



**Minutes of the proceedings of the Siston Parish Council Meeting held at Warmley Community Centre, on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2023 commencing at 7.30pm**

**Present** – Parish Councillors Andrew Stacey (Chair), Alan Bryant, James Hackett, Nathan Reed and Aled Rees. Ward Councillors Samuel Bromiley (departed 8.40pm) and Marilyn Palmer.

**44. Apologies for Absence:** Parish Councillor Ros Mahoney and Ward Councillor Ben Stokes.

**45. Declarations of Interests under the Code of Conduct adopted May 2023**

Councillor James Hackett – Chair of Friends of Siston Common – Inc Grant Application Minute Ref 60

Councillor James Hackett – Grant application for Avon Industrial Buildings Trust Minute Ref 60

Councillor Alan Bryant – Grant application - William Champion Gardens Minute Ref 60

Councillor Andrew Stacey – Planning Application Bridgegate Engineering Services – Minute Ref 48

**46. Minutes Approved**

Full Council Meeting – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Resolved:** The minutes were passed and signed as a correct record.

**47. Public Participation**

Five members of the public were present.

At 7.40pm four members of the local police teams arrived to observe the meeting. A resident asked for the cause of a recent accident on the High Street. It was advised details that were not confidential would be shared after the meeting to the Clerk. (They departed the meeting at 8.25pm.)

Two members of the public advised their attendance to the Clerk in advance of the meeting and that they would like to speak to the Parish Council regarding agenda items 16 (Bristol and Bath Railway Path) and 22 (Planning). The Chairman therefore proposed that these items were advanced to the top of the agenda.

**Resolved - All Agreed**

**48. Planning**

Councillors agreed that they had received and reviewed the planning information for the month prior to the meeting.

**Resolved – All Agreed**

Two members of the public addressed the Parish Council about the planning application for Bridgegate Engineering Planning Reference P22/07171/F. They explained that a revised application had been submitted and they addressed their concerns and noted they felt changes had been made to address each of the objections that had been made to satisfy the Planning Committee, but they did not resolve the residents' concerns. They confirmed that they still felt it was appropriate to object and asked for the Parish Council to continue to support the objections, on behalf of the residents they were representing.

Councillor Stacey advised he had spoken with the Planning Department and a summary of all the changes between the initial application made and the revised one would be put up on the planning portal.

Ward Councillor Bromiley explained the next steps and agreed he would hold a meeting, prior to any site visit to ensure that the residents views were represented to the Planning Committee, which would also be used when the Planning Committee met to deliberate on the application. He recommended that only one member of the public spoke to the Planning Committee when the meeting takes place, which encompasses all residents views. He also encouraged all those who had made an objection to the original application, to re-submit them.

**49. Bristol and Bath Railway Path**

Two members of the public addressed the Council. One explained that he had attended as a representative of a group of concerned residents regarding the speed of travel of bikes passing across the front of the Warmley Waiting Room and then travelling towards Bath, past the Signal Box. A child had been knocked over in that area recently. One explained that the railway path which passes through Siston, is one of only two sections in the entire length of the railway path that contains a large hill and also that the pathway contains two blind bends at

that point. This area in particular is often overgrown with vegetation, making it near impossible to pass safely, as people travelling are pushed into the centre of the pathway.

A draft proposal to improve the railway path through the sections highlighted by these residents had been circulated in advance of the meeting, which had been provided by Councillor Hackett to the Council on behalf of the Cycling Forum.

Councillors approved the draft proposal and agreed they were happy to provide written confirmation to the group that Siston Parish Council were supporting the proposed improvements.

Councillors instructed the Clerk to write to South Glos. Council to ask if the downhill section of the Bristol to Bath Railway Path (near Warmley Station) could be added to a maintenance plan for the vegetation to be cut back regularly and to highlight the safety concerns.

**Resolved – All Agreed**

Councillor Rees asked the Policeman present if there were still plans for them to monitor a section of the railway path for speed and electric bikes, which they confirmed there were.

