**KINGSTON ST MARY PARISH COUNCIL**
**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING, HELD ON 14th OCTOBER 2025**
**AT THE PLAYING FIELD PAVILION, KINGSTON ST MARY, STARTING AT 19.00**

| Item No | Item | Action By |
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| **1.0** | **Attendance and Apologies -**<br>In attendance:<br>Cllr P Townsend (Chairman)<br>Cllr P Boyce<br>Cllr S Hancock<br>Cllr A Simpson<br>Mrs K Gibbins (Parish Clerk)<br>Cllr N O'Donnell (Somerset)<br>D Darch<br>I Forrest<br><br>Apologies: Cllr D Stripp, Cllr D Perry (Somerset)<br><br>Two members of the public were in attendance. | |
| **2.0** | **Councillors' Declarations of Interest -** None | |
| **3.0** | **Approval of Minutes of Ordinary Parish Council Meeting held on 9th September 2025**<br><br>**Resolved:** The minutes of the meeting were approved and will be signed as a true record at a future date. | |
| 4.0 | **Planning**<br>a) **Applications -**<br>**Case Ref: 20/25/0033/T** - Notification to carry out management works (reduction by 50%) to one Japanese Pagoda Tree within Kingston St. Mary Conservation Area at The Shop, Kingston Road, Kingston St. Mary<br>The Council resolved to fully support this application.<br>**Case Ref: 20/25/0030/T** - Notification to fell one ash tree and one linear group of self-set willow, sycamore, oak, hazel and ash (under mature beech) and to carry out management works to one oak tree within Kingston St. Mary Conservation Area at Garden Flat, Kingston Manor, Lodes Lane, Kingston St. Mary<br>The Council resolved to fully support this application.<br>**Case Ref: 20/25/0031** - Replacement of garage with detached garage and storage building at Bobbetts Cottage, Kingston Road, Kingston St Mary<br>The Council resolved to fully support this application subject to complying with the Conservation Officer's report.<br>**Case Ref: 38/25/0319** – Approval of reserved matters following Outline Application 38/23/0347 for the appearance, landscaping, scale and layout for the erection of 239 No. dwellings with associated drainage and infrastructure at Phase 1B, Staplegrove (West), Taunton<br>The above application was for information purposes only and the Council resolved not to comment on it.<br><br>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.<br><br>https://www3.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/asp/webpages/plan/plapplookup.asp | |

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| **5.0** | **Matters Outstanding from Previous Minutes –** | | |
| | i. | **Internet Banking** – The Council agreed to carry this forward. | |
| | ii. | **Finger Posts** – The Clerk advised the posts have now been refurbished. She thought the fingers would be installed at the same time, but they haven't. The Clerk spoke to Somerset Forge and it is still working on the fingers but are hoping to install them on both posts on 16th October. The Chair asked about payment and the Clerk advised the Council has not yet been invoiced for the work. She explained that once the invoice is received, she will apply for the grant from CPRE. | Clerk |
| | iii. | **Kingston Road –** The Council agreed the Kingston Road closure got a bit difficult when Mill Cross was closed and the one-way system was put in place at the same time as Volis Hill being closed. Unfortunately, there were a few problems with motorists not respecting the road closure. The Chair went on to say the works on Church Lane are finished and it is now open. He also advised he will be meeting with the W&WU Project Manager on the 28th October for an update on the work. | |
| | iv. | **Noticeboard** – The Clerk advised there is no update other than the invoice for Legal Services needs to be approved this evening. She said that once Legal Services has received the payment her understanding is a notice will be erected at the site of the noticeboard for 30 days. If no objections are received the Council should then be able to erect the noticeboard. The Chair and the Clerk thanked Cllr Perry for his assistance with clarifying queries regarding the process. | Clerk |
| | **v.** | **Playing Field Shelter** – The Chair advised there was nothing to report. He also agreed to contact Darren Greenslade about providing a quote for a suitable non-wooden replacement. | Chair |
| | vi. | **Somerset Council Chair's Awards for 2025** – The Chair advised he attended the Awards Ceremony with two members of the community who received an award for their services to the community. | |
| | vii. | **Speed Indicator Device –** The Chair agreed to write to the owners of Westhay Cottage to ask for their approval for the SID to be erected in the vicinity of their house/drive. IF advised the Council that the LCN has been discussing the qualifications needed to erect and manage the SIDs which are becoming increasingly complicated. The Council will most likely need to train a couple individuals to do this. | Chair |
| | viii. | **Parish Council Highway Works** – The Chair advised he has not heard any more about the highways scheme. The Chair advised he wrote to Highways about the road markings at Mill Cross and they have agreed to put the works into next year's budget. | |
| | ix. | **Somerset Council Planning's Firebreak** – The Chair mentioned the letter from the Conservative Councillor which he felt would only prolong the clearing of the backlog. The Clerk advised Cllr Perry had asked the Planning Officer about granting extensions, but he has not heard back. | |
| | x. | **Kingston St Mary Rapid Response Catchment** Area – The Chair advised the plan was to leaflet the Parish about flooding concerns. He attended the Parish Council Conference where he spoke to a Somerset Rivers Authority representative and they do a lot of community engagement around flood planning and preparedness. He asked the Council if this is something which might be worthwhile. Cllr O'Donnell advised he is now a member of the SRA and they have a small budget to help with flood planning and preparedness. DD looked at what was on offer, she said a flood warden's workshop would be very useful and it might be worthwhile offering it to members of the community. After the training it would then be worthwhile | |

