

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 19TH JANUARY 2017 AT 5PM, STAPLEGROVE VILLAGE HALL

PRESENT:

Parish Councillors: Joan Bird, Michael Clark (in the chair), Alan Debenham, Ian Talbot, Ros Went
District Councillors: Caroline Tucker
PCSO Tony Wearmouth

Six members of the public were also in attendance.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Nick Townsend.

2. Code of Conduct - Declaration of interests

All the Parish Councillors have a personal interest with respect to the North Taunton Development.

3. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2016

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

4. Police Matters

PCSO Tony Wearmouth reported that the level of calls to the Police from the Parish has reminded at a similar level to previous years. These calls represented a small number of criminal activity, with one address accounting for six calls regarding anti-social behaviour. Measures have been put in place to address this with the Police working alongside Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) and other agencies.

PCSO Wearmouth noted the fatal accident that had occurred on Greenway Road at the end of last year. A full investigation was on-going, so few details could be made public at this time. However, it was noted that Taunton School International have registered an interest in setting up a Speedwatch scheme.

Cllr Clark noted that the Parish Council have been engaged in discussion with Somerset County Council (SCC) for over 2 years about improving road safety, and would welcome the support of the Police. PCSO Wearmouth agreed to contact the Speed Enforcement Unit about data from speed camera site in Brindle Close.

The Clerk noted that she had received a copy of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Plan and would make it available to anyone who was interested within the Parish. This document is also available electronically at <http://www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/Your-PCC/Police-Crime-Plan-2016.aspx>

PCSO Wearmouth was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

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

Replanting of trees in The Grove

A parishioner asked if there were any plans to plant further trees in The Grove to replace those which were being felled. It was reported that there were no plans to do this at present.

Staplegrove Local History Group

A parishioner reported that Staplegrove Local History group have received funding for an event which will be held at the Village Hall on Saturday 25th March 2017. If anyone is interested in helping or attending they were asked to contact Mr Derek Senior.

Kibby's Field

A parishioner asked if the Parish Council had received a reply to its letter sent to the Director of Planning and Development at TDBC on 1st August 2016, requesting confirmation that Kibby's field would remain part of the Green Wedge. No reply has yet been received.

6. Matters Arising

a. Blocked road drains

Cllr Clark reported that the gully pots had now been cleared along Manor Road, and that the gutters had been swept. Thanks were extended to SCC and TDBC for this. A parishioner noted that there were still problems with the road drains along Staplegrove Road between the Post Office and Silk Mills roundabout. This will be monitored.

b. Proposed change to Parish Council stationery

It was agreed that the Parish Council stationery should remain unchanged.

7. North Taunton Development

Cllr Clark reported that, at the moment, it looks likely that the planning applications will be considered by the planning committee in mid-March. The Parish Council are working closely with Kingston St Mary Parish Council and local campaign groups to ensure that all concerns are raised effectively.

It was noted that 'Garden Town' status has recently been awarded to Taunton and the publicity documentation covering this seems to imply that the development in Staplegrove was going ahead, rather than being shown as a proposal. However, the 'Garden Town' status may enable money to be accessed to construct the spine road before any houses are built. A joint letter has been sent to Rebecca Pow MP asking for her help in securing the loan of this money which would be repaid as the houses are built.

Cllr Debenham queried whether the access road for the new housing at Nerrols Drive might create sufficient an extension for the road to connect to Cheddon Road, and then on to Kingston Road. Cllr Clark replied that this might happen, but there were access issues around Pyrland Hall and the schools.

It was noted that copies of all correspondence can be seen on the Parish Council website. Parishioners are still able to send comments on the planning applications to TDBC, and all of these are available to view on the planning section of TDBC's website.

8. CIL training (23 November 2106) – report from Cllr Debenham

Cllr Debenham attended a training event about CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funding. He reported that the event was well attended. To receive CIL funding, an application has to be made. While housing might be built in an area, the CIL funding can be spent elsewhere. Cllr Debenham will forward the training materials to the other Parish Councillors.

9. Proposed transfer of responsibility for the maintenance of fingerposts

The Clerk had been contacted by Jo Sharp at SCC with regard to fingerposts in the Parish. Ms Sharp had noted that there were no funds available at County level to carry out maintenance or repairs to fingerposts. Repairs to one fingerpost in the Parish that has been damaged were estimated to cost around £1500. The Parish Council had been asked if they would like to take on responsibility for the maintenance and repairs to fingerposts.

The Parish Council felt that carrying out these repairs was not a good use of local money, especially when it was not known how many fingerposts there were within the Parish and the amount to repair work that was needed.

10. Signs in Hudson Way play area

There are two very dilapidated signs in the Hudson Way open space which belong to the Parish Council. It was noted that the original wording stated "Hudson Way open space. It is forbidden to exercise dogs in this area." It was noted that there was no way that this could be policed. As the children's play area was fully fenced, it was agreed that the signs were updated to remind dog owners about the dangers of dog faeces and the need to clean up any fouling.

The Clerk will investigate this.

11. Nuffield Hospital plans for development (9 December 2016) – report from Cllrs Bird and Went

Cllrs Bird and Went reported that they had attended a meeting at the Nuffield Hospital to which householders effected by the proposed development had been invited. The meeting was led by the Project Manager. The initial stage of the proposed development will be increasing the size of the plant building that provides services for the operating theatres. While the building will be bigger, it will be better insulated than at present, so noise levels should be no higher. The houses effected by this building are 37 and 71 Showell Park, and 15 and 17 Rhodes Close.

