

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL AND ORDINARY MEETINGS OF STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 18TH MAY 2017 AT 6.15PM, STAPLEGROVE VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT:

Parish Councillors: Joan Bird, Michael Clark (in the chair), Nigel Coates, Alan Debenham, Ian Talbot, Ros Went
District Councillors: Caroline Tucker
County Councillor: Rod Williams
Clerk: Helen McInnes

Five members of the public were also in attendance.

Minutes of the annual meeting

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from District Councillor Nick Townsend.

2. Code of Conduct - Declaration of interests

All the Parish Councillors have a personal interest with respect to the North Taunton Development. Cllr Tucker declared a pecuniary interest.

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2017/18

Cllr Bird proposed Cllr Clark as Chair, and Cllr Coates seconded this. Cllr Went proposed Cllr Bird as Vice Chair and Cllr Talbot seconded this. Cllr Clark and Cllr Bird were unanimously re-elected as Chair and Vice-Chair respectively.

Minutes of the ordinary meeting

4. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2017

In the final paragraph of item 8, 'unlikely' was altered to 'likely'. It was then agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2017 were taken as read and signed as a correct record of proceedings.

5. Police Matters

The Clerk reported that no report had been received from the Police. Cllr Debenham asked why the Police had closed Manor Road after what seemed like a minor collision. Cllr Clark responded that he could not answer that, but was pleased that the Police had attended and as a result, that the collision would be recorded.

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

- i. A parishioner asked about progress on the provision of double yellow lines in Bindon Road, near Chaplins. Cllr Tucker replied that she had not yet received a reply from Cllr Fothergill, and asked that Cllr Williams speak to him, or his successor about this. It was noted that some of the on street parking was thought to be employees of Lloyd and White. Cllr Tucker agreed to speak to them about encouraging safe and neighbourly parking of staff cars.

7. Matters Arising

i. Dog Signs for Hudson Way park

The Clerk reported that she was still waiting for the quote from TDBC, as the relevant member of staff was currently on leave

ii. Update on concerns re. pedestrian crossing near Post Office

PC Gear had reported that static red-light cameras are managed by the Criminal Justice Department in Somerset. After a Road Safety Partnership meeting which was attended by PC Dave Adams (Road Safety Liaison Officer), PC Gear has been assured that there are

currently no static red light camera devices available within the Somerset County Council area. He also noted that while such equipment is available on the market, there are no imminent plans by SCC to purchase any.

PC Gear has indicated that he will allow PCSO Tony Wearmouth to attend the location at key times (for a limited period) to make some further observations (operational circumstances allowing). It was agreed that the morning 'school run' times might be the most critical as this is when crossing use and commuter traffic are likely to be at their highest.

8. Matters arising from the Annual Meeting of Parish Electors

There were no matters arising from this meeting.

9. Update on North Taunton Development

Cllr Clark reported that the meeting that was going to be held on 6th April 2017 to brief TDBC councillors about the proposed development had not gone ahead. This was due to there being a lack of agreement between the site promoters and TDBC officers. It is understood that the areas on which there is no agreement include the percentage of affordable homes and the re-siting of electricity pylons. It is thought that the planning committee will not hear these applications until August at the earliest.

However, it was noted that the Housing Infrastructure Fund can be subject to bids from District Councillors, and that if successful, funding from this source might be released to allow movement towards agreement on the contentious issues.

All present felt that the spine road must be fit for purpose, and completed before any other construction takes place.

10. Request for funding from Life Education Wessex

The Clerk had received a request for funding from Life Education Wessex, a charity who provide health and drug prevention sessions to primary school children. The charity are visiting Staplegrove Church School. The Parish Council felt that this was a valuable educational enrichment activity and agreed to make a donation of £150.

11. Purchase of resources from Keep Britain Tidy – dog fouling

There continue to be issues around dog fouling in the Parish; including dog waste not being cleared up, and people leaving filled dog waste bags in verges and hedges. The Clerk reported that Keep Britain Tidy had a range of posters and stickers available in their 'There's no such thing as the Dog-Poo Fairy' campaign. The Parish Council agreed to purchase some of these resources up to the value of £100.

12. Car park works at the Nuffield Hospital

The Parish Council and local residents have received a letter from the Nuffield Hospital (18th April 2017) indicating that work would be starting on increasing capacity in their car park on 24th April 2017. The work is scheduled to continue for four weeks. The letter also noted that during this time it recognised that more cars would be parked in Showell Park.