**50. Co-option**

Councillors all voted for Mr Stephen Reade to become a Parish Councillor. His acceptance of office was duly signed and witnessed by the Clerk.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

**51. Ward Councillor Update**

Ward Councillor Marilyn Palmer introduced herself to those present. She advised that she had recently arranged for the overgrown grass verges on Webbs Heath and Siston Lane to be cut back, as they were causing a risk to residents, accessing the road.

**52. Terms of References for Committees**

Councillors agreed the contents and use of the Terms of Reference for the Allotment, Finance and Planning Committees for 2023/24

**Resolved: All Agreed**

**53. Polices**

Councillors agreed the contents and use of the Polices for: Complaints, Scheme of Delegation, Grievance, Equality and Diversity, Data Protection, Vexatious Complainants, Lone Working, Social Media, Health and Safety, Internal Controls, Whistle blowing, Training and Development, Staff Appraisal, Records Retention and the Simple Publication Scheme. A few formatting errors were advised which need correcting by the Clerk before publication to the website.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

**54. Conflict of Interests – External Auditor BDO**

All Councillors and the Clerk/RFO confirmed they had no conflict of interests with the external auditor BDO.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

**55. Owl Box Review and Repairs**

The Clerk presented the quotation for the review and repair of the Owl Boxes from Woodstock Tree Services. Councillors agreed with the work to be undertaken on the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and agreed they were happy with the quotation.

Councillor Hackett confirmed he had some spare straps for the Owl Boxes and advised he would pass them for use.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

**56. Freres Alms Houses Bitton**

Councillor Stephen Reade was approved to become the Trustee of the Freres Alms Houses (Bitton) on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Clerk agreed to forward the meeting invitation to Councillor Reade.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

**57. Bus Network**

Councillor Reade was approved to represent Siston Parish Council, at a joint venture meeting with Oldland and Bitton Parish Councils to review transport in the local area, with a view to planning an application to the Westlink Project, being organised by the Metro Mayor. A note was made that two million was quite a small sum of money for a transport project.

## **Resolved – All Agreed**

### **58. St Barnabas Church Invitation**

Councillors agreed to accept an invitation to promote Siston Parish Council at the Church Christmas Fair on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2023. A “Green” themed tree needs to be made.

It was confirmed that there was no financial support to be given to the Church.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

### **59. South Glos Council – Cleaning Team**

The Cleansing Team will be in Siston Parish shortly for one week in July 2023.

Councillors agreed that priority should be given to the Siston Hill Estate. A list of jobs had been collated for that area by the Clerk, that were approved.

Councillors also agreed to request cleaning of road signs in the Parish, particularly those on Tower Lane and Tower Roads (North and South).

The Clerk was asked to advise these tasks and priority order to South Glos. Council.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

### **60. Grants**

Warmley Wheelers – A grant of £500 was agreed. Since the last meeting Warmley Wheelers advised that they had a 20-year lease from South Glos. Council Community Spaces Team to maintain the trails advised on the application. Ward Councillor Bromiley confirmed that if the Parish Council made a request for the trails, as public pathways, to be maintained by South Glos. Council, then they would not be up to the standard that the bikes from Warmley Wheelers could use.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

William Champions Gardens - £2083 was agreed. The Clerk confirmed this amount was set aside for a Parish Council Project in the Finance Committee meeting Oct 2022 min ref 15. The Clerk advised that the Grant Policy allows for larger projects to be considered in September of each year, for payment after the May meeting in the following year. She advised in the forthcoming budget planning for the 2024.25 year the Council will need to consider the projects and grants separately.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

Friends of Siston Commons - £1659.09 was agreed. The Clerk confirmed this amount was set aside for a Parish Council Project in the Finance Committee meeting October 2022, min ref 15.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

Avon Industrial Buildings Trust - £500 was agreed for payment. The Clerk circulated in advance of the meeting an email provided by the applicant explaining that exterior works were being undertaken at the present time and the mine was not listed by the Coal Board. In addition, written confirmation from the land owner was being obtained, as only verbal permission was held. Councillor Bryant was familiar with the applicant and its directors and assured the Council of his qualification.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

### **61. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

Councillor Stephen Reade agreed to Chair the Steering Group.

