KINGSTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, HELD ON 11th FEBRUARY 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) Apologies: Cllr S Hancock, Cllr D Perry (Somerset), Cllr N O'Donnell (Somerset) 8 members of the public were in attendance	
2.0	**Councillors' Declarations of Interest -** None	
3.0	**Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 14th January 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: 22/25/0004/CQ** - Application for Prior Approval for proposed change of use from agricultural building to 1 No. dwelling house (Class C3) and associated building operations at Lower Marsh Farm, Kingston Road, Kingston St Mary The Council considered the above planning application and resolved to fully support it. **Case Ref: 20/25/0001** - Erection of a single storey extension to both sides and rear with alterations to front porch and extension to garage to form double garage at Falcon Barn, Fitzroy Road, Norton Fitzwarren The Council considered the above planning application and resolved to fully support it. **Case Ref: 20/25/0002/T** - Notification to fell one cypress tree and one Redwood within Kingston St. Mary Conservation Area at Westhay Cottage, Kingston Road, Kingston St. Mary The Council considered the above planning application and resolved to fully support it. Please note that the Parish Council's full response to the above planning applications 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 asked Ian Forrest (IF) to update the Council on the last LCN Highways Working Group meeting which took place on 30th January and was a joint meeting with Taunton Town Council. IF summarised the points of the meeting which were relevant to KSM PC and asked the Clerk to circulate the minutes to all Councillors. IF talked about the current Highways Maintenance programme which runs until April 2025 and said KSM has one scheme on the programme which is the flooding at Yarford. IF has requested an update on this scheme. IF said we now need to consider the programme for the	Clerk/Ian Forrest/Chair

		coming year as we can put forward requests directly to the website. The Council discussed putting forward Park Lane and improvements to drainage on the lane to reduce the flooding which occurs on this road quite regularly. The second item discussed was the Enhanced Highways Maintenance Scheme (EHMS) which is essentially the gap between what we historically received from Somerset Council and what it will now provide, i.e. statutory services. IF said KSM PC has one request with Kier for a quote. The Council is mindful that some of the gullies need to be emptied, and Somerset Council will only clear them every two years. If we want to have them cleared more regularly, we will have to fund this. Collaboration with neighbouring Councils was encouraged. The Clerk advised an e-mail had been received from the Clerk of Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Council hoping to see if we could work together in this regard. The Clerk will forward this mail to IF so he can start a conversation with Cheddon Fitzpaine. The Clerk advised there was a lot of water running on Pickney Lane and several drains were blocked. How to identify the drains was discussed next and 'What Three Words' or 'Open Street Maps' were possible suggestions. 'Open Street Maps' seemed to be more sensible with photographic evidence as support. IF then discussed how Somerset Council deals with potholes and feels the Parish Council won't need to earmark money in future precepts for pothole repair. The Councillors agreed to report potholes directly to Somerset Highways through the website and advise the Clerk as well. Cllr Stripp has a local contact who may be able to undertake works regarding drain clearing. The Clerk said she had been in conversation with Zurich and the public liability follows the Council provided the Council takes reasonable care. She referred the Council to the TAP Policy Schedule. IF suggested the Council do a risk and liability assessment for each project it wishes to undertake. The Chair thanked IF for his help and agreed to meet with him to have a look at Park Lane.	
	iii.	**Finger Posts** – The Clerk advised she has received a quote of £6,583.00 + VAT from West Country Blacksmiths to restore 2 fingerposts in the parish. She reminded the Council of the locations of the fingerposts in question. One is at the south end of Park Lane and the other is at the north end of Whitmore Lane. She went on to say that CPRE have small grants available in 2025 to help with the restoration and this is £250.00 per fingerpost. She also said she has asked Somerset Forge near Wells for a quote and is waiting for a quote from Cedric Foundries in Chard. Cedric Foundries has confirmed they make the fingers but do not fit them. The Council discussed the cost of restoring the fingerposts and whether it was money well spent. The Council agreed to wait for a quote from Somerset Forge before deciding about restoring the fingerposts.	Clerk
	iv.	**Condition of Kingston Stream** – The Chair asked a member of the public to update the Council on developments with the condition of the stream. He went on to say he has heard nothing more. The Chair advised the Council is still waiting on a quote from Kier to clear the ditches. The member of the public said the regulator on the Mill Cross chamber had been turned which means there is no waterflow down the stream along the Kingston Road. This denies himself and all others down stream of water and this is not acceptable. He would like something done but feels pushed to one side and it is frustrating. The Chair said he will pass the member of the public's notes on to Somerset Council. It was pointed out that the clearing of the ditch may not rectify the problem.	Chair

