

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 15TH MARCH 2018 AT 5PM, STAPLEGROVE VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT:

Parish Councillors: Joan Bird, Michael Clark (in the chair), Alan Debenham, Simon Moon, Ian Talbot, Ros Went

District Councillor: Caroline Tucker

Clerk: Helen McInnes

Six members of the public were also in attendance.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from PCSO Tony Wearmouth.

2. Code of Conduct - Declaration of interests

All the Parish Councillors have a personal interest with respect to the North Taunton Development, as does Cllr Tucker.

3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18th January 2018

Having been circulated, the minutes were then taken as read and signed as a correct record of proceedings.

4. Police Matters

The Clerk read out a report sent by PCSO Wearmouth. In the period between 13th February 2018 and 13th March 2018 there had been a total of 28 calls to the police from the Staplegrove area.

These can be broken down as follows:

- Traffic - 7
- Concern for welfare - 4
- Admin - 4
- Missing persons - 3
- Assault - 3
- Theft - 2
- Threats - 2
- Weapons - 2
- Domestic related - 1

On investigation, the calls about weapons were meaningless and no actual weapons were involved. PCSO Wearmouth also reported that school parking in Hudson Way and Irvine Close continues to be a problem and patrols have been increased.

5. Questions from Members of the public re items not on the agenda

- i. A Parishioner thanked Cllr Clark and Helen McInnes for their help in resolving an issue about signposting in Mill Rise. The Parishioner had found their support and regular updates very reassuring.
- ii. A Parishioner noted that the footway along Staplegrove Road, westbound towards Silk Mills Road was muddy and impassable. He had reported it to Somerset County Council (SCC), but no action had yet been taken. The Clerk agreed to follow this up.
- iii. Cllr Tucker noted that there continued to be vehicles parked in the layby along the same stretch of road (mentioned in point iii above) on the eastbound side. These vehicles appeared to be parked there for advertising purposes, and totally fill the layby making it inaccessible to other traffic. The Clerk agreed to contact the owners of the vehicles concerned.

6. Matters Arising

i. Double yellow lines in Showell Park

The Clerk circulated a map that had been received from SCC Highways, of the proposed new double yellow lines. Cllr Clark stated that this was not what had been suggested at the meeting held on site at the end of 2017. The Parish Council's suggestion was the addition of double yellow lines opposite each junction to support the lines already present to enable more room for large turning vehicles.

However, it was agreed that the overall parking situation was improved. Cllr Clark reminded residents of the area that they could report inconsiderate parking by Nuffield staff to the hospital.

ii. Grass cutting in the playground and outside Staplegrove House

The Clerk noted that she had contact Howard SW about the grass cutting quote as requested. Howard's had agreed that if there were fewer than 30 cuts during the year, the invoiced amount would be reduced by £30 per cut. The DLO's contract runs until the end of March 2018, and Howard SW's contract begins on 1st April 2018.

iii. Traffic lights near the Post Office

The Clerk asked for clarification about which lights were felt to be obstructed. It was confirmed that it is the pedestrian crossing lights, when travelling eastbound along Staplegrove Road. The Clerk will investigate.

7. Update on highways matters

i. Request for SLOW on Staplegrove Road near Village Hall

Unfortunately County Cllr Rod Williams was not at the meeting and had not sent an update on this. The Cllr Clark agreed to contact Cllr Williams to assess if any progress had been made.

ii. Progress on the recovery of the eroded footway near Westerkirk Gate

Unfortunately County Cllr Rod Williams was not at the meeting and had not sent an update on this. The Cllr Clark agreed to contact Cllr Williams to assess if any progress had been made.

iii. Feedback from Scrutiny for Policies and Places meeting – 30th January 2018

Cllr Clark explained the background to the meeting, and explained the Parish Council's main concern – the creation of an outer ring road by the very short extension of the spine road to existing road systems. Previously SCC's Highway department have said that there is 'no demand' for such a road. This position seems to be less entrenched than in the past.

The suggested route of a ring road would cross National Trust (NT) land near Pyrland Hall. Cllr Clark explained that this land is not of special interest, but is investment land, the sale of which would provide funds for the upkeep of other NT properties.

Cllr Clark went on the report that he had been contacted by County Cllr Mike Rigby who expressed support for the notion of a ring road. Cllr Rigby also felt that the Government's Major Road Network (MRN) proposals gave additional backing to the creation of such a ring road in Taunton. He has agreed to follow this up with SCC.

8. Proposed £500 donation to Love Musgrove MRI Campaign

- i. At the January meeting of the Parish Council, Elaine Waymouth had spoken about the 'Love Musgrove MRI Scanner Appeal' and made a request for a donation. Having looked at the documentation, a proposal was made to make a £500 donation, as it was felt that such a facility could benefit any member of the Parish. The Clerk reported that this could be accommodated by a number of small underspends in the budget. The £500 donation was agreed by all of the Councillors.

9. Use of Social Media to engage with parishioners

The Clerk reiterated that the Parish of Staplegrave included areas including Grove Gate, and the area of housing around Hudson Way and Bindon Road. In general, the members of the public who came to meetings were from the areas of the Parish nearer to the Village Hall and church. The Clerk suggested a trial of Facebook or Twitter to try to engage with more Parishioners. This had proved successful in neighbouring Bishops Hull.

