

## CLERK'S REPORT – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021

### **Parish Council Matters – Agenda Item 7**

**Street Lighting Maintenance** – The clerk has not yet succeeded in concluding agreement with Volker Highways for Street Lighting Maintenance. They have however, quoted rates and terms and conditions for both Planned Maintenance and Reactive Maintenance which are agreeable. The only matter outstanding is 'agreement of conditions of contract', but the sequence of Lockdowns and other restrictions has prevented progress and conclusion of the matters. However, unlike SSE, and other potential suppliers, Volker will take on an agreement whereby the Parish Council manages its own Street Lights, planning and procuring its planned maintenance as it wants it to its budget. SSE in theory provided this planned maintenance, but in my time as clerk I have never received an inspection report for any light other than those that failed and needed replacement. Other potential contractors, CentreGreat and WestonRail might be willing to provide such an agreement, but only if an inspection and condition report is produced for each and every light – effectively requiring the first round of planned maintenance (which would be charged) before taking on the lights. They would also require any that failed inspection to be brought up to standard before they are taken on.

I therefore propose that we procure a round of Planned Maintenance from Volker in 2021-22, to commence our relationship with them, and have produced a proposed Purchase Order to reflect this. This would catch up on all the inspections and surveys missed under SSE. You are legally obliged to conduct Electrical safety and Structural Inspections every six years. It may well identify lights in need of significant refurbishment or replacement, but these would be budgeted and planned to take place in subsequent years. The proposed Purchase Order is for £772, and appears in the proposed Budget. You may therefore need to deal with this item simultaneously with budget discussions.

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**Allotments** – All allotments are let, and there is no waiting list. Other items remain outstanding, such as the hedge line, but all are further delayed from any progress due to Lockdown 3.

### **General Parish Matters – Agenda Item 8**

**Southstoke Lane and Village Road Safety Measures** – The South Stoke village Speed Restriction scheme has been circulated for review and approval. We need to respond to this as soon as possible. The associated TRO is being prepared at the moment. The project is still expected to be completed in its entirety before the end of March 2021. The whole scheme is put out for consultation, and so it will be important to inform the village and ensure there are no objections.

Together with the grants received, CIL funds and precept funds the cost of the whole scheme can be met by the Parish Council if necessary.

**Implementation of Broadband provision in Southstoke and Midford by Truespeed** – This appears to be complete within South Stoke village itself and progress continues around Midford.

**Village Hall** - The Village Hall Water heater in the Kitchen has been replaced. The village hall remains closed under lockdown restrictions. A further grant is available and should be claimed as the village hall is unlikely to have any income before the summer.

**Police liaison and Neighbourhood Watch** – The clerk has ordered sixteen Neighbourhood Watch signs at a cost of £104 from the Avon & Somerset Police Neighbourhood Watch Administrator. It was necessary to pay this sum on a personal cheque, and that cheque has not yet been banked. It therefore appears that there is no progress with this order, and may be waiting for the return to work of Trevor Wilmot, so some considerable time yet. The location of the signs have been agreed and most permissions obtained.

**South Stoke Phone Box - Emergency Phone Cellular Annual Rental** – During the first lockdown the annual rental payment of £60 became due and was invoiced to the clerk's previous address. We were not therefore aware of it until it was overdue, and so it has been paid for this current year. However, the phone has never been used and coverage in the village has improved and the carrying of a mobile phone by everyone is now the norm. The clerk recommends that the phone rental is discontinued next year, and requests instruction to terminate the service when it comes up for renewal.

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**Signage on Old Midford Road junction with Packhorse Lane** – Judy Parfitt of the Beeches has again requested signage to point to South Stoke at the junction of Old Midford Road and Packhorse Lane. Cllr. Jenny John has discussed this with her and she will discuss with fellow residents of the section of Old Midford Road to see if they can agree on signage. We also raised the question of where the delivery drivers destination was, so that we have a correct analysis of the problem.

**Litter Bins – Provision and Location of a Litter Bin at Churchyard Wall** – It has been agreed that the litter bin on the Churchyard Wall is no longer suitable for purpose being too small for the increased use now being seen. It is agreed that we will replace the bin with a larger one, similar to that on the village green. The clerk will discuss locating the new bin on the Grove Path with Charles Hignett. It will be located there or in the road corner of the Churchyard and Gatehouse walls.

### **Footpaths and Open Spaces**

**Footpaths** – The agency payment has been claimed and received. We need to check that paths are appropriately cut and maintained.

**Village Green** – Nothing to report beyond litter bin issue.

**Churchyard - Highway Drainage issues at Lychgate** – All issues now remedied.

### **Dates for Future Meetings – Agenda Item 13**

To confirm the following dates for future meetings:-

Monday 18th January 2021      Monday 15th March 2021

Annual Parish Meeting: Monday April 19th 2021

Annual Parish Council Meeting: May 17th 2021

With all meetings to be held as normal in the Village Hall at 7:00 p.m. if Covid-19 guidance and restrictions permit – Otherwise Online via ZOOM