It was noted that the current planning application did not include provision for additional parking as the hospital is waiting for feedback from queries about tree preservation orders. They hope to be able to create 15 to 20 additional parking spaces once this information has been received. The contractors carrying out the proposed development have been told there must be no parking on nearby residential roads. The Nuffield Hospital have given an assurance that this will be 'policed' and are also considering ways of making full use of the parking spaces they have at present. Finally, it was noted that the proposed development will not result in an increase in patient numbers.

12. Quote for grass cutting from DLO in 2017

The Clerk reported that DLO had quoted for cutting the grass in the Manor Road play area. This was at a similar level to the previous year. However, the quote did not include cutting the grass outside Staplegrove House. The Clerk will ask DLO to quote separately for this.

13. Consultation about proposed merger of Taunton Deane and West Somerset councils

The Parish Council had been invited to send a representative to a meeting about the proposed merger of Taunton Deane and West Somerset councils. This will take place on Monday 23rd January 2017; Cllr Talbot said he would attend this meeting.

Cllr Clark noted that all residents are being encouraged to comment on the proposals, and that this can be done online at www.yournewcouncil.org

14. Co-option of new Councillor to fill Casual Vacancy

Two volunteers had come forward to fill the Casual Vacancy. Following a discussion, the Parish Council selected Nigel Coates in order to broaden the area in which the Councillors covered. The other candidate was thanked for his interest.

15. Election of Vice-Chair to the Parish Council

Cllr Clark noted that Cllr Ware's resignation meant that the Council was without a Vice Chair. The Councillors were asked who they wanted to propose anyone for the role. Cllr Went proposed Cllr

Bird; Cllr Debenham seconded this. Cllr Bird thanked the others for her proposal and accepted the role.

16. Citizen's Advice Taunton – request for funding

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had been approached by the Citizen's Advice Taunton (CAT) with a request for funding. The Parish Council felt that CAT provide a valuable service that was open to all members of the Parish. It was agreed to make a donation of £50 towards their work.

17. Planning applications

The Chairman talked through a paper giving details of planning application received and decisions made since the last meeting. There was a discussion about the appeal that has been lodged with The First Secretary of State against the decision of the Taunton Deane Borough Council to refuse permission for application 34/16/0010. (Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of 2 No. two storey detached dwellings with double garages at Millgrove House, Staplegrove.) The Parish Council's comments sent in to the original two applications have been forwarded again.

18. Financial matters

a. November and December 2016 Bank reconciliations

The Clerk circulated the details of the bank reconciliation for November and December 2016, which had been checked and certified by an independent person.

b. Receipts and payments since last meeting

| | | £ |
|------------------|---|----------|
| Receipts: | David Marks Carpets – website entry | 5.00 |
| | Santander bank interest (November) | 12.13 |
| | Selene Accounting – website entry | 5.00 |
| | Cook Way Autocentre – website entry | 5.00 |
| | HMRC – VAT repayment | 316.14 |
| | NatWest transfer from Santander | 3,000.00 |
| | Glassworks Taunton Ltd – website entry | 5.00 |
| | Santander – bank interest (December) | 5.82 |
| Payments: | Charlie Saville – footpath maintenance (October and November) | 255.00 |
| | Arboricare – hedge reduction in The Grove | 540.00 |
| | Membership of the Society of Local Council Clerks | 88.00 |
| | Donation to Somerset Community Justice Partnership | 25.00 |
| | Membership of the Somerset Playing Fields' Association | 15.00 |
| | Helen McInnes – November salary and expenses | 360.98 |
| | Santander transfer to NatWest | 3,000.00 |
| | Information Commissioner – Data Protection Register | 35.00 |
| | Helen McInnes – December salary and expenses | 335.19 |
| | HMRC – December tax | 1.20 |

c. Budget Statement as at 31st October 2016

The Clerk circulated the Budget statement as at the 31st December 2016.

d. Clerk's salary scale and allowances

The Clerk reported that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services had agreed a small pay increase, to be implemented immediately and backdated to 1 April 2016. It was also noted that, as indicated in her contract, she would increase one scale point in April 2017.

An increase of 1% to the Clerk's allowances was agreed, and will be applied from April 2017.

e. Precept request 2017/2018

The Councillors considered the proposed budget for 2017/18. It was agreed that the Clerk should request £8500 precept for 2017/18. The decrease was due to a number of factors, including there being no tree report this year, and no contingency required for a locum Clerk.

f. Bank signatories

David Ware would be removed as a signatory on the Parish Council's accounts following his resignation. It was agreed that Cllr Went should be added as a signatory.

19. Correspondence

- Staplegrove Scouts had contacted the Parish Council to apologise for the mess that had been created at the weekend along the path to the Scout Hut. They had offered to form a working party to clear up, which the Parish Council had accepted.
- Somerset Community Justice Partnership had written to thank the Parish Council for the donation towards their work.

20. Any other Business

- Cllr Debenham had attended a Cabinet meeting at SCC and noted that the Revenue Support Grant will be decreasing to zero over a number of years. He also reported that a further £18m of savings need to be made at SCC.
- Cllr Bird reported that she had spoken to the Parishioner who had requested dog waste bins, and who understood the reasons for the Parish Council's decision.
- Cllr Bird had been contacted by another Parishioner whose house backs on to the Grove. They have queried trimming some overhanging branches. Cllr Bird will pass the details on to the Clerk who will speak to them.
- Cllr Tucker passed on a request for support from Taunton School International in progressing speed restrictions along Greenway Road which was agreed.
- Cllr Tucker noted that the 'Great British Spring Clean' was taking place from 3rd to 5th March 2017, and asked if the Parish Council had plans to get involved.

21. Date of next meetings

The next meeting of the Parish Council, will be held on Thursday 16th March 2017 at 5pm.

The subsequent Parish Council meeting will be held on Thursday 18th May 2017 at 6pm and will include the annual meeting of electors.

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