



Sodbury Town Council

**Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council
12th October 2021 at 19:30 hrs held at
Chipping Sodbury Town Hall, Charter Suite**

Present: Councillors B Allen, J Ball (Chair), L Banister, A Gregson, C Hays, P Rumney, P Smith, S Spooner, S Tubby, A Rush, L Rush, A Williams

Cate Davidson – Town Clerk
Jackie Murley – Assistant Clerk

Residents x 5

A Public Participation

An Old Sodbury resident (OS1) who had addressed Members at previous Full Council meetings on the matter of a strip of land adjacent to his property and associated potential Stopping Up order, confirmed he would be happy to answer any questions at any time on the subject. He restated the trees cut down on the land had suffered Ash Dieback and a picture of a tree affected was circulated to Members together with two maps the road before and after (dates unknown) it was widened (A432). He added he did not wish to build on the land and intended to plant trees and maintain the area and had, in fact, saved SGC money by paying for removal himself. Regarding the Stopping Up order, he had sought the Council's "approval in principle". Questions and dialogue followed:-

Member Q: Were they all Ash trees A (OS1): One Fir tree. Works carried out by an experienced tree surgeon who had worked for SGC for many years

Resident (OS2) added a Scots Pine, Maple and dozen Hawthorn were also removed.

Q: Why did SGC do adopt that piece of land as highway? A (OS1): When road widening works took place, an area of land was needed to store equipment.

Member Q: Why was the fence erected? A (OS1): Pipes and cables were exposed and there is also a problem with parked cars.

Member Q: Was the land on the Sale document? A (OS1): No. Have you heard of adverse possession? OS1 claimed he owned the land and his solicitor was able to prove it categorically. He was submitting a stopping up order and the application required written confirmation that STC did not object to it. OS1 continued with the meaning of adverse possession and that he had a right to apply.

Member Q: If current owner moved, who would maintain the land? A (OS1): The strip of land would become part of the field which is a separate plot of land to the residential property.

406 Apologies and Chairman's Remark

Apologies received and accepted from Cllrs Gibson, Gilpin, Romaine

407 Declarations of Interests and Granting of Dispensations

None

*J. Ball
9/11/2021*

408 Reports from South Gloucestershire Councillors on matters relating to the Parish and not included on the Agenda

Cllr A Rush reported the recent Full Council meeting had been cancelled. He attended a Cabinet meeting on 11/10/21 with nothing of note to report with matters such as changes to flood defence project and M49 junction works on the Agenda. No update to report on the Local Plan with further consultation expected in 2022. With regard to "Thrive" funding, Cllr A Rush reported funds still remained available to businesses. Cllr Banister added the Chamber of Commerce needed money.

409 Reports from representatives from other bodies on matters relating to the Parish and not included on the Agenda

Cllr Banister reported a new market was to be held in the town from 14/10/21 with 20 stalls anticipated. Signs for the market may need to be reviewed and, if so, Green Tops to be advised.

Cllr Allen reported (1) attendance at a SGC Yate Community Engagement Forum (CEF). At that meeting, discussion was had on the nuisance of e-scooters in the area, it being illegal unless part of a Government-backed trial eg Voi (2) attendance at a Hanson Quarry Liaison Meeting with planning being sought for road changes in the Wickwar Road area.

Cllr Banister reported attendance at (1) a Chamber of Commerce meeting. Fiver Fest would return from the 9-23 October to encourage "shop local", (2) a Sodbury & Yate Business Association (SYBA) on 27.09.21 which looked at how to take the Association forward (3) a Library Partnership meeting and working with the Town Clerk to recruit new volunteers, and (4) Town Lands Charity meeting

410 Approval of Minutes of Full Council Meeting of 14th September 2021

RESOLVED the Minutes of Full Council Meeting of 14th September 2021 are approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

411 Matters Arising

The Clerk reported in relation to:-

1. the Adopted Highway matter referenced at Agenda item 397, "public participation" and Agenda item 414 and that the matter had been referred to SGC.
2. Agenda item 399, Family Food 4 Free (FF4F). Discussion had taken place with SGC Enforcement who had referred the matter to a SGC Safer and Stronger Communities Manager with the hope of relocating the food bank as the current location was not appropriate. As yet, no progress had been made.
3. a new market in the High Street which would start on Thursday on a trial basis
4. the Chipping Sodbury High Street Consultation (Agenda item 402) and the associated poor response rate to the survey. A Chamber of Commerce member added it was not the Chamber's responsibility to publicise the survey and the low take-up was of no surprise as people did not know about it, comment backed-up by a SGC Councillor. A Member added a Post Office drew people to Chipping Sodbury and, without it, businesses suffered. It was confirmed any dialogue with PO representatives had ceased.

