

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2010 AT 5.00 PM AT STAPLEGROVE VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Dr G Hayes (in the Chair), Mr M Clark, Mr A Debenham, Dr T Harris, Mr J Morris, Mr D Ware, Mrs E Waymouth, Somerset County Councillor (SCC), PC Andy Davies and one member of the public.

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATION OF INTEREST

With reference to agenda item number 7 Tom Harris declared that he was a personal friend of both Graham Bennett and David Lock. The Chairman declared that he also knew David Lock in a personal capacity.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2009, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record of the proceedings, subject to amending paragraph 8 to read ‘...and no **vehicle excise** tax penalty notices’ and paragraph 11 to read ‘it was **unreasonable** that the Parish Council had received a charge....’.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Pinch point, Manor Road – replacement trees

Noted that planting to replace those trees removed from the church site as part of the pinch point scheme had been undertaken at the end of January 2010. It was agreed that the contractor had done an excellent job and that the site now looked very smart.

Showell Park bus stop and shelter

The Chairman reported that together with the Clerk and parishioner Tom Tennant, he had met with representatives from First Bus Company, SCC’s Transporting Somerset and a Somerset Highways officer on 2 December 2009. The First Bus Company representative had been adamant that he would not move on the matter of the bus company refusing to use the stop, on the grounds it was dangerous for buses to move out across a lane of traffic. It was, however, suggested by the Highways officer that a solution could be to construct a build out in the lay by and put the shelter on it. The bus would then stop in the first lane and would only have to pull out into the second lane. He agreed to look into the feasibility of the scheme and whether there would be any funds to meet it. The Clerk reported that subsequently the Transporting Somerset Operations Manager had informed her that because of the current economic climate SCC had suspended the budget for projects such as this. All schemes currently in the system had been put on hold and no new schemes were to be taken on. Regretfully he was unable to take this proposal any further until the budget situation improved. Agreed to keep this matter in abeyance for the time being and review it again in the future. In the meantime, Elaine Waymouth agreed to speak to SCC colleagues to see if there was anything else that could be done to get the bus company to change its mind on using the bus stop.

New seat for Hudson Way playground

The Clerk reported that Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) had ordered the new seat and would contact her when a fixed delivery date had been arranged. The seat would be installed shortly thereafter and then the Parish Council billed.

Vandalised swings in Staplegrove Children’s Playground/vandalised sign

Noted that the vandalised swings had been repaired and the insurance claim settled. The bill was £1300 plus £195 VAT (£1495). The Parish Council had to pay a policy excess of £125 with the insurance company meeting the cost of the remaining net amount. As the vandalism had been caused by boisterous behaviour by older persons, and the design specification of the swings stated they were for use by under 10s only, the Clerk had ordered two laminated stickers to be placed on the swings, stating. ‘Please respect this play equipment. To be used by under 10s only’ (£17 plus VAT). A sturdier replacement ‘No dog fouling sign’ for the playground, to replace one that had been vandalised, had been ordered at the same time and paid for by the Parish Council (£22 plus VAT).

5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

6. PARTNERS AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER (PACT)

PC Andy Davies reported that a number of volunteers who were interested in undertaking the Speed Watch in Manor Road had come forward and would receive training shortly. The Clerk confirmed that Kingston St Mary Parish Council were willing to allow Staplegrove to share its radar gun in exchange for paying for a share of the purchase price and a contribution towards the cost of the annual calibration charge. They had suggested that a partnership agreement would need to be drawn up.

Andy reported that there had been problems with motorists speeding in College Road, which runs from Greenway Road to Taunton School. The school had issued a letter to parents asking them to slow down. He added that a Business Watch for the Bindon Road business area was being established so that businesses could alert each other when shoplifters were in the area. Inconsiderate parking in Hudson Way continued to be an on-going issue that the police were keeping an eye on.

7. FOOTPATH MAINTENANCE

The Chairman reported that Graham Bennett was no longer able to trim the footpaths for the Parish Council. Local gardener David Lock had indicated that he would be willing to take on the strimming for a year-long trial period. He would charge £10 per hour and would use the Parish Council strimmer, as he did not have his own public liability insurance. The Clerk would write to him and confirm that the Parish Council would employ him on this basis.

Noted that Deane DLO had been asked to cut back the verge in front of Staplegrove House, which was part of The Grove and owned by the Parish Council and which had encroached onto the public footpath. The bill to the Parish Council, which had yet to be received, would be £215 plus VAT. Deane DLO had also cut back vegetation overhanging the public footpath on the opposite side of the road, near Rivendell Cottage. This would be charged to TDBC's Parks Department.

8. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – TDBC'S CORE STRATEGY

The plans for Staplegrove, included in the Core Strategy, which provided a framework for future development that would guide planning issues in Taunton Deane up to 2026, were discussed at length. It was noted that an exhibition giving details of the proposals for Staplegrove would be held in Staplegrove Village Hall on 17 February. The event had been widely publicised by the Clerk. Parishioners would be given the opportunity to make their views known at the event. It was agreed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman would compose a response from the Parish Council to the Core Strategy, based on points raised at the meeting and an assessment of public opinion at the exhibition. The response would be circulated to all councillors before being submitted to TDBC by the end of February. It was agreed that a public meeting to discuss the Core Strategy provisionally booked for 19 February was not required.

9. EMERGENCY CONTACTS LIST

Tom Harris reported on the positive feedback he had received following the circulation of an email from the Clerk warning of dangerous driving conditions in Corkscrew Lane during the recent severe icy weather and asking for the email to be forwarded to neighbours. He felt that the compilation of a list of email addresses to be held by the Clerk so that she could circulate important information would be useful. The Clerk agreed to ask parishioners in the next Parish Journal to contact her if they wished to be included on the list, which would be held by her in complete confidence. Any emails issued would not display parishioners email addresses.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

11. CORRESPONDENCE

- Noted a letter from Taunton Transition Town concerning their work to raise awareness of the potential impacts of climate change.
- A letter of thanks from the PCC for the grant from TDBC and donation from the Parish Council

for the churchyard maintenance 2009/10 was read out. A letter from the Youth Football Club thanking the Parish Council for its grant was also noted. The Chairman had also received a letter of thanks from the PCC for the grant from the Parish Council for the upgraded external lighting in the churchyard.

- The Clerk reported that she had received letters from SCC stating that a section of Rectory Road would be closed on 3 March to enable resurfacing and associated works to be carried out at the bend before the junction with Dodhill Road and a section of Langford Lane would be closed for 20 days starting from 8 March to enable drainage works to be carried out.
- Noted an invitation to attend the Mayor's Patronage Concert on 20 March at 7.15pm at the Temple Methodist Church.
- The Clerk gave details of a declaration by TDBC that three parcels of land situated at the Silk Mills Park and Ride Site and immediately west of Silk Mills Lane were being managed as Local Nature Reserve.

12. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank reconciliations

The Clerk circulated details of the bank reconciliations for October, November and December 2009, which had been checked and certified by a parishioner.

Receipts and payments since last meeting

Receipts:	Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.82
	Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.07
	Victoria's Beauty Room - fee for entry in business directory on website	5.00
	Firs Nursing Home - fee for entry in business directory on website	5.00
	Alliance & Leicester – refund of charge made for failed cheque from Churchill Accountants	7.50
	Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.64
	Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.07
	SCC Community Budget - £2000 grant for Manor Road fencing and seat for Hudson Way playground, £250 grant for church lighting	2250.00
	Allianz Insurance Plc – settlement of insurance claim for vandalised swings	1175.00
	Western Power Distribution – payment of wayleaves	3.48
	Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.46
	Alliance & Leicester – bank interest	0.07
Payments:	Staplegrave PCC – TDBC maintenance grant (£525) and PC donation (£100) 2009/10	625.00
	Staplegrave Children's Playground Trust - TDBC maintenance grant (£425) and PC donation (£218) 2009/10	643.00
	Staplegrave YFC – donation 2009/10	500.00
	Sutcliffe Play SW – repairs to vandalised swings	1495.00
	Signs Express – laminated stickers for swings advising of age limit and replacement 'no dog fouling' panel for Manor Road playground	57.50
	Alliance & Leicester – charge for failed cheque from Churchill Accountants	7.50
	Staplegrave PCC - £250 contribution from SCC's Community Budget and £486 donation from the Parish Council to pay for external lighting in the churchyard	736.00
	PWLB – ½ year loan repayment	750.81
	J Peake – clerk's ¼ year salary and admin expenses 1 October – 31 December 2009	1083.90

The Clerk reported that in response to her letter stating that it was unreasonable to charge the Parish Council for the failed cheque from Churchill Accountants, Alliance & Leicester had stated that the charges had been raised correctly but as a gesture of goodwill had reversed the charge.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Noted that John Kenny from the PCC was looking at the possibility of using contractors to cut

the grass in the churchyard and had contacted the Clerk for details of the Deane DLO who cut the Staplegrove Children's Playground for the Playground Trust.

- In response to a question from Tom Harris the Chairman confirmed that the Parish Council would be happy to receive the annual report by the Chairman of the Staplegrove Trust as its report to the annual meeting of electors.
- The Chairman was thanked for his efforts in clearing up litter in various parts of the parish.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The annual meeting of electors for the parish will be held on Tuesday 25 May 2010 at 6.00pm followed by the annual meeting of the Parish Council. The annual meeting of the Staplegrove Children's Playground Trust will also follow.