



SOUTH PETHERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Clerks to the Parish: **Kate Alford and Justin Robinson (Locum)**

Unit 1, Frogmary Green Farm, West Street, South Petherton TA13 5DJ

Tel: 01460 241002

E-Mail: clerk@southpethertonparishcouncil.gov.uk

www.southpethertonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Public Session

A member of the public raised concerns over financial reporting of the council's reserves.

Cllrs J Roundell-Greene and A Dance gave an update from Somerset Council:

Cllr Dance has held two surgeries in the area and spoke of the need for more foster carers to come forward in the county. Cllr Dance would be happy to arrange for a speaker to visit South Petherton to promote the benefits of foster caring. Further redundancies have been necessary at Somerset Council to help balance the books.

Cllr Roundell Greene Raised concerns about highway safety outside the school and poor attendance at the LCN meetings. A site visit with Somerset Highways officers is planned to consider issues in Over Stratton.

The Minutes

Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting of South Petherton Parish Council held at William Blake Memorial Hall on Monday 4th November 2024 when the following business was conducted.

PRESENT Councillors N Wakely (Chair), S Carp, C Bragg, S Spiers, K Jones, R Brown, B Chitty, D Steel, B Elliott, B Swainson, T New, D Hodson-Wright, A Dance (until item 10.7(4)), R Killen along with the Locum Clerk Mr Justin Robinson.

6 members of the public were also in attendance.

10.1 To receive and approve any apologies for non-attendance.

Apologies were received from Cllr Baker.

10.2 To receive any declarations of interests.

None

10.3 To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council from 7th October 2024.

It was unanimously resolved to approve the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting.

10.4 Locum Clerk updates:

The locum clerk reported on progress with the office lease (Cllrs New and Wakely to act as signatories of the new lease). The tennis court works had been completed but issues with making payments now necessitated adding additional signatories to the bank mandate. SALC and Somerset Council to jointly host a conference on the 13th November; the parish council can send two representatives should they wish.

10.5 Chairman's Announcements.

10.6 Reports:

(a) Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC)

The Locum Clerk reported that the SALC AGM would be held on 13th November in Bridgwater as part of the parish councils conference. The council could send two representatives.

(b) Councillors

Cllr Carp reported that the tennis club would be holding an event to celebrate the completion of works to the courts in the new year.

10.7 Items for Decision

- (1) To consider a request from the Community Hub Group that South Petherton Parish Council apply to Somerset Council to register the Methodist Church complex on Palmer Street as an Asset of Community Value.**

Members discussed the timing of the submission of the bid and agreed that an application should proceed at the earliest opportunity. It was unanimously resolved to submit an application to register the Methodist Church complex as an Asset of Community Value.

- (2) To consider assigning additional signatories to the bank mandate and online banking.**

In order to ensure that payments can be made when over signatories are unavailable, it was unanimously resolved to add Cllrs Carp and Chitty as signatories to the bank account.

- (3) To approve the hours, salary ranges, job descriptions and person specifications for the clerk and assistant clerk posts.**

It was unanimously resolved to approve the documents, as presented by the locum clerk.

- (4) To approve the adverts for the clerk and assistant clerk posts and authorise the locum clerk to place the adverts with SALC and neighbouring county associations and with Dillington Advertising.**

It was unanimously resolved to accept the locum clerk's recommendations re advertising both posts. (Cllr Dance left the meeting at the point)

- (5) To review the council's pension scheme provision and adopt any recommendations.**

Members reviewed the current LGPS provision and expressed concern at the costs to the council, although it was also acknowledged that the scheme is attractive to potential employees.

After much discussion it was resolved to offer the NEST scheme to the council's new employees, with the contribution levels to be negotiated with the new clerk and assistant clerk. 10 For 2 Against and 1 Abstention.

- (6) To agree the proposed recruitment process timeline.**

It was unanimously agreed to approve the timeline as tabled by the locum clerk.

- (7) To appoint members to serve on the shortlisting and interview panel.**

It was unanimously resolved to appoint Cllrs Bragg, Carp, Killen and Wakely to serve on the panel.

- (8) To consider whether the post of clerk requires a basic DBS check.**

It was unanimously resolved that the post of Clerk should require a standard DBS check.

- (9) To agree that the application process for both staff vacancies will be by submission of a CV and covering letter.**

Agreed, unanimously.

- (10) To delegate any other matters relating to the recruitment process to the locum clerk in consultation with the chair of council and the chair of the finance and general purposes committee.**

Agreed, unanimously.

10.8 Open Spaces Committee

Members received and noted the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee held on 7th October 2024.

10.9 Finance & General Purpose Committee

Members noted payments made in October 2024 and unanimously resolved to agree the items of expenditure and approve the payments for November 2024.

10.10 Planning Committee

Members received and noted the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 7th October 2024.

10.11 To note the reports received

Cllr Chitty gave a report on the allotments. There are some potential items for the locum clerk to follow up on in due course.

10.12 Other matters referred to Officers.

None.

10.13 Date of next meeting - Monday 2nd December 2024 at The William Blake Memorial Hall.

