



# SOUTH PETHERTON PARISH COUNCIL

South Petherton Parish Office  
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## Public Session

A member of the public spoke in support of the council applying for an SRA flood mitigation grant for the Whitfield Lane area.

A member of the public suggested that the Blake Hall lights could do with replacing for next Christmas and also asked if the council was represented at Remembrance Sunday.

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

Cllr Dance reported that, in his role as MP for Yeovil, he had met the Leader of Somerset Council together with other Somerset MPs to discuss the council's current financial pressures and agree how best to lobby central government.

Cllr Roundell-Greene commented on how festive the village was looking. Changes to the current council tax reduction scheme (council tax benefit) are being considered by Somerset Council. LCN meetings in Crewkerne are not well attended and the parish council was encouraged to send a representative to each meeting. A highways site visit to Over Stratton had identified a number of significant potholes for repair.

## The Minutes

Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting of South Petherton Parish Council held at William Blake Memorial Hall on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2024 when the following business was conducted.

**PRESENT** Councillors N Wakely (Chair), S Carp, C Bragg, L Baker, K Jones, R Brown, B Chitty, D Steel, B Elliott, B Swainson, D Hodson-Wright, A Dance (until item 11.7(7)), R Killen along with the Locum Clerk Mr Justin Robinson.

12 members of the public were also in attendance.

### **11.1 To receive and approve any apologies for non attendance.**

Apologies were received from Cllrs New and Spiers.

### **11.2 To receive any declarations of interests.**

There were none.

### **11.3 To receive and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council from 4<sup>th</sup> November.**

The minutes were unanimously approved as a correct record of the meeting.

### **11.4 Clerk update**

A request had been received for a councillor to read at the local church Christmas service.

### **11.5 Chairman's Announcements.**

There was nothing to report.

### **11.6 Reports:**

- (a) Somerset Association of Local Councils – the training schedule has been circulated.
- (b) Councillors – Cllr Chitty requested the name plaques be found for the next meeting.

### **11.7 Items for decision or that may require action**

- (1) To receive a verbal update from Tom Miller of LVA on the proposed development off Lightgate Lane. Council to then consider its response should further action be needed.**

Mr Miller updated members on the current position and invited questions from members with regard to potential community benefits should access to the potential development site be secured across council owned land.

Members were keen to explore whether a direct financial contribution to the council could be considered rather than provision of a new community building. Mr Miller agreed to look into this.

Other members were concerned about the pressure on local infrastructure that further development could exacerbate.

It was noted that as discussions progressed, the council would need legal and other professional advice. It was, therefore, resolved that council should seek full agreement from LVA to fund council's legal and other professional costs should matters progress to a point where such services were needed. 10-3-0

**(2) To receive an update on progress with the Community Hub project and agree any actions that may be required.**

Members considered a request from the Community Hub Committee to make an offer for the Methodist Chapel complex. Many members were supportive of the idea, regarding it as a once in a lifetime opportunity to acquire such a site in the heart of the village but others were concerned about the lack of a business case and the longer-term financial implications of such an acquisition. The locum clerk urged caution as no business case has yet been considered by the council and the funding for the project has not been secured.

After much discussion it was resolved to consider the rest of the item in confidential session owing to commercially sensitive nature of the business to be discussed. 11-1-1

Members then moved to an adjacent room to continue their discussions.

After further deliberation it was resolved to instruct the locum clerk to submit an offer not in excess of £165,000.00 for the Methodist Chapel complex, with the proviso that no money be committed until the necessary funding and planning consents have been secured 9-2-2

**(3) To appoint Cllr Killen to serve on the Finance and Open Spaces Committees.**

It was unanimously resolved to appoint Cllr Killen to the Finance and Open Spaces Committees.

**(4) To consider a request from TWIG (Cllr Jones) to apply for a Somerset Rivers Authority flood mitigation grant and agree any actions.**

It was noted that as the land in question was currently leased to a third party, this should very much be a fact-finding project at this stage. Members unanimously agreed that this should be a longer-term ambition for 2027.

**(5) To consider what action is required regarding the future maintenance of the meadow at Whitfield Lane.**

It was noted that the poor access to the site would probably deter a farmer or contractor from taking on works on this site. It was, therefore, agreed that TWIG would approach the neighbouring tenant to see if access could be obtained to the meadow through this land.

**(6) To consider whether to request Somerset Highways to investigate what parking restrictions can be enacted to improve road safety outside the school.**

It was noted that there are problems with poor and inconsiderate parking outside both schools, especially during the school run times.

It was unanimously resolved that the council's new officers should contact the police and Somerset Council's enforcement team to explore the options for improving highway safety at the junior and infant schools.

At this point Cllr Dance left the meeting.

**(7) To consider and agree what action should be taken to prevent inappropriate parking in the disabled bay in the car park adjacent to the Co-op following concerns raised by a resident.**

Members were highly sympathetic to the problems that poor and illegal parking could cause for disabled motorists and their passengers. It was unanimously agreed that this problem should be highlighted on the council's Facebook page and in the parish newsletter and that the council's new officers should obtain quotations to renew the parking bay markings.

**(8) To consider a request from a resident to address the lack of street lighting between Drove Close and Cobbetts Rise on North Street and agree any actions.**

Members noted that this may not be an adopted highway. It was resolved to instruct the council's new officers to ascertain ownership of the areas in question and the potential costs for the purchase and installation of additional lighting columns.

## **11.8 Open Spaces Committee**

It was noted that there were no matters to report.

## **11.9 Finance & General Purpose Committee**

Members noted payments made in November 2024 and unanimously approved the payments for December.

**11.10 Planning Committee**

Members received and noted the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

**11.11 To note the reports received on the following (all verbal reports at the meeting):**

- a) Allotments & Whitfield Lane – there are some outstanding matters to be discussed with new staff members, once they are in post.
- b) Footpaths & Bridleways – concerns were raised over slippery footpaths in the village centre. The locum clerk asked for a list of specific locations.
- c) Recreation Ground/SPRUG Liaison – there may be a faulty floodlight at the recreation ground.
- d) Youth Provision – The Scouts recently held a meeting of trustees. All is well and fundraising is being planned for the new year.
- e) Patient Participation Group – The recent planned meeting was cancelled. SPARK has been running an initiative to train people to use IT and is keen to train others to provide support in the local community.

**11.12 Other matters referred to Officers.**

There were none.

**11.13 To receive a report from the recruitment panel and resolve to adopt any recommendations.**

Cllr Bragg reported that the interviews for both posts were currently ongoing and that recommendations would be made to the next meeting of council.

**11.14 To agree the new template contract of employment for staff.**

It was unanimously agreed to use the new model template for staff contracts, based on but not bound by any future changes to Green Book terms.

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**Signed:**

**Dated:**