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| | considering purchasing equipment which might be useful for flood preparedness.<br>xi. **Parish Council Preparedness Survey** – The Chair advised the Council that following its response to the survey an Environment Agency representative had written to the Council and made them aware of the grants available. Local Councils can get up to £5k towards flood equipment and training. | |
| **6.0** | **The Grange, Taunton School** – update<br><br>The Chair advised he had received a reply from Taunton School's Director of Estates. The Grange is being sold to a third party who want to use the accommodation for middle managers from EDF in the short term and then convert it to retirement flats once they get necessary planning approval. The Chair will chase up the path to the Spinney for the November meeting. | Chair |
| **7.0** | **Road Markings at Mill Cross**<br><br>The Chair asked IF to talk to the Council about this agenda item. IF said the Council had talked about this item earlier in the meeting but he reiterated the need for reinstatement of the road markings at Mill Cross which were there originally plus some enhancements to the northeast corner to prevent motorists from cutting the corner. He also mentioned the condition of the southeast corner of the road which needs repairing. The other thing which has happened at Mill Cross is the gully has been disturbed by the reinstatement of the road following the gas works. The Highway Officer has agreed to visit the site on 29th October. | Chair/IF |
| **8.0** | **AGAR 2024/25** – Consider final external auditor report and decide action required<br><br>The Clerk advised the Council the AGAR has been approved and the cheque to pay the Auditor's fee is on the list of cheques for approval this evening. She explained the 'other' comment on the Auditor's Report. The Council approved the final Auditor's Report and decided that no further action was required. | |
| **9.0** | **AGAR 2024/25** – Assertion 10 – Digital & Data Compliance<br><br>The Chair discussed the requirement for next year's AGAR in respect of Digital & Data Compliance and explained the actions the Council needs to take to meet the compliance requirements. The Council agreed to work on these actions over the next 12 months and agreed the website accessibility requirements will need to be implemented by the IT Manager. The Council also agreed to consider purchasing a laptop for the Clerk to maximise cyber security. The Clerk said that a budget was set aside for this some years ago. The Clerk agreed to discuss these matters with the IT Manager. | Whole Council/Clerk |
| **10.0** | **Somerset Community Working Group Review –**<br><br>The Chair advised Somerset Council is doing a survey on how it develops and engages with communities. The Council discussed the questions and agreed on its responses to them. | |
| **11.0** | **The Swan** – update<br><br>The Chair advised the Swan has new landlords who also look after the Princess Royal in Taunton. The Council recorded its thanks to Neil and Tracey who kept the pub open during the road closure. | |
| **12.0** | **Community Health & Wellbeing Grant**<br><br>The Chair advised that Cllr Stripp's application for a grant for £10k towards the cost of the engineering and planning survey for the active travel route has been successful. The Chair went on to say the total cost of the survey is £13k. The | |

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| | Council agreed to accept the award and contribute the additional £3k to cover the cost of the survey. | |
| **13.0** | **Climate Emergency** – Update and Climate and Emergency Action Plans<br><br>DD confirmed the update to the Climate Emergency Plan had been completed. The next stage is to put the document on the website. She discussed some of the actions which have been proposed by members of the community which are beyond the scope of the PC and suggested the Council put a piece in Link-Up to see if any member of the community might like to take the lead on some of these projects. The Council agreed and DD said she would draft something up for Link-Up to coincide with the Climate Emergency Plan going live on the website. | DD |
| **14.0** | **Playing Field Committee** – update<br><br>The Chair asked Cllr Simpson to update the Council on the playing field committee. She said they had been focussing their attention on purchasing the container and the logistics around getting the container to the site. The container will ensure there is ample storage space to facilitate the hiring out of the pavilion. The Council discussed the position of the container and agreed to position it tight to the wall.<br><br>The Chair presented the Playing Field Accounts to the Council. The Council approved the Accounts and the Chair agreed to send them to the Charities Commission. | Chair |
| **15.0** | **Local Community Network** – update<br><br>The Chair asked IF to update the Council on the LCN Highways Working Group. IF brought a few points in the minutes of the previous meeting to the attention of the Council. The Chair said he would like to have a review with the appropriate stakeholders once the gas works has been completed.<br><br>The Chair said he missed the Last LCN meeting on 24th September but noted that on the 10th June 2026 the LCN meeting is scheduled to be held in Kingston St Mary.<br><br>The Chair also reported that Cllr Sripp gave a presentation at the last LCN meeting on the Children & Young People's Working Group. | |
| **16.0** | **Kingston St Mary Community Land Trust** – Update<br><br>The Chair advised a CLT board meeting is scheduled for November. | |
| **17.0** | **Kingston Community Partnership** – Update<br><br>The Chair said there was nothing to report. | |
| **18.0** | **Financial Matters –**<br><br>The Council noted the monthly bank reconciliation and approved it as well as approved the following payments:<br>• £500.00 – Somerset Council Legal Services, fee for erection of noticeboard on the side of the highway in Edgeborough<br>• £3,609.00 – Heaver Bros Ltd – One trip (new) green container together with delivery, grafotherm treatment and padlock & key<br>• £252.00 – PKF Littlejohn LLP, Professional services rendered in connection with the Limited Assurance review of the AGAR return for year ended 31 March 2025<br>• £202.80 – Somerset Council, emptying of dog waste bins for Qtr 2, 1 July – 30 September 2025<br>• £500.00 – Link-up, Parish Council donation for 2025/26 financial year | |

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| **19.0** | **Items for Next Agenda –**<br><br>Please pass any other agenda items to the Clerk before the next meeting. | |
| **20.0** | **Items for Link-Up and KSM Website –**<br><br>The Chair will submit a write up for Link-Up. | |
| **21.0** | **Date of Next Meeting – 11th November 2025**<br><br>The meeting closed at 20:43 | |
| **Signed:** | | |
| **Dated:** | | |