	v. **Road Safety** – The Chair asked IF if he had managed to investigate possible ways the traffic coming into the village from Buncombe Hill might be slowed. IF said after consulting with one of the villagers about the traffic calming measures that had been implemented previously Somerset Council decided a 30-mph sign approaching the village from Buncombe Hill was not necessary as it would require additional signage in the Quantock Hills Natural Landscape. The Council discussed the possibility of siting another SID on this segment of road but it was felt there was no suitable location. vi. **Somerset Bus Services** – There was no discussion about this agenda item. vii. **Project Gigabit and Highspeed Rural Broadband** – The Council discussed the poor broadband coverage in certain parts of the village. Our local MP Gideon Amos is pushing Central Government for improved broadband services in Taunton and Wellington and has asked Somerset Council for clarification of what the descoped Airband contract will deliver. viii. **IT Provision** – The Chair asked the webmaster to talk to the Council about the situation with the current IT provision. The webmaster explained the current hosting situation is unworkable for 2 reasons; firstly, the e-mail provision of 10 gigabits of storage space per mailbox is proving to be insufficient and secondly, the current provider does not offer an e-mail backup facility. The webmaster has investigated possible solutions which he explained will mean changing webhost providers. He suggests the Council move in the next few months. The package he is recommending offers unlimited web space which means kstm.uk can also be hosted alongside the PC's domain name at no additional cost. The new cost will be slightly higher at £144.00/annum. The Council agreed to the switch and asked the webmaster to initiate the move.	
6.0	**KSM Family Fun Cycle Ride –** The Chair asked a member of the public to talk to the Council about the KSM Family Fun Cycle Ride. She gave the Council a bit of history on the ride and said it is organised by KAPACC and has been taking place annually since 2018. She said the Council has helped financially and she is hoping they will make a small contribution this year as well to help cover the costs. The first year the fun cycle ride was held it attracted around 35 riders and last year there were between 70-80 so it is becoming very popular with local families. KAPACC was also awarded the TACC Gold Award for excellence to cycling in the local area last year. The Council agreed to donate £50.00 to Kingston Community Partnership for the KSM Family Fun Cycle Ride 2025.	
7.0	**Quarterly Accounts Review –** The Chair thanked the Clerk for her hard work and attention to detail and reviewed the quarterly accounts with the Council. He mentioned receipts are up by £4,100 because of a VAT return and payments were £1,800 higher mainly due to upgrading the SID and repairs to the village noticeboards and seat which were not budgeted for. The Capital costs will be £5,700 over budget and this is largely because of the playing field shelter build being delayed and the cost pushed in to this financial year. Total expenditure is forecast to be £8,000 over budget but is compensated by increased VAT returns and the rescheduled Playing Field shelter expenditure. However, the forecast surplus/deficit for the year is only £500 more than budgeted and the financial reserves are on target.	
8.0	**April Parish Council Meeting** – change of date	Clerk

	The Clerk asked the Council if the date for the April meeting could be changed. The meeting is currently scheduled for Tuesday, 8th April. Tuesday, 15th April was proposed. The Council agreed to move the meeting to Tuesday, 15th April.	
9.0	**Local Community Network** – update The Chair advised the Council the last LCN meeting was held on 22nd January and some of the topics covered were, Children and Young People's Working Group, Active Travel and an update on travel links for Monkton Heathfield 2 which the Council went on to have a discussion about. Cllr Stripp updated the Council on the progress of the C&YP Working Group. He confirmed that all the Councils within the LCN had agreed to allocate 5% of their 2025/26 precept to youth provision. He went on to say the seed grant from SALC had been secured and it was being used to conduct a survey of youth in the LCN. Once the survey results were available the Working Group will then put together a bid to receive up to £35k in match funding from SALC. The funding will be used to improve the provision for children and young people in our LCN.	
10.0	**Climate Emergency** – update and Emergency Plan The Council agreed to invite Dixie Darch to the March meeting to talk the Council through the Emergency Plan and the NP policies which relate to the Emergency Plan.	Clerk
11.0	**Neighbourhood Plan** – Review of KSM NP Policies Cllr Stripp referred to his e-mail and talked the Council through the following policies and statements of intent in the Neighbourhood Plan: Statement of Intent on Traffic and Road Safety; Active Travel Policy; Designation of Green Spaces Policy and Dark Skies Policy. Cllr Stripp updated the Council on the progress with the active travel route and the Chair explained the designation of green spaces policy and what areas had been given this designation. The Council discussed different issues which were raised regarding the above policies and statement of intent.	
12.0	**Kingston St Mary Community Land Trust** – Cllr Stripp said there was nothing to report.	
13.0	**Kingston Community Partnership** – Cllr Stripp updated the Council on progress with the fete which will take place on 14th June.	
14.0	**Financial Matters -** The Council noted the monthly bank reconciliation and approved it as well as approved the following payments: • £265.99 – Steen R&W, semi-annual invoice for editorial and technical maintenance of website and hosting of site • £50.00 – Paul Townsend, Reimbursement for the Poppy Appeal Donation agreed in January 2025 at PC Meeting	
15.0	**Items for Next Agenda -** Playing Field Committee. Please pass any other agenda items to the Clerk before the next meeting.	
16.0	**Items for Link-Up and KSM Website -**	

	The Chair will submit a write up for Link-Up.	
17.0	**Date of Next Meeting – 11th March 2025** The meeting closed at 21.07	
Signed:		
Dated:		