

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON  
TUESDAY 19 MAY 2010 AT 6.25 PM AT STAPLEGROVE VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:** Dr G Hayes (in the Chair), Mr M Clark, Mr A Debenham Mr T Harris, Mr J Morris, Mrs E Waymouth, Somerset County Councillor and PCSO C Escott.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from David Ware and David Greig, Taunton Deane Borough Council's (TDBC) Parish Liaison Officer.

**2. CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN 2010/11**

Geoff Hayes and Michael Clark were elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively.

**4. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2010, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

**5. MATTERS ARISING**

**New seat for Hudson Way playground**

Noted that the new seat for the Hudson Way playground had been installed and the bill was awaited. The seat had been sited away from the school/playgroup sites as there had been problems in the past with youngsters at seats in this area throwing litter and cans into the school and playgroup grounds.

**Local Development Framework – TDBC's Core Strategy**

The Chairman reported that the Parish Council's response to the Core Strategy had been submitted to TDBC, expressing alarm at the suggested imposition of 1800 new houses in the Staplegrove area and outlining a number of related concerns. However, a recent meeting that he had attended had given him the impression that major new roads were no longer viable and Staplegrove did not seem to qualify as a suitable site for major urban extension due to poor communication and lack of local amenities. Any future development in the Staplegrove area would most likely be in the Kingston Road area. In addition the new government had scrapped the Regional Spatial Strategy.

**Emergency Contacts List**

The Clerk reported that she had put a request in the Parish Journal for parishioners to contact her if they wished to have their email addresses added to a database, which would enable her to circulate important information to them. Despite the fact that she had stressed that she would only send emails when urgent or important information needed to be disseminated, that the list would be held in complete confidence and that she would not disclose email addresses to third parties, there had been no takers.

**6. ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISH ELECTORS – MATTERS ARISING**

The Parish Council agreed to the suggestion made at the annual meeting of parish electors that it should assist the Staplegrove Youth Football Club with funding towards the refurbishment of its old changing block. A one-off grant of £200 was agreed. The usual annual grant to the Club to help with its running expenses would be considered at the next meeting.

**7. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no members of the public present.

**8. PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER (PACT)**

PCSO Claire Escott reported that the police were continuing to keep an eye on parking problems near Staplegrove School and some improvement had been noted. Bogus officials had been operating in the parish, mainly targeting the elderly. The police had established 'no cold calling zones' at sites where this was a problem. TDBC and Trading Standards were dealing with a neighbourhood dispute in Showell Park concerning a business operating from a private residence. Tom referred to his suspicions

about a vehicle at Dodhill and residents being disturbed by shotgun shooting late at night. Claire agreed to investigate the vehicle at Dodhill and confirmed that all firearms related concerns should be reported to the police. John mentioned that he had assumed that a missing dog should be reported to the police but that this responsibility had now transferred to TDBC's dog warden. He was concerned that this fact had not been widely publicised and the Clerk agreed to mention it in the Journal.

Tom gave an update on the establishment of a Community Speed Watch team, which consisted of 5 officially trained volunteers with another 5 or 6 volunteers yet to be trained. The Local Action Team had paid for 5 high visibility jackets for use by the volunteers. The team had gone out on three occasions with the police Community Speed Watch Co-ordinator, at a site approved by the police, at the Lawn Road junction. Four drivers travelling well in excess of 36 mph had been identified and would receive warning letters from the police. Tom felt that the presence of the team had been effective in making drivers slow down. The team would target other problem areas in the parish in the future. Volunteers were currently borrowing the police radar gun. The Clerk reported that she had asked the Clerk of Kingston St Mary Parish Council to draw up an agreement for Staplegrove Parish Council to look at, giving the conditions it would pose if Staplegrove were to share its radar gun.

## **9. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **Alliance & Leicester**

Noted that Alliance & Leicester was proposing to transfer its business into Santander Uk plc. Alliance & Leicester had been part of the Santander Group since 2008. The transfer would make no changes to the accounts held by the Parish Council, and if agreed would be completed by the end of 2010.

### **Bank reconciliations**

The Clerk circulated details of the bank reconciliations for January, February, March and April 2010, which had been checked and certified by a parishioner.

