KINGSTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, HELD ON 13th MAY 2025
AT THE PLAYING FIELD PAVILION, KINGSTON ST MARY, STARTING AT 19.00

Item No	Item	Action By
1.0	**To elect a Chairman and sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form** Cllr Townsend was proposed as Chair by Cllr Stripp and seconded by Cllr Boyce. The Council unanimously voted to elect Cllr Townsend as Chair. Cllr Townsend accepted the role and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.	
2.0	**Attendance and Apologies -** In attendance: Cllr P Townsend (Chairman) Cllr P Boyce Cllr S Hancock Cllr D Stripp Mrs K Gibbins (Parish Clerk) Cllr D Perry (Somerset) Apologies: Cllr A Simpson, Cllr N O'Donnell (Somerset) 5 members of the public, including Ms D Darch and Mr I Forrest, were in attendance.	
3.0	**Councillors' Declarations of Interest -** None	
4.0	**Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on 15th April 2025** **Resolved:** The minutes of the meeting were approved and will be signed as a true record at a future date.	
5.0 **5.1** **5.2** **5.3**	**To appoint members responsible for -** **Planning -** The Council agreed this would be a shared responsibility. **KSM Playing Field Management Committee Representative -** The Council appointed Cllr Simpson. **Finance Member/Auditor** – The Council appointed Cllr Townsend.	
6.0 **6.1** **6.2**	**To appoint members responsible for outside bodies -** **Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee -** The Council appointed Cllr Stripp. **NALC/SALC** – The Council appointed the Clerk.	
7.0 **7.1** **7.2** **7.3** **7.4**	**Members of the public with responsibilities - To ascertain whether the current members of the public agree to hold responsibilities for -** **Footpaths and Rights of Way -** The Council agreed the current member of the public with this responsibility is winding down in this role and it needs to find someone to replace him. **Tree Warden -** The Council agreed it needs to find someone to take on this responsibility. **Natural Environment** - The Council agreed to ask the current member of the public if she would continue in this role. **Internal Auditor** - The Council agreed to ask the current Auditor if she would continue in this role.	
8.0	**Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct -** The Council reviewed the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct and resolved to adopt it for another year.	

9.0	**Standing Orders and Procedures -**	
9.1	**Standing Orders -** The Council reviewed its Standing Orders and resolved to adopt them for another year.	
9.2	**Financial Regulations** - The Council reviewed its Financial Regulations and resolved to adopt them for another year.	
9.3	**Internal Audit Procedure** - The Council reviewed its Internal Audit Procedure and resolved to adopt it for another year.	
9.4	**Financial Risk Assessment** - The Council reviewed its Financial Risk Assessment and resolved to adopt it for another year.	
9.5	**Model Publication Scheme** - The Council reviewed its Model Publication Scheme and resolved to adopt it for another year.	
9.6	**Financial Reserves Policy** - The Council reviewed its Financial Reserves Policy and resolved to adopt it for another year with one amendment. 'The current level of General Reserves to be held by the Parish Council is set, in accordance with JPAG's and NALC's advice for smaller authorities, at equal to nine to twelve months of predicted expenditure.'	
9.7	**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy** - The Council reviewed its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and resolved to adopt it for another year.	
9.8	**Safeguarding Policy** - The Council reviewed its Safeguarding Policy and resolved to adopt it for another year.	
9.9	**Biodiversity Policy** - The Council reviewed its Biodiversity Policy and resolved to adopt it for another year.	
10.0	**Planning -** **a) Applications:** **Case Ref: 20/25/0014** - Change of use of holiday let into 1 No. residential dwelling at Cuckoo Lodge, 7 Mill Meadow, Kingston St Mary The Council considered the above referenced planning application and resolved to fully support it. **Case Ref: 20/25/0015** - Change of use of holiday let into 1 No. residential dwelling at Heron Lodge, 9 Mill Meadow, Kingston St Mary The Council considered the above referenced 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	
11.0	**Matters Outstanding from Previous Minutes -** **i.** **Internet Banking** – to be carried forward **ii.** **Enhanced Highways Maintenance** – The Chair reported that Kier has still not provided a quote for gully clearance. IF feels the Council has been led up the garden path and feels strongly this is a non-starter as Kier do not respond to e-mails or phone calls. **iii.** **Finger Posts -** The Clerk confirmed that the CPRE have awarded the Council £500 towards the repair of 2 fingerposts. Overall, the net cost to the Council for the repair work would be £2,355. The Clerk advised the cost could be reduced by only putting 2 fingerposts on the Whitmore Lane Post. Cllr Boyce looked on Google Maps and confirmed there were 3 fingers on this post pointing to Kingston, Staplegrove and Langford. The Council agreed to reinstate all three fingers and approved the expenditure for the restoration of the Whitmore Lane and Park Lane posts. **iv.** **Condition of Kingston Stream -** Cllr Stripp advised that Cllr O'Donnell had reported back on the stream at the April meeting and the April minutes would be available on the website in due course. A member of the public	Clerk