Councillor Hackett and Reed confirmed they wish to be members of the group.

The Clerk was asked to co-ordinate a meeting and include all the residents who had provided their details to be part of the Neighbourhood Planning Group.

**Resolved: All Agreed**

### **62. Finance**

a) Members received statement of accounts (receipts and payments inc. v budget) to the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2023

b) Members received and approved the bank statements to 29<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

c) Members received the Bank Reconciliation to 29<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

**Resolved - All agreed.**

### **63. Accounts for Payment**

The on-line payment of the following items for June2023 were approved:

1. S Thomas – Salary - £839.91
2. HMRC - £250.84
3. S Thomas – Expenses - £60.48
4. A Stacey – Chairs Allowance - £50
5. Abbot Skip Hire – Allotments - £230

6. D&M Property Maintenance – bench clean - £297
7. D&M Property Maintenance - Bus shelter clean- £180
8. Stone King LLP – Warmley Comm Removal of Custodian Trusteeship - £438

Also agreed was payment of the approved grants min ref 60

**Resolved – All Agreed**

#### **64. Clerks Update and Correspondence**

##### **Update**

- Councillor Stacey arranged for the remaining memorial wreaths and a clear up to be completed at the Memorial Garden by a local resident.
- Councillor Mahoney obtained photographs and video of motorbikes being driven on the Commons and has passed this onto the police.
- Mathew Lipton, Commons and Biodiversity Manager of South Glos. Council offered the Parish Council Hedgehog Heroes signs. Councillor Mahoney took receipt of the signs on behalf of the Council. She has passed them to King's Oak and King's Forest Schools for them to install. Ros had advised she has spoken with those two schools about working with the Friends of Siston Commons Group.
- Letter of thanks sent from Siston Parish Councillors to Ian Saywell of West of England Combined Authority for the work they undertook, clearing litter from the banks of Warmley Brook.
- Letter of thanks sent from Siston Parish Councillors to Friends of Siston Commons to thank them for their work, commitment and time, working throughout the parish, to share with all those that volunteer their time.
- The Clerk has continued to chase South Glos. Council regarding the creation and installation of the signs for Siston Village. A response has been received apologising for the delay and advising they are working on the location of the signs at present. The Clerk has responded to advise of the locations already decided in the previous piece of work. Ward Councillor Marilyn Palmer advised she would try to expediate matters if the Clerk provided the contact details.

**Resolved - All Agreed**

- Councillor Aled Rees highlighted some pieces of asbestos on the allotment. Photographs were required in order to obtain quotations for the removal of them, however on further inspection by Councillor Rees, it was advised that the they are hidden by undergrowth now and cannot be seen or removed. This task will be undertaken in a few months. The Clerk suggested some no entry tape was put in place, to ensure residents could not touch the material. Councillors Rees and Reade advised the material was well hidden and not in place where allotment holders would go. It was decided no tape would be put in place.

**Resolved – All Agreed**

- Following a review of the assets, it was noted that many benches are not numbered. Cllr Bryant is now organising a few more numbers to be made for placing on the 40 benches now on the asset register. Councillors confirmed they were in agreement with this.

**Resolved – All Agreed**

##### **Correspondence**

- Telephone call received from the South Glos. Travellers Unit to advise there are a few traditional caravans parked just off Firework Close. They were resting horses and moved on a few days later, after written notice was given.
- Email received asking what the correct process was for reporting Travellers, which was advised by the Clerk.
- A complaint was received by Cllr Stacey regarding the Memorial Garden: The bins were full and some rubbish was on the ground, the bushes and hedges had not been trimmed and the planters have not had any flowers placed in them. The Clerk referred this to South Glos. Council, who arranged for the bin to be emptied and a litter pick to take place the next day. The bushes and hedges part of the email was sent on internally to be managed at South Glos. Council.
- Email received from a resident advising of the ill repaired path on Goose Green by National Grid. Advised the resident that we are waiting to speak with National Grid Repair Team and will ensure a good repair is carried out. National Grid have advised Chris Belcher will undertake the repair on their behalf.