### **2009/10 accounts and asset register**

Noted and approved the 2009/10 accounts and asset register which had been circulated with the agenda.

### **Internal audit of 2009/10 accounts and review of the effectiveness of internal audit arrangements**

Noted that Mr B J Howe, our internal auditor, had audited the accounts for 2009/10. Mr Howe had advised that the Clerk's invoice for salary/expenses payments should be signed and dated by the Chairman in future and all invoices received should be in the name of Staplegrove Parish Council. Agreed to comply with this advice. It was noted that the Internal Auditor had carried out a limited internal audit and that the Parish Council must ensure that effective controls were in place and were in operation to prevent and minimise any possible financial losses through fraud and corruption. Copies of Mr Howe's internal audit testing documents, together with other working papers, were referred to at the meeting and it was agreed that he was a most able and competent auditor. The audit undertaken had been very comprehensive and detailed. Internal controls also included having three signatures on each cheque, monthly bank reconciliations checked by an independent parishioner and receipts and payments reported to each meeting. It was agreed that the Parish Council had a very secure system of internal audit and control.

### **External audit of 2009/10 accounts**

The Clerk presented the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2010 and The Statement of Accounts and Annual Statement of Governance were duly signed. Noted that the internal auditor had completed his section of the Return and the Clerk had displayed a notice inviting electors to inspect the accounts and supporting documents on request to her.

### **Receipts and payments since last meeting**

	£
Receipts: Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.45
Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.07
Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.44
Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.07
Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.49
Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.07
HM Revenue & Customs – VAT refund 2009/10	674.22
Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.47

Payments:	Land Registry –search of index map, enquiry about land at Darwin Cl.	5.00
	TDBC – siding footpath outside Staplegrove House (part of The Grove)	252.63
	Staplegrove Village Hall – room hire	40.00
	TDBC – grass cutting outside Staplegrove House (part of The Grove)	144.90
	J Peake – clerk’s ¼ year salary & admin expenses 1 Jan – 31 Mar 2010	1011.90
	Easyspace Ltd – internet fees relating to parish website	109.60
	B J Howe – internal audit 2009/10 accounts	122.50
	David Lock Garden Services – footpath maintenance	202.00

#### **10. REVIEW OF INSURANCE POLICY- 1 JUNE 2010 - 1 JUNE 2011**

Received and noted a paper by the Clerk outlining the current insurance cover and renewal details. Agreed that the Parish Council was well insured and all risks adequately covered. The Clerk would renew the insurance policy with Aon (Allianz had transferred the administration of the policy to the Local Council Team with Aon) for the above period, premium £703.06.

#### **11. CORRESPONDENCE**

- An invitation to join the Somerset Association of Local Councils was declined.
- Noted that TDBC’s Corporate Equality Scheme 2010-2013 was available to view and comment upon on the Council’s consultation website.
- The Clerk read out letters from Somerset County Highways giving details of a temporary road closure on Bindon Road on 2 June to enable resurfacing and associated works to be carried out and plans to surface-dress Whitmore Lane and Dodhill Road, weather permitting, in early July.
- The Clerk would refer to Mr Liddon of Sylvarbor Consultants details received from the Forestry Commission about a serious disease threat to woodlands. Mr Liddon was due to undertake the biennial safety inspection of The Grove this year. Agreed that he should be asked to take a look at the trees in the Manor Road Children’s Playground at the same time and his recommendations presented to the Playground Trust.

#### **12. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Noted a paper giving details of planning applications received/decisions made, since the last meeting.

#### **13. LITTER AT VILLAGE SHOP**

The Chairman reported that he had been concerned at the amount of litter at the village shop and felt there was a need for a litterbin outside of the door. However, the shop had recently changed ownership and improvements were anticipated.

#### **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- Michael referred to the oak trees planted by the Parish Council near the duckpond, which were coming on well. He agreed to cut back the lower branches in the winter.
- The Chairman reported on a successful ‘adopt a footpath’ day in Kingston St Mary where parishioners were encouraged to adopt and maintain a footpath in the parish.

#### **15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Tuesday 24 August 2010 at 5.00 pm. A meeting of the Staplegrove Children’s Playground Trust will follow.