he believes this is possibly what needs to be regularly maintained to ensure a constant flow of water. Cllr Stripp reiterated that the Parish Council's main concern was health and safety and to ensure an accident like what happened last year on the Kingston Road did not happen again. He went on to say the Council will most likely fund the clearance of the ditch which goes under the road by Marsh House on an annual basis. The Council agreed to continue to push Kier for a quote to do this work. Cllr O'Donnell updated the Parish Council on his actions and said the EA had visited the site and said it was not their remit. He did chase the Officer at Somerset Council in charge who said they are putting a case together internally to fund an enforcement officer who can work with riparian owners on watercourse management.

v. **Playing Field Committee** – Cllr Simpson talked to the Council about the Playing Field Committee and said a committee of about a dozen people had been formed all enthusiastic about trying to improve the services/facilities of the pavilion and playing field. Two productive meetings have been held so far and there is a lot happening. The main thing is sourcing funding to help with the improvement costs. She said she is applying for a grant from a Somerset Community Fund and a Hinkley Point Fund for containers to store equipment to free up the pavilion so that it can be rented out. A new floor will be laid, and a working party will paint the interior of the pavilion before the new floor is laid. She said there are various organisations which might like to hire the hall out, Everyone Active and Little Wildlings Nursery. Cllr Stripp said it is hoped the improvement plans for the playing field can be presented at the fete.

vi. **Asset of Community Value** – The Chair said he has applied for the Swan to be renominated as an asset of community value and

	it will take approximately 2 months for the application to be processed. The ACV status needs to be renewed every 5 years. The previous application expired in February. vii. **Annual Parish Meeting** – The Clerk updated the Council on the invites which have been sent out and said she has had 2 positive responses so far. Somerset Cllr O'Donnell has agreed to give a brief presentation at the meeting about the Somerset Local Plan. The Clerk asked the Councillors to let her know if there were any other village organisations they would like invitations sent to. Cllr Stripp gave his apologies and said he would not be able to attend the meeting. The Clerk reminded the Council she would not be able to attend either.	
6.0	**Kingston Road** – Temporary Road Closure The Chair advised the meeting that the PC doesn't know a great deal about the closure of Kingston Road other than it won't be closed for the entire 6 months as there will be a rolling programme of closure in place. He advised the work being done was the replacement of gas mains. He said he had spoken to the Project Manager yesterday who said it was necessary to close the road for safety purposes as it wasn't wide enough to do the work and have traffic passing at the same time. The closure will be in seven phases and the Chair summarised each phase but said this information was only provisional and could change. He went on to say the official diversion is up Buncombe Hill and down into Bishops Lydeard and on to the A358. The meeting participants discussed the difficulty the road closure will cause and made suggestions of ways to possibly reduce any problems created by the closure. The Chair said he will try and get a meeting with Somerset Highways and Wales & West Utilities to discuss ways to reduce problems created by the closure. He told the meeting the information which had been received so far will be published on www.kstm.uk and the Kingston Facebook Page as soon as possible and the Parish Council will endeavour to update the site as and when any further communication is received. Somerset Cllr Nick O'Donnell updated the Council on his actions about the road closure. He will continue to liaise with the project manager at WWU to voice concerns of the residents.	
7.0	**Protected Landscapes -** This agenda item was not discussed.	
8.0	**Noticeboard** – Staplegrove The Clerk advised she has sent an e-mail to the relevant Officer at Somerset Council to confirm the process and costs regarding getting the noticeboard installed on the highway. Historically, the costs were a licence admin fee of £165.00 and legal fees of £350.00. She is waiting to hear back and will chase up next week if no further information has been received. The Councillors all commented on how nice the finished noticeboard looked.	
9.0	**Link-Up -** update The Chair confirmed he had attended the Link-Up Board Meeting and was pleased to advise that Link-Up is now financially stable. The PC donation to Link-Up had helped as had advertising revenue.	
10.0	**Local Community Network** – update	

	Cllr Stripp updated the Council on progress with the Children and Young People's Working Group. He said all the Councils in the LCN had agreed to put 5% of their budget in 2025/26 towards youth provision and the working group was successful at getting a £35k match funded grant from SALC. The Working Group has hired a mobile youth club called the Boombox which belongs to a charity in Weston. It is a van which has been converted into a mobile activity centre and will be visiting the village next Wednesday, 23 April. It is aimed at 10 – 18-year-olds. The van will be touring the rural parishes. The remainder of the funding will be used to plan and provide a schedule of activities for youth in the LCN which will hopefully continue after the funding runs out.	
11.0	**Climate Emergency** – update and Emergency Plan DD said she has made the changes to the plan which were suggested at the last meeting and will ask the Webmaster to upload the amended plan to the Kingston St Mary website. The Council thanked her for her continued support with this. At the end of the meeting DD talked about the Climate Action Plan and suggested it needed updating as it was now out of date. One of the key things was to try and forge links with existing organisations to share the workload. DD invited Cllr O'Donnell to talk about Climate Action Taunton of which he is a trustee and Taunton Town Council's Climate Plan. Cllr O'Donnell went on to talk to the Council about Climate Action Taunton and gave a presentation about Taunton Town Council's Climate Plan.	
12.0	**Neighbourhood Plan** – Review of KSM NP Policies Cllr Stripp said the next part of the Neighbourhood Plan for review was the Housing Policy section which was quite a lengthy section. The Council agreed to put this off for another meeting when more time was available. DD asked the Council if they had received the checklist she shared which was about action on climate change for small councils. The Clerk agreed to resend the e-mail. DD mentioned this was one of the things missing from the Climate Action Plan and the Council had felt it wanted to have its own internal checklist. She asked the Councillors to please review this as a starting place for its own checklist.	
13.0	**Kingston St Mary Community Land Trust** – Cllr Stripp said there was nothing to report.	
14.0	**Kingston Community Partnership** – Cllr Stripp said the preparations for the fete were going the right way and updated the Council on who would be providing what on the day. The Council went on to discuss the possibility of using the fete as an opportunity to raise funds for the improvements to the pavilion and playing field.	
15.0	**Financial Matters –** The Council noted the monthly bank reconciliation and approved it as well as approved the following payments: • £243.98 – Somerset Council, Qtr 4, 1st Jan - 31st March 2025, 2 x bins emptied once weekly • £486.82 – SALC, Affiliation fees for 2025/26 • £500.00 – KSM Community Land Trust, grant towards running costs • £220.00 – Les Marsh Carpets, 25% deposit for pavilion flooring • £206.00 – HMRC, Clerk's PAYE & NI payment for JAN/FEB & MAR • £52.00 – ICO, Data Protection renewal fee • £160.00 – David Stripp, reimbursement of payment to Angel Art for face painting • £304.17 – Paul Prettejohn, service of playing field lawn mower	

	Th Council discussed the quote for the grass cutting season for 2025 and asked the Clerk to request a breakdown of the quote and how often the grass is cut from the contractor.	
16.0	**Items for Next Agenda -** Please pass any other agenda items to the Clerk before the next meeting.	
17.0	**Items for Link-Up and KSM Website -** The Chair will submit a write up for Link-Up.	
18.0	**Date of Next Meeting - 13th May 2025** The meeting closed at 22.16	
Signed:		
Dated:		