	in attendance updated the Council on his actions and again reiterated that he is pressing Somerset Council to look at the system as a whole and get it working to the benefit of the community and then manage it accordingly. **v.** **Playing Field Committee** – The Chair thanked Paul Chadwick for his efforts and for leading the team of residents which included Cllr Simpson who all helped with the improvements to the pavilion. Cllr Stripp went on to say that Cllr Simpson has applied for a grant for an outside storage unit. The Chair advised he had met with Proludic about a replacement play tower in the infant's area and also asked for a quote to replace the playing field shelter with a metal one. **vi.** **Asset of Community Value** – The Swan, Kingston St Mary – The Chair advised the Council has applied for the Swan to become an asset of community value and he has not yet heard back about the application. The Chair agreed to follow this up. It is understood that the Swan will be closing in the next few days. **vii.** **Annual Parish Meeting** – The Clerk updated the Council on the organisations which have responded positively and will be attending the meeting. The Council agreed that there is also likely to be a lot of people at the meeting wanting to discuss the road closure. **viii.** **Kingston Road** – temporary closure The road closure was discussed at length and particularly the potential issue around Kings Hall School traffic and local traffic meeting in Dodhill Lane and Whitmore Lane. It was agreed the dissemination of information from W&WU and Somerset Council was too little too late and the consultation with local stakeholders very poor. The inaccurate information on Google Maps was discussed and how this was contributing to the problems. A possible one-way system was considered but it was agreed this would most likely cause additional road user problems rather than be of help reducing congestion in the narrow lanes around Kingston St Mary parish. The Chair and IF are attending the Hestercombe LCN Highways Working Group meeting tomorrow where the road closure will be discussed in detail. DD gave a big thanks to the Chair of the Parish Council and both Somerset Councillors for all they have done so far to try and manage the situation and alleviate the issues arising from the extended road closure. **ix.** **Noticeboard** – The Chair advised the noticeboard has been finished and is ready to be erected. The Clerk advised she is waiting to hear from Somerset Council on the process to get the noticeboard approved and licenced so that it can be erected on the roadside.	Chair
12.0	**Playing Field Shelter** – update The Chair advised PCSO Marshall Bernhardt came to see him on Saturday and the police have a suspect in custody. This individual has been involved in other fires around Taunton but hasn't admitted to starting the playing field shelter fire. The Clerk advised she has lodged a claim with Zurich and is waiting for a quote from Darren's Den to rebuild the shelter. A second quote is also needed.	
13.0	**Nerrols 3 Planning Application Case Ref: 38/19/0129** The Chair advised the Parish Council has been asked to contribute towards the cost of seeking legal advice to overturn Somerset Council Planning Committee's decision to approve the Nerrols 3 Planning Application. It is felt the decision was pushed through by the Chair and Cheddon Fitzpaine would like to seek legal advice as to whether it can overturn the decision. KSM and West Monkton Parish Councils have been asked to contribute to a fee of £2,000 making the contribution £667 each. Cllr Perry clarified the route of appeal would be a Judicial Review and if the decision made was wrong on procedural grounds the approval could be quashed. He said the applicant would most likely resubmit the application. He understood there was very strong public opinion that access to the site should be through the southeast and Nerrols 2 rather than through the top end of Cheddon	Chair/Clerk