412 Finance – Payment of Accounts

RESOLVED that the schedule of payments and Bank Reconciliation were approved. Cllrs A & L Rush declared an interest and did not vote.

413 Correspondence

None to report

414 Adopted Highway (section) – Old Sodbury

The Chairman reported the Clerk was in receipt of a special motion by way of a letter signed by seven councillors to bring back the matter for review in the light of a better understanding of the implications of a stopping up order and to consider further the advice from NALC. During discussion the following comments were made by members:-

- *Under the impression STC should not be involved in such legal matters*
- *NALC's recommendation was not to become involved in a land ownership matter or advance approval of a stopping up order as read out by the Clerk at the previous meeting*
- *STC should remain neutral until formally consulted on*
- *Withdraw previous resolution made in July, remain impartial and await consultation*
- *The applicant sought STC's support prior to submitting an application. The Stopping Up Order application required "written confirmation that STC did not object". The request from the applicant was to "support in principle"*
- *The July 2021 Minutes stated STC supported the Stopping Up Order and that **should not** be the case*
- *Additional letters of complaint had been received by the Clerk*
- *It is matter between SGC and the Stopping Up Order Applicant*

Proposal 1 - the Council had no objection in principle to a Stopping Up Order, which was seconded.

Proposal 2 - the Council was not objecting nor supporting the Stopping Up Order, which was seconded.

A vote took place by way of a show of hands

Proposal 1: 4 x support, 5 x against, 3 x abstain

Proposal 2: 6 x support, 6 x abstain

RESOLVED: the Council was not objecting nor supporting the Stopping Up Order. Clerk to advise SGC.

With regard to the Council agreeing with the action taken already by the owner, it was agreed that this matter did not need re-considering.

The Clerk reminded members that this matter could not be re-tabled for six months. If SGC formally consults on a stopping up order then this would be considered at that time.

Old Sodbury resident left the meeting at 20:32 hrs

415 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2020/21

- The Statement had been circulated to all Members with the Agenda. No matters were raised by the External Auditor.
- Members noted the report and thanked the Clerk for her work.

- 416 Tourist Information Centre – Appointment of Committee Members**
RESOLVED Cllrs Linda Rush and Steve Spooner be appointed.
- 417 To ratify policies as approved by the Finance & General Purposes Committee**
RESOLVED the following policies ratified:-
- Standing Orders
 - Financial Regulations
 - Code of Conduct for Members
 - Complaints Procedure
- 418 Climate Emergency – Action Plan**
 Members’ pledges were handed to the Clerk and examples read out at the meeting. Cllr Spooner reported the Climate Action Fair held on the 18/09/21 organised by CAYACS (Climate Action Yate & Sodbury) was busy and well received.
- 419 Old Sodbury Woodland**
RESOLVED - a unanimous decision to delegate decision making powers in relation to all matters regarding the Old Sodbury Woodland to the Environmental & Leisure Committee.
- 420 Items of Report**
Cllr Spooner updated with regard to the proposed new equipment at The Ridings Play Area. Three suppliers had visited site and costings received from two to date. In addition, a new self-closing gate was due to be installed to the existing play area. **Cllr Smith** raised the subject of the Pitchings and “ownership” and that residents appeared to be making a claim on pitchings outside of their properties. Cllr Rumney added residents did not have documents to prove the land outside their property belonged to them. The Clerk confirmed SGC had extended the licence to allow businesses to place tables & chairs outside of their premises and the subject would be an Agenda item at next Full Council.
Cllr Hays reported the High Street looked unsightly in places with railings and barriers situated outside of businesses. **Cllr Gregson** added leaving bins out on the Pitchings to protect spaces added to the problem.
Cllr Gregson raised the matter of moss in between the pitchings. Did the moss hold the pitchings together? It was noted a team of volunteers removed the moss periodically. **Cllr Rumney** confirmed the pitchings were set in sand and by removing the moss, sand was also removed. Many required re-sanding.
Cllr Rumney reported that the cleaning fluid used by SGC on the public toilets had caused damage to paint surfaces. The Clerk confirmed she had liaised with SGC who confirmed the fluid was appropriate for COVID purposes and recommended by Public Health England.
- 421 Next Full Council Meeting: 9th November 2021 at 19:30 hrs – Chipping Sodbury Town Hall, Charter Suite**

Dated

Signed