

## **Pilton Annual Parish Meeting**

12 March 2025, Pilton Village Hall

Present: Simon Crivich, Kiki Crivich, Deborah Cutler, Cathy Lowe, Steve Lowe, Verona Fraser-Mackenzie, Jude Glide, Vaughn Ives, Andrew Shaw, Liz Mayhew, Paul Murray, Mo Reynolds, Anne Llewellyn, Angela Wynn, Tracey Mapstone, Norman Hodghton, Fiona Case, Mike Case, Carolyn Griffiths, Louisa Byng, Steve Russell-Yarde, Kelly Montshiwa, Mikael Nyblom, Cllr Roger Noble - Pilton Parish Council (PPC), Colin Watt, Liz Elkin, Christine King, John Boucher, Cllr Claire Connock (PPC), Cllr Richard Woodhouse (PPC), Cllr Terry Moulder (PPC), Jenny de Gex, Cllr Kelly Sumner (PPC), Cllr Claire Sully - Somerset Council (SC), Gill Pettitt (Parish Clerk).

### **1 Apologies**

Tony Wheat, Cllr Tom Hollings (PPC), Cllr Owain Powell (PPC), Cllr Nick Hall (PPC), Cllr Lynda Roberts (PPC), Joe King, Audrey Brown, Jessica Holm.

### **2 Minutes of 15 May 2024 Annual Parish Meeting**

The minutes of 15 May 2024 were approved.

### **3 Chair of the Parish Council's announcements and matters arising from last year's Parish Meeting**

Cllr Sumner reported that whilst works had been done on Whitstone Hill drains, Shutwell Lane works had been promised pre-winter, then told it would be done within this financial year. Now it is scheduled for the first quarter of the next financial year. The drain is collapsed.

Cllr Sully (SC) reported that major drainage upgrade work needs to be done before the Festival, the frustration is that we don't know when it will be done, but Cllr Sully does push for it to be done. Works that have already been undertaken include Bread Street ADT Drainage Scheme, Compton Lane ADT Drainage Scheme, Top Street Local Drainage works, Top Street ploughing works reinstate verge, St Mary's Lane Local Drainage works flooding to St Mary's Cottage, St Mary's Lane patching works, Jet Patching and Ditching works prior to Glastonbury Festival, several jetting site works around village and too many Safety Defect repairs to mention. Cllr Sully is asking officers to make information on works done and outstanding more available.

Local Government Boundary Commission boundary changes will reduce Somerset Councillors from 110 to 97 and thus reduce expenditure - expected to be completed by 2027. Mendip South will be going. Please feed back how you feel when the consultation opens - it is not decided yet how Pilton will be represented on Somerset Council. Cllr Sully currently represents the 10 councils in Mendip South, but it is likely that she will not be able to in the future. She is very involved in Mental Health and suicide prevention and how the community can support each other. Supports benches to access mental health information - hopefully to be installed on the Strawberry Line.

Council tax remains lower than similar sized counties and neighbouring counties.

Question regarding East Compton road works being prioritised over critical works elsewhere - the delay on this project is because it is big, but it is scheduled to be done by June.

A vote of thanks to Cllr Sully was made for all the work she does for the parish. Tessa Munt MP has also been very supportive.

### **Matters Arising**

Traffic calming works on Conduit Square received a quote of £50,000 for traffic

lights just for a survey. Somerset Council would not support this. Neat Lane works would be even more expensive.

Zebra crossing by the bus stop on the A361 would cost between £80,000 and £170,000 - funds are not available.

The parish community survey has been completed.

Burial Ground major works completed - stone piles that were causing flooding have been removed and the stone will be reused this year. 1,000 wildflowers have been planted. Markers have been purchased to identify plot lines.

The 20mph speed limit scheme has been completed. Thanks to Steve Russell-Yard and GFEL for their support in this.

- 4 To note the 2025 Community reports.** These are available on the website at [Annual parish meetings](#).

- 5 Presentation of Action Plan arising from the 2024 Parish Survey.** Cllr Woodhouse reported that over 300 parishioners responded to the survey. The Community Council for Somerset praised the Steering Group for their work and were surprised by the level of response which is statistically an important percentage – it is significant.

Regarding work arising from the survey, the Parish Council is a catalyst and facilitator rather than a deliverer. The various trusts and community groups within Pilton will consider and present what, if anything, in response to what the parish has said. The survey went live before the Pilton Show, was closed in September. CCS provided the executive and the detailed reports in December which was adopted by the Parish Council's December meeting. The [reports](#) are available on the Council website within the agenda. The report was sent to all groups involved. There are encouraging early signs for adoption of the ideas from the Pilton Playing Fields. A village meeting will be held hopefully in July to discuss what funding, improvements etc can be managed. There will be AGMs for each of the trusts where parishioners can express their support for works being done and ask for more if necessary.

Three clip boards were provided to ask for feedback to express interest in helping with initiatives, such as a repair shop; to offer help fundraising in whatever way possible; for additional comments to any of the areas of the survey.

Members of the Steering Group presented the three ranges of actions arising from the survey:

Louisa Byng presented the Easy Wins:

- a. Noted that the Roundabout is the biggest and most used communication liked within the parish, followed by Facebook, Noticeboards, the website and email. Thanks were given to the Roundabout team that have provided the newsletter for many years.
- b. Very few people were aware of the Community Transport that is available in the area – this will be better publicised.
- c. Health Connectors – again, very few were aware of this service. This will be better publicised and talks will be had with the NHS to understand how they can help with health issues. Volunteers will be very helpful to move this forward.
- d. A cleaner parish – there are two parish litter picks organised each year. More volunteers are always welcome. Fly tipping and lack of bins were also an issue.