A parishioner reported that at least 40 cars related to the Nuffield Hospital were parked in Showell Park during week days, these often caused an obstruction near junctions. It was further noted that the car park works were only designed to create an additional 22 spaces, so parking in Showell Park would most likely continue to occur. Cllr Clark reported that Sasha Burns, Hospital Director had stated that she would remind staff to park considerately, but as the local roads were public highways she had no way of preventing them from using that area.

13. Renewal of insurance policy for 1 June 2017 – 31 May 2018

The Parish Council noted the insurance overview documents and the three quotes. It was agreed that the scope of the insurance cover was sufficient, and the company who provided the lowest quote (Inspire) was selected.

14. Review of Risk Assessments

The Parish Council noted the risk assessment document and agreed that no changes were required.

15. Review of procedure for dealing with planning applications

Cllr Clark reported that the Parish Council had been unaware of the fact that the discussion of planning applications needed to take place at a public meeting. This is not currently the case. It was proposed that a sub-committee was formed and that the planning applications would be discussed at the sub-committee. Other members of the Parish Council could attend the meetings if they are interested in a particular application, as can members of the public. The meetings will be advertised on the Parish Council website.

The Parish Council agreed this proposal, and Cllr Clark and Cllr Bird agreed to form the planning sub-committee.

16. Planning applications

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

17. Financial matters

i. Bank reconciliations – March and April 2017

The Clerk circulated the details of the bank reconciliation for March and April 2017, which had been checked and certified by an independent person.

ii. 2016/17 accounts and asset register –to note and approve

The Parish Council approved the 2016/17 accounts and they were signed by the Chairman. The asset register was also agreed as correct and up-to-date.

iii. Internal audit of 2016/17 accounts and review of the effectiveness of internal audit arrangements

The Parish Council noted the comments made by the Internal Auditor. It was also noted that Internal Auditor had carried out a limited internal audit and that the Parish Council ensured that effective controls were in place to prevent and minimise any possible financial losses through fraud and corruption.

iv. External audit – completion of Annual governance statement 2016/17

The Clerk presented the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2017. The annual governance statement was agreed and signed.

v. External audit – completion of Accounting statement 2016/17

The figures in the accounting statement of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2017 were noted and agreed; the form was signed. It was also noted that the internal auditor had completed his section of the document. The Clerk will ensure that a notice is displayed inviting electors to inspect the accounts and supporting documents on request to her.

vi. Receipts and payments since last meeting

		£
Receipts:	Santander – bank interest (March)	4.93
	Village Hall Management Committee – donation towards path	1,400.00
	HMRC – VAT repayment	373.38
Payments:	TDBC – path in Manor Road playground	1788.00
	TDBC – photocopying for March meeting	18.30
	Helen McInnes – March salary and expenses	358.88
	HMRC – March PAYE	1.00
	TDBC – grass cutting (2016/17)	433.92
	Charlie Saville – March footpath maintenance and playground strimming	190.00
	Helen McInnes – April salary and expenses	329.47
	HMRC – April PAYE	57.80

18. Correspondence

- i. The Clerk had been contacted by TDBC and asked to publicise an Affordable Housing Open Day on Wednesday 7th June 2017, to be held at Somerset County Cricket Ground. The clerk will put posters on the Parish Council's noticeboards.
- ii. The Clerk reported that SCC had started environment maintenance along County roads on 8th May 2017. This includes grass cutting on verges, clearance around road signs and sight lines at road junctions. It was noted that the busiest roads are cut first.

19. Any other Business

- i. Cllr Debenham raised his disapproval about the proposed dual carriageway between West Hatch to Killams. Cllr Clark stated that all members of the public were entitled to comment, but that it was not felt to be a Parish Council matter as it was geographically distant from Staplegrove.
- ii. Cllr Talbot noted concerns about the footpath on Manor Road between Rectory Road and the post box. Due to works carried out by a householder, the footpath had been narrowed due to slippage of earth. Cllr Talbot agreed to speak to the householder.
- iii. Cllr Williams introduced himself to the Parish Council as the newly elected County Councillor for Staplegrove and Rowbarton. He outlined the five main issues concerning SCC (funding, demographics, social care, economics and organisational change). He added that there is likely to be increased devolution from central Government which will create added pressures for all tiers of local Government.

20. Date of next meetings

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Thursday 20th July 2017 at 5pm. The subsequent Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 21st September 2017 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.