The Clerk explained the pros and cons of using Facebook groups and pages. It was agreed that there should be a six-month trial of a Staplegrave Parish Council Facebook page initially.

Cllr Moon agreed that he would set up a Staplegrave Parish Council Twitter account in the summer.

10. Possible use of CIL funding – Speed Indicator Device (SID)

The Clerk circulated a briefing paper about the cessation of SCC's current SID programme, and the costs and limitations of running a SID. It was decided that the Parish Council would not proceed with the purchase of a SID at this time for the following reasons:

- Overall costs are high.
- Difficulty in identifying four suitable sites given the conditions imposed by SCC Highways.
- A SID can only be used at each site for a maximum of two weeks, and is not allowed back to that location within two months of its removal. This means there is a lot of time when the SID is unused.

11. Update on proposed new Speedwatch location and purchase of signs

PCSO Wearmouth has visited and assessed a potential new site (near 285 Staplegrave Road) for the Community Speedwatch to monitor. He has submitted the required paperwork, and is awaiting confirmation for this. It is felt that monitoring traffic here, out of peak congestion times, will assist in reducing traffic speeds and increase road safety. Community Speedwatch coordinator, Heather Williams has recruited some new recruits to help cover the proposed new site.

In January 2018, the Parish Council had agreed to fund replacements for the two Speedwatch signs along Manor Road. The Clerk was in contact with a supplier, but a supply date had not yet been agreed. She agreed to contact a more local supplier to get a quote for the signs.

12. Discussion of Somerset Strategic Housing Framework 2018 - 2022

The Clerk noted that this document had been circulated to Councillors by email on 8th February 2018. It was also available online at <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/strategies/somerset-strategic-housing-framework/>

It was agreed that no representation would be made by the Parish Council, but that individuals could respond if they wanted to.

13. Discussion of the creation of a Parish 'Emergency Plan'

Cllr Talbot noted that during the recent heavy snowfall, he had become aware that other Parish Councils had executed their Emergency Plan. Staplegrave Parish Council do not have an Emergency Plan, but it was felt that it would be expedient to have one for the future. The Clerk agreed to contact Milverton Parish Council, and collect other information about how to formulate an Emergency Plan.

Cllrs Talbot and Moon agreed to create a working group to take this project forward with support from the Clerk.

14. Planning applications

i. Report from Planning Sub-committee meeting, 21st February 2018

The Council noted the minutes of the Planning Sub-committee meeting held on 21st February 2018. The meeting had been advertised on the Parish's website and noticeboards.

ii. Decisions since last meeting to be noted

The Chairman talked through a paper giving details of planning applications received and decisions made since the last meeting.

15. Financial matters

i. Bank reconciliations – January and February 2018

The Clerk circulated the details of the bank reconciliation for January and February 2018, which had been checked and certified by an independent person.

ii. Receipts and payments since last meeting

		£
Receipts:	Website entry – Somerset Stairlifts	5.00
	Santander – bank interest (January)	12.99
	Website entry – County Aerials	5.00
	Santander – bank interest (February)	13.21
Payments:	TDBC - photocopying	31.74
	TDBC - photocopying	15.26
	Citizens Advice Taunton – donation	100.00
	Helen McInnes – January salary and expenses	356.82
	HMRC – January PAYE	59.80
	Easyspace – Domain registration	25.88
	Village Hall room hire	78.00
	Helen McInnes – February salary and expenses	271.89
	HMRC – February PAYE	54.00

iii. Budget Statement as at 28th February 2018

The Clerk circulated the Budget statement as at the 28th February 2018.

iv. Clerk's salary

The Clerk is currently employed on LC1, scale point 19, (£18,560 pa / £9.647 per hour) for 7 hours a week. Cllr Clark noted that the Council may withhold an increment if it is considered that performance fell below the level expected, or award an additional increment for exemplary performance if it chooses to do so. Cllr Clark proposed the award of a two increment award this year, taking the Clerk to scale point 21 from April 2018 (£19,939 pa / £10.36 per hour). The proposal was agreed unanimously.

16. Correspondence

The Clerk had received an email from Staplegrove Church School. The school is looking for a Caretaker, either on a temporary or permanent basis. The Caretaker would be required to work 3 hours a day; with tasks including unlocking the school site (between 6am and 7am), and minor maintenance work. Supervision would be provided by the Site Manager. If anyone wanted further details, it was advised to contact either the Clerk or the school directly.

17. Any other Business

Cllr Debenham reported that he had attended Taunton Deane Borough Council’s planning committee discussing the Firepool development. The major changes from the original plan are the inclusion of 200 houses and a central boulevard. There were mixed views on the proposals.

18. Date of next meetings

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Thursday 17th May 2018 at 6pm and will include the annual meeting of electors. The subsequent Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 19th July 2018 at 5pm.

A meeting of the Staplegrove Children’s playground Trust will follow both these meetings. All meetings will be held at Staplegrove Village Hall.

The Clerk circulated proposed dates for future meetings. These were:

- 20th September 2018
- 15th November 2018
- 17th January 2019
- 21st March 2019
- 16th May 2019 – starting at 6pm, to include annual meeting of electors etc

The meeting closed at 6.20pm

These minutes are approved as a correct record _____

Date _____