KINGSTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, HELD ON 14th JANUARY 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 Hancock Cllr A Simpson Cllr D Stripp Mrs K Gibbins (Parish Clerk) Cllr D Perry (Somerset) Cllr N O'Donnell (Somerset) Apologies: Cllr N O'Donnell (Somerset) 3 members of the public were in attendance	
2.0	**Councillors' Declarations of Interest -** None	
3.0	**Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 12th December 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 -** No planning applications were considered at the meeting.	
5.0	**Mill Meadow Planning Applications -** The Chair advised the Council that the applicant is questioning whether Somerset Council has a 5-year housing supply in place. He is awaiting a response from the Council and will then decide whether to resubmit his applications or lodge an appeal.	
6.0	**Matters Outstanding from Previous Minutes -** i. **Internet Banking** – The Council agreed to carry this forward. ii. **Enhanced Highways Maintenance** – The Chair advised the Council he and Cllr Stripp had a site meeting with Kier back in November and had an indicative quote for road markings at Mill Cross, flooding on the Cheddon Road and clearing of the ditch on the Kingston Road but is still awaiting an official quote. The Chair asked Ian Forrest if he would bring this up at the next LCN Highways Working Group meeting. Ian agreed to this action. iii. **Finger Posts** – The Clerk advised she is still waiting for a quote from West Country Blacksmiths. She did have a long phone call with them and they have promised a quote. It sounds like any work required could be quite expensive. The Clerk advised she has also messaged Cedric Foundries in Chard. It seems like the foundry makes the finger posts but may not be prepared to install them. Cllr Stripp mentioned the fingerpost at the end of Whitmore Lane was possibly missing the top or finial. The Clerk suggested it might be a worthwhile exercise to do an audit of the fingerposts in the parish. She also reiterated that the CPRE has a small amount of funding available to help with the restoration of the posts but a quote is required in the first instance. The Clerk said she would investigate whether Somerset Council has a list of	Chair/Clerk Ian Forrest/Chair Clerk

	the fingerposts in the parish. Cllr Perry said he would enquire as well. iv. **Condition of Kingston Stream** – The Chair advised the Council and the members of the public present that the Council are still waiting on a formal quote from Kier regarding clearing the ditch on Kingston Road. The member of the public said he would like to see a trash screen put by the inlet part of the siphon to stop any debris from getting trapped in the u-bend. The Chair clarified the work being quoted for is clearing the ditch from Mill Cross downstream to the siphon. It is felt the siphon is on private property and therefore work to the siphon is not included in the work being quoted for. v. **Somerset Council Electoral Division Boundaries Consultation** – The Chair advised he has submitted the paper on Electoral Division Boundaries and has had five responses, including one objecting to the proposal. Cllr Perry said there was a special meeting today of the Constitution and Governance Committee and Somerset Council's submission to the Committee has not been approved and has been put off for the working group to have a look at it again. In the submission, KSM would fall into Division 85 which is called Bishops Lydeard and consists of Enmore, Goathurst, Over Stowey, Spaxton, Bishops Lydeard, Cheddon Fitzpaine and Kingston St Mary. Cllr Perry went on to explain a bit of the history and how the divisions historically have been made up and what the changes are hoping to achieve. Cllr Perry said the submission would be available to view on the Council's meeting calendar by clicking on today. The papers would then be available to download.	
7.0	**Road Safety –** The Chair advised this agenda item was to discuss the slowing of traffic entering the village from Buncombe Hill. The Chair asked Ian Forrest if he would be able to investigate this and suggest what might work. The Council discussed how the traffic might be slowed coming into the village and the possibility of moving the 20mph sign further up the hill. Currently the traffic goes from 60mph to 20mph. The Council talked about positioning a SID on the road to slow the traffic but felt repositioning the 20mph sign might be a more realistic option. Ian said he would give this agenda item some more thought.	Ian Forrest
8.0	**Somerset Bus Services –** The Chair advised Somerset Council has £6m to spend on bus services and are asking for proposals on how the funding might be spent. We've received e-mails from Somerset Bus Partnership and Better Buses for Somerset with recommendations. The Council felt it would be best to put forward a proposal asking to have a weekend service introduced from Kingston to Taunton and possibly an evening service. The Council agreed the current bus timetable doesn't accommodate people who are working.	Chair
9.0	**Project Gigabit and Highspeed Rural Broadband –** The Chair referred the Council to the letter from our MP Gideon Amos regarding Project Gigabit. He is lobbying central government to ensure his rural constituencies have access to highspeed broadband. Cllr Stripp discussed a survey which had been conducted in the past looking at download speeds in the parish. Cllr Stripp agreed to get a hold of the survey for reference purposes.	Cllr Stripp
10.0	**Dog Fouling –** The Chair and Councillors discussed the problem of dog waste bags being dumped in the hedges on both sides of the road by Sawyers Leigh and the Primary School.	