- e. Biodiversity – more work is needed in improving and conserving biodiversity. Wildflowers have been planted at the burial ground – more trees, hedges, flowers can be planted. The Parish Council now has a duty to conserve biodiversity. Suggestions and volunteers welcome.

Carolyn Griffiths presented the Medium Term actions:

- a. Actions often fall to particular parish organisations and the Steering Group hopes to talk with these to find out what is possible. The Steering Group will try to attend to those that do not fall naturally with a trust or existing community group to find out how they can be enacted.
- b. Environment – maintain verge management and biodiversity; create a Green Charter; start initiatives such as a seed swap scheme and garden days.
- c. Rights of Way – maintained by the ASBOs – more volunteers to join the group are welcome. [A member of the ASBOs explained that their group get together once a week to try to keep the rights of way clear. An average of an hour to two hours work, followed by a few hours of tea and cake.]
- d. Community Energy Scheme – Energy proficiency guidance.
- e. Bike hire / community car share scheme – volunteers are needed to organise this.
- f. Communication – better community communication. Consultation – more polls, question and answer sessions, and surveys were called for. Regular and public engagement so people can have their say. With perhaps a dedicated Facebook page
- g. Pilton Playing Fields Trust and Pilton Village Hall both received a large number of suggestions. Such as more team sports, outdoor gym, benches, solar lighting. The Village Hall – better access to the rooms, repair shops, skills training and mentoring, support for IT and carers and mental health support. Book swaps, community workspace.

Cllr Connock presented Critical / Long Term actions:

- a. Parking – an issue that requires looking at especially around the Playing Fields, Village Hall and Burial Ground.
- b. Signage – better signage.
- c. A right of way link to the Strawberry Line.
- d. New bus route from Castle Cary Station to Glastonbury is being looked at – 20mph scheme seems to have worked mostly, though there are a few problems here and there.
- e. Safe cycle routes – may be impossible to achieve because of the narrow lanes, but perhaps we can look at some safer routes.
- f. Flooding – work to mitigate is ongoing.

Cllr Sumner summarised – Cllr Hall is working with a group looking to provide a new Castle Cary/Glastonbury bus route that would pass through Pilton. This would bring more visitors to Glastonbury and benefit Pilton.

A litter picking group also goes out every Thursday at 8am. All are welcome.

Concentrating on East Compton to Red Gate for the last two months.

Pilton Playing Fields – new equipment is being sought at a cost of £88,000. Hope to bring back cricket, start a women's football team – need to update changing rooms, the outdoor gym piece will be moved, more benches will be provided.

Communications – the Village Hall Trust is holding a drop-in on May 11<sup>th</sup> for the community to say what they want. The Hall is now legally correct in regard to electricity testing and heating is now in the skittle alley. Trial of food to be

provided. Looking to resolve the issues of parishioners not knowing when the Hall

is open. Looking to soundproof the Judo room below. Have looked at repairing the lift but it would cost £18,000. There is still a lot to work on, which this meeting will help to come to fruition.

A question on the Burial Ground – people were unaware that they could drive in to the Burial Ground when visiting – could there be a ‘Please enter’ sign on the gate?

## **Adjournment for Refreshments**

### **6 Open Forum – discussion and comments on the Action Plan.**

Question regarding the work done last year on low-cost housing allocation systems - will the actions be implemented? Cllr Sumner said this will be followed through.

Question regarding boundary changes affecting Pilton - it is expected that a consultation will be produced by Somerset Council in the coming year.

Note, there are two pots of funding now - the GFEL donation and the usual Parish Council grants.

Question regarding the GFEL donation fund - the process for disseminating will be formalised at the next Parish Council meeting including the GFEL conditions that the money would be for infrastructure and repairs.

Question regarding village noticeboards - difficult to open, in need of repair. Cllr Woodhouse reported that consideration is being given as to whether the Parish Council can provide, in addition to the normal Parish Council grants, bridging loans to support community initiatives that would be repayable once money has been raised. Any funding would be expected to be match funded through other sources.

Concern was expressed that the GFEL funds may be consumed by just one group. There are many areas around the parish that need support.

The grant process has been fully formalised recently, so Council requires a lot of information before Council can consider applications, including a question on where other funding has been sought.

Noted that the Parish Council needs to work closely with Pilton Show when offering grants to ensure there is no overlap.

There is likely to be more competition for funding. One of the strong themes in the survey was a desire for more involvement with decision making.

Question as to whether there will be consultation on the distribution of funds - the funds were given to the Parish Council and it is their decision on how the funds are distributed. There is a public forum where opinions can be voiced at every meeting.

Rents - at Village Hall have increased have they been published? - they should be on the website.

All bookings are honoured at the price they were, and all groups would be consulted on room hire fees in the future.

The Village Hall Trust AGM were told prices would be published.

Parish Council work this year has been immense. Parish Council will be meeting with the off-site camping groups to discuss best ways to be good neighbours.

Could Roundabout include a notice about children who are being a nuisance around the streets recently? Maybe when things move forward on the survey, the children can become involved in them.

Litter pick - how is this communicated? It has not been publicised but will be. Somerset Council reduction of road cleaning? Somerset Council has a litter picking area on their website and can support groups doing this. Road signs are filthy. It feels as though there is no pride in Somerset because of the detritus. Suggest that a piece go in Roundabout to encourage pride in the Village, pick up outside your house. ASBOs clear the layby area too. Why is there no bin? Somerset Council does not wish to provide one there as they get filled with household waste.

Thank you to the team doing it.

Someone is selling firewood on the road - this should be reported on the Somerset Council website at '[Report a problem on the road](#)'.

Thanks were given to the Parish Council.

**Meeting closed at 20:59**