- Copy email received from a resident, that they had sent to South Glos. Council Streetcare Team, advising that some renovation work has been done a property on Ridley Avenue, but they have not provided a skip and so materials are being left on the verge. A spot check by the Clerk was undertaken during the problem and after and the issue has now been resolved.
- Email received asking about local publications for South Glos. Council to publicise training courses.
- Copy email received to advise a resident has reported a post being kicked out on the football pitch at Siston Way, to Streetcare.
- Copy email received from a resident, which he has sent to MP Chris Skidmore to ask him to chase up the Environment Agency to fix the sluice gate at Warmley Forest Park. It stated the work should have been done in Sept 2022, so an email response was sent to clarify the funding has been agreed for 2023.24, but the Parish Council has not been advised of a date when the work was commenced. Earlier this year, the funding was re-affirmed in correspondence with the Environment Agency. The resident suggested the Parish Council put a note of the present position for social media, as there is currently hearsay and rumour circulating in the parish. Councillors declined the request for the social media note.

#### **Resolved – All Agreed**

- Email received from a resident. They have made a suggestion of a way to control cattle for the proposed reintroduction onto Siston Common, without boundary fencing. I have sent two emails received to Matthew Lipton, Commons and Biodiversity Manager of South Glos. Council for consideration. A comprehensive response was sent from South Glos. Council to the resident and circulated to the Council after this meeting was held (20<sup>th</sup> June 2023). Councillor were advised to provide individual feedback to David Tibbiatts of South Glos. Council regarding the proposed control method.
- Email received from a resident reporting further pollution at Warmley Brook (which looks like oil). The Clerk reported it to the Environment Agency on the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The Environment Agency have asked if the person who spots the issue could ring the emergency line to give a firsthand account on 0800 807060. This will help the investigation.
- Email received from a resident to report posts removed (x2) onto the football pitch at Siston Park, making vehicle access a possibility. The Clerk has reported this to South Glos. Council.
- An enquiry has been received about a further memorial bench. Information has been sent back to the resident to consider.
- Several emails have been received from the action group against the planning application for the McBrida factory in Bridgegate. They advised their intention to make representation at the Parish Council meeting. See minute ref 48 above.
- A resident has raised concerns with Cllr Hackett and also the Clerk about the speed of bikes travelling along the railway path between the Warmley Waiting Room and the Signal box. They noted their intention to speak at the Parish Council meeting, which is noted minute reference 49 above.

#### **65. Friends of Siston Commons**

A report was circulated in advance of the meeting.

#### **66. Other Business**

- Councillor Bryant advised the intention of the Allotment Committee to create signs to mark each allotment by number.
- Councillor Bryant advised allotment holders had requested a site on the allotment to share extra produce and other items for other allotment holders.
- Councillor Bryant advised there was now a plot available to hand on to a new tenant.
- Councillor Bryant advised that both himself and Councillor Rees would shortly completing the annual allotment judging for the best kept and most improved allotments.
- Councillor Bryant advised that the Warmley Flower Show would be running in August 2023 and they would be raising money for Men in Sheds and the Signal Box this year.
- Councillor Bryant updated those present on upcoming events at the Kingswood Heritage Museum.
- Councillor Hackett invited Ward Councillor Palmer to the Boyd Valley Engagement Forum. It was also suggested that Councillor Palmer should be added to the mailing lists for Friends of Siston Commons and the Webbs Heath Mine renovations.

- Councillor Reade advised the group the Station Master Pole had now been renovated and the sign itself was also going to be completed shortly.
- Councillor Reade advised that he would be raising heritage as an important consideration to the Council Scrutiny Commission as a resident not a Councillor. In addition, as a resident he was also going to comment on the South Glos. Council Waste Contract proposals and the performance of WECA.

**Date of next meeting: TUESDAY 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at Warmley Community Centre**

**Meeting closed at – 21:07**

**Confirmed and signed**

**Chairman..... Date .....**

*Sara Thomas*

**Clerk for Siston Parish Council**

**Email:- [sistonpc@gmail.com](mailto:sistonpc@gmail.com) Tel:- 07946 858048**