	The suggestion to purchase and site a dog waste bin in this area was not seen as favourable.	
11.0	**Footpaths –** The Chair advised we have had one offer to adopt a footpath. The Chair asked the Clerk if she knew which footpath(s). The Clerk said she believes it is the footpaths in Nailsbourne, i.e. Watery Lane, Tainfield Cottages to Mill Cross and Nailsbourne to Parsonage Lane. The Council discussed what 'adopt a footpath' means. It was decided it meant, report any issues they come across to the Parish Council through the kstm.uk website and take on any low maintenance clearing with secateurs if able to do this. The Chair mentioned he received a call from a farmer about a gate accessing a footpath on their land which requires repairing and should the farmer repair it? The Chair agreed to speak to the farmer. The Parish Council believes Somerset Council are no longer taking responsibility for upkeep to the footpath network or gates and stiles. The Clerk agreed to investigate this and find out what Somerset Council's responsibilities are for the maintenance and care of the footpath network.	Clerk
12.0	**Poppy of Honour Appeal –** The Chair talked about the National & Commonwealth WW1 Memorial that will be unveiled in the future at The Somerset Wood, Maidenbrook Park, Taunton. West Monkton Parish Council are raising money to build a Pavilion to house the Poppy and are offering people/businesses the opportunity to purchase a plaque that will be placed near the Memorial in perpetuity. Many other Parishes have elected to purchase a plaque. The Council agreed to purchase a medium sized plaque by way of a £50 donation and the Chair said he would come up with the wording to go on the plaque.	Chair
13.0	**IT Provision –** The Chair advised his system has managed to lose his sent e-mails and they cannot be recovered because currently the Parish Council has no system in place to back up its e-mail correspondence. The Chair has agreed to meet with the webmaster to discuss what would be required to ensure we operate an e-mail system that can be backed up regularly. Currently there is no facility in Stack mail to back the system up.	Chair
14.0	**Local Community Network** – update The Chair said the next LCN meeting is scheduled for 22nd January and the next meeting of the LCN Highways Working Group is scheduled for 30th January. Ian Forrest introduced himself and said a few words. He advised the Council that he has agreed to be the Kingston representative on the Highways Working Group of the LCN. He said he has been trying to focus on the fact that there are certain things which Somerset Council have a legal duty to provide in terms of the highways, footpaths, hedges and stiles and other services they have been providing over the years which they no longer can afford to provide. They have recently issued a document to the Working Group which defines what is their legal obligation and what they will do in the future. He is unsure where this leaves the Parish Council and it is difficult to know what the overall impact will be on the Parish Council as there is no document specifying what level of service has been provided in the past.	Clerk/Ian Forrest

	The Council discussed the situation, and it would seem Somerset Council will take responsibility for problems/defects which ultimately pose a safety concern. A budget for 2025/26 has still not been approved. Ian went on to say that Somerset Council have coined the phrase, 'Enhanced Services' which essentially means, as far as he can tell, the difference between what we had and what we will get in the future. He sees this as 'the bit we have to pay for' which is what the Parish Council needs to figure out. To set a precept in the future we really need to know this. Cllr Stripp said he was concerned about the legal impact on the Council if it takes on responsibilities around road maintenance. The Clerk has phoned the Council's insurer to discuss this and is waiting for a call back. Cllr Stripp felt SALC should be consulted on this matter too. Ian agreed to take this concern back to the LCN Highways Working Group. Ian also went on to say Somerset Council is offering training to volunteers who will be working on the highways but this training does not cover those who are maintaining SIDs which are situated on the highways. Cllr Stripp updated the Council on the work of the Children and Young Peoples Working Group. He said things were very positive and 6 of the 8 councils in the LCN have approved a budget for youth provision in 2025/26. He hopes the other 2 will approve the same at their next meetings. Seed funding from SALC has been awarded to do research on the ground with young people and the working group is planning on submitting an application to SALC for match funding of £35K which is due by 10th March.	
15.0	**Climate Emergency** – update The Chair said he had provided the Clerk with a few amendments to the Emergency Plan. The Clerk asked the Council if they had any other amendments which needed to be made to the Emergency Plan. The Clerk agreed to make the amendments, and the Chair said he would provide her with a word document file of the plan.	Clerk/Chair
16.0	**Neighbourhood Plan** – Review of KSM NP Policies 1, 2 & 3 Cllr Stripp took the Council through the first three policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and advised the Councillors that the purpose of this exercise is to remind them of the policies within the plan and what they are trying to achieve. He went on to say this will help the Council ensure that when they are reviewing planning applications they are always considering the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies.	Whole Council
17.0	**Kingston St Mary Community Land Trust** – Cllr Stripp said there was nothing to report.	
18.0	**Kingston Community Partnership** – Cllr Simpson confirmed the KCP was successful at securing a grant from the Festive Fund for Somerset and delivered small gifts at Christmas which were much appreciated by the recipients. Cllr Simpson said she has been asked for feedback from SCF and has agreed to send a picture as well. Several Councillors mentioned they had received positive feedback from some of the gift recipients. Cllr Stripp confirmed that KCP will be organising the village fete again this year and the date has been set for 14th June 2025. The Council discussed the playing field pavilion and how it might drum up interest in forming a group to put together a plan for the pavilion and playing field. Cllr Boyce suggested it might be a good idea to put this item on the agenda for the next meeting.	

19.0	**Financial Matters –** The Council noted the monthly bank reconciliation and approved it as well as approved the following payments: • £168.00 – Kingston St Mary Village Hall, hire of hall for PC monthly meetings and LCN CYP event • £208.73 – HMRC, Clerk's PAYE & NI (back taxes still owed) • £500.00 – Parochial Church Council • £150.00 – Kingston St Mary Playing Field, hire of pavilion for PC monthly 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 will submit a write up for Link-Up.	
22.0	**Date of Next Meeting – 11th February 2025** The meeting closed at 20.54	
Signed:		
Dated:		