

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 15 NOVEMBER 2011 AT 5.00 PM AT STAPLEGROVE VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT: Dr G Hayes (in the Chair), Mr M Clark, Mrs C Cornell, Mr J Morris, Mr D Ware, County and District Councillor Mrs E Waymouth and District Councillor Mr B Nottrodt.

Mr J Gray, Site Manager, Leadbitter Construction, attended for agenda item 6.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Dr T Harris, Mr D Greig, Taunton Deane Borough Council's (TDBC) Parish Liaison Officer and PCSO J Routley.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 August 2011, having been circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Commemorative stone at Lawn Road

Noted that a ceremony to dedicate an engraved stone and tree to 40 Commando would take place on 16 November 2011.

Rag Hill footpath

Agreed that a working party to tackle the vegetation coming through the wire fencing at Long Rap field and encroaching onto the footpath would meet on 8 December 2011 at 9.30am.

Manor Road Playground – commando frame

As the cost of investigating the fault with the commando frame and carrying out subsequent repairs could not be justified in view of its age, the commando frame had been removed. The £15 obtained from a scrap merchant for the metal had been given to Trevor Cavill, the parishioner who had removed the frame, as compensation as his angle grinder had been damaged in the process. Agreed to send a letter of thanks to Trevor.

The Grove – access to Staplegrove House

Despite the Parish Council confirming with the solicitors, acting for the owner of Staplegrove House, that it would be prepared to enter into an agreement about access over Parish Council land to the house, nothing further had been heard. The house had subsequently been sold and the new owners had not approached the Parish Council about the matter. Bruce Nottrodt suggested that the Parish Council might want to write to the new owners stating that although the Parish Council owned this land it gave them permission to use this accessway. This would ensure that the owners were made aware that they did not have any rights relating to this accessway. The Clerk would seek advice and write to the owners on this matter.

Somerset County Council (SCC) Chairman's Award for Service to the Community

Noted that a nomination from the Parish Council for the SCC's Chairman's Award for Service to the Community had been successful. The awardee had been unable to attend the award ceremony and would receive her award privately from Elaine Waymouth, Vice-Chairman of the County Council.

Parish website

The Clerk reported that a parishioner, who was a software engineer, had offered to help her, free of charge, to update and re-design the website. In his opinion the Parish Council's current website host, Easyspace, had sold it a limited server at a high cost. The current server would not allow the website to be updated and Easyspace would only upgrade the server at an additional cost of £3.99 per month, which he considered to be very expensive. Agreed with the Clerk's suggestion to wait until the hosting with Easyspace expired in April 2012 and then rewrite the website and host elsewhere, in order to avoid duplicate server costs.

Queen's diamond jubilee weekend 2 to 5 June 2012

The Chairman reported that an informal meeting had been held on 10 November 2011 to discuss what

the parish should do to celebrate the Queen's diamond jubilee weekend. Representatives of the various organisations in the parish had attended. A committee had been formed and a draft programme of events drawn up. The committee would continue to meet and co-ordinate events.

Review of electoral arrangements for Somerset County Council

The Parish Council had made the following statement to SCC regarding the review:

'In spite of its proximity to the town, Staplegrove continues to maintain its own identity and is particularly proud of its peripheral village feel. The community of Staplegrove approves of its current identity and has every wish to remain unchanged and to continue to be aligned with Kingston St Mary, Cheddon Fitzpaine and West Monkton. It is also pleased to note from the draft proposals that no change is recommended'.

5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

6. NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT OFF SILK MILLS LANE

Noted that the Parish Council had been invited by TDBC's Street Naming Officer to come up with a name for this development. Of the three names the Parish Council had suggested, TDBC and the developers had accepted 'Grove Gate'.

Mr J Gray, Site Manager, of Leadbitter Construction gave a presentation about the company and how it was managing the new development. He urged the Parish Council to contact him if they were aware of any concerns or complaints from the community. He added that an Open Day would take place at some stage and the Chairman of the Parish Council would be invited to hand over the first set of keys when the site was ready for occupancy. Crest Nicholson was the other developer on the site.

7. WINTER HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

The Chairman reported that SCC had given each Parish and Town Council ten 20kg bags of de-icing material for self-help use on the public highway/footways only, in the event of prolonged periods of snow and ice. Michael Clark would be attending an open evening at the Highways depot on 16 November to see how SCC dealt with winter weather.

8. DAMAGED FENCING ON MANOR ROAD

The Clerk reported that a lady had lost control of her car and crashed into the fencing, erected by the Parish Council on Manor Road, opposite 'Anjalin'. The Clerk had obtained a quotation for the repairs, from Orchard Fencing, and had passed it to the driver to forward to her insurers. Her insurers had sent the Clerk a cheque made payable to Orchard Fencing. The repairs had been undertaken and the cheque sent to Orchard Fencing.