	Road. He did say, however, the access route was put to Somerset Highways, and it agreed the existing road system could cope with the increased traffic. Although the planning application was initially rejected a revote was held as no material planning objections were put forward and the committee voted in favour of the application. In a review, the Judge will most likely ask was the planning committee entitled to do what it did? The Council agreed in principle to contribute towards the cost as the proposed access point would increase traffic passing through Kingston St Mary Parish and Village and to show support for neighbouring parishes, particularly as the Council fundamentally agrees with Cheddon Fitzpaine PC and the objections they have with the agreed access to the site. The Clerk agreed to make sure the Council has the power to spend money on a Judicial Review and the Chair agreed to request that the review also investigate what the legal cost of bringing a Judicial Review would be and the likelihood of winning the appeal as these would present additional costs.	
14.0	**Citizens Advice Somerset** – Annual update and donation appeal The Chair said Citizens Advice Somerset has appealed for contributions towards its running costs. The Clerk said the Council donated £200 to Citizens Advice in 2022/23. Citizens Advice does help people in the parish. The Council agreed to donate £250 from the grants budget of £500.	
15.0	**Taunton International School** – The Grange update The Chair said the Council has received notification from Taunton School that the Grange is up for sale. The sale is being handled by Savills. The Council agreed to ask Taunton School to make the footpath access to the Spinney a right of way and/or gift this land to the Parish Council.	
16.0	**Rural England Prosperity Fund** The Chair advised Somerset has been awarded £1m of capital funding to support businesses and communities in rural areas. Certain criteria must be met with the grants relevant to the PC being net zero infrastructure or circular economy projects. Any grant would require match funding from the PC and the grant would only be paid after the project was completed, therefore, 100% would have to be funded upfront. The Chair asked the Council if this was something it could pursue for the playing field? The Council agreed to give this item more thought.	Whole Council
17.0	**ROSAG –** Staplegrove West development The Chair advised there is an exhibition by Bloor Homes of their Design Guide for Staplegrove West on the 21st May at Staplegrove Village Hall. They have asked for any comments to be submitted by the 3rd of June. The design guide can also be viewed online.	
18.0	**Quarterly Accounts Review** The Chair reviewed the quarterly reports and thanked the Clerk for keeping them in good order. In summary, the Chair reported the Council had finished the year with a surplus of £656 income over expenditure. This, however, was £2,600 below budget as during the year the Council purchased 2 new defibrillators, repaired the village green seat, upgraded the SID and had a very successful fete so we spent more than was budgeted but all for good causes.	
19.0	**Local Community Network** – update The Chair advised he and IF would be attending the Joint Highways Working Group meeting tomorrow.	

20.0	**Climate Emergency –** update The Chair asked DD to talk to the Council about Climate Emergency. DD summarised her report in the meeting papers and the Council's current Climate Action Plan which now needs reviewing and updating. She would like to get a working group together including those who worked on the original document and any other members of the community who would like to get involved to rewrite the original plan. The Council agreed and thanked DD for her support.	
21.0	**Neighbourhood Plan** – update The Council agreed to push this item forward to the next meeting.	
22.0	**Kingston St Mary Community Land Trust –** update Cllr Stripp advised the Council the CLT Board Meeting will be held tomorrow.	
23.0	**Kingston Community Partnership** – update Cllr Stripp said most things for the fete have been organised and there are quite a few stallholders. He said he is hoping to have a table for the playing field with the Playing Field Committee's plan/vision for the area for people to see. Cllr Boyce said that some of the older children would like a bigger slide in the playing field.	
24.0	**Financial Matters –** The Council noted the monthly bank reconciliation and approved the following payments: • £660.00 – Les Marsh Carpets – laying of flooring in playing field pavilion • £374.40 – Payroll Specialists – payroll provision for 2025/26 • £120.60 – Paul Prettejohn – additional mower repair • £600.00 – Emil Goretzki, completion of hardwood noticeboard The Council noted the following receipts: • £43,550.00 – 2025/26 Precept • £3,713.89 – CIL payment in respect of planning application 20/24/0027 – Grove Farm, Pickney Lane, Kingston St Mary, Taunton, TA2 8AS The Council approved the following quotes: • £676.00 + VAT - Somerset Council, emptying of dog waste bins for 2025/26 • £280.00 + VAT – Jack Councill, cutting of village green for 2025 season	
25.0	**Items for Next Agenda –** Please pass any agenda items to the Clerk before the next meeting.	
26.0	**Items for Link-Up and KSM Website –** The Chair will submit a write up for Link Up.	
27.0	**Date of Next Meeting – 10th June 2025** The meeting closed at 20.58	
Signed:		
Dated:		