9. POLICE MATTERS

There was no police officer present. Caroline Cornell reported on a theft of a car in Showell Park.

10. SCC'S LOCAL TRANSPORT POLICY (LTP3)

Having been invited to put forward Local Transport Improvement Schemes to SCC for consideration, the Parish Council's suggestion to provide a footpath from Village World to Whitmore Lane had been put on the reserve list. SCC was proceeding with a detailed investigation into the scheme. There had been no indication of whether the Parish Council would be expected to contribute towards this scheme.

11. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

12. CORRESPONDENCE

- A booklet by the Campaign to Protect Rural England titled 'How to respond to planning applications' was noted and retained by the Chairman.
- Noted a letter from SCC's Acting Service Director for Highways and Traffic concerning the Council's policy on replacement of broken slabs and paviour blocks with tarmac. It was suggested that if parishes preferred to replace like for like they should contribute financially in

sharing the cost. This did not apply to Staplegrove as it did not have any cobbles or block paving.

- The Parish Council re-affirmed its policy to give grants to groups/organisations in the parish only and rejected requests for funding from Taunton and District Citizen's Advice Bureau, AGE UK and St Margaret's Hospice.
- Noted that SCC was consulting on a potential increase in its charge (from £2 to £10) for renewing or applying for a Blue Disabled Parking Badge.
- An invitation to the Taunton Deane Area Group of the Somerset Wildlife Trust's winter event 'Making Space for Nature' on 9 December was declined.

13. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank reconciliations

The Clerk circulated details of the bank reconciliations for August and September 2011, which had been checked and certified by a parishioner.

Quarter year budget statement and precept request

Received and discussed a report by the Clerk giving a quarter year budget statement as at 30 September 2011 and a suggested figure for the precept for 2012/13. It was agreed to request a precept of £10,710.

Receipts and payments since last meeting

	£
Receipts	
Santander – bank interest	1.07
Santander – bank interest	0.09
E Waymouth – contribution towards paint/oil for seats	10.00
TDBC maintenance grants 2011/12: PCC £525, footpaths £750, playground £425	1700.00
Santander – bank interest	1.03
Santander – bank interest	0.09
Fees for entry in business directory on parish website:	
Couple of Mugs	5.00
Evolution Tae Twon Do	5.00
Barratt & Canniford	5.00
Jeffrey Acreman Ltd	5.00
D R Collard	5.00
K M Scott, Staplegrove Lodge B&B	5.00
R & D Electrical Solutions	5.00
Impact Design	5.00
P J Signs (Taunton) Ltd	5.00
Cookway Autoservice Centre	5.00
Arboricare Ltd	5.00
Greenway Motors	5.00
C M Cook & J H Cook	5.00
Village World Ltd	5.00
Santander – bank interest	1.06
Santander - bank interest	0.09
Payments	
Charlie Saville – footpath maintenance July-Aug 2011	97.50
J Peake – Clerk's ¼ year salary & admin expenses 1/6/11- 30/9/11	891.58
HMRC – NI/PAYE income tax	116.60
TDBC – election costs 5 May 2011	676.13
Society of Local Council Clerks – annual subscription	82.00
J S G Hayes – reimbursement for paying bill from Stooks Memorials for engraving on stone to be dedicated to 40 Commando	146.00

Grants and Donations

The Clerk reported that despite doubts about whether TDBC maintenance grants budget would be available this year TDBC had been able to award the same amounts as it had in previous years, namely:

£750 for footpath maintenance

£525 for churchyard maintenance

£425 for the playing field maintenance

She added that £750 should be sufficient to cover the footpaths but the playground would have an approximate shortfall of £125 for grass cutting as well as additional running costs estimated to be £250.00. The Parish Council agreed to top up the grant to the Playground Trust by £375.

Church accounts indicated that they had spent £745 on grass cutting to date. The church had asked if the Parish Council could provide some financial assistance towards the lighting in the churchyard, particularly as the footpath, although owned by the church, was frequently used by parishioners walking to and from Manor Road. Annual costs were expected to be in the region of £250. Agreed not to top up the churchyard maintenance grant but agreed to give a grant of £100 towards the lighting, for this year only.

The Clerk reported that the Staplegrove Youth Football's accounts (for year ending June 2011) had not yet been prepared. Agreed to await the receipt of the accounts before considering a grant to the club.

PAYE implementation

Noted that the PAYE system was operating well and a tax code for the Clerk had been received.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Michael Clark reported concerns that the traffic light at the Manor Road junction heading into town, was not operating correctly. The Clerk stated that she had raised these concerns with SCC's Traffic Control who had said the site had been monitored and the lights were performing correctly. She agreed to raise this matter again with a contact at SCC recommended by Elaine Waymouth.
- David Ware stated that he felt a parish newsletter was required as the website and parish journal did not target the whole of the parish. Concerns were expressed that a team of volunteers would be needed to collect news articles, edit and distribute the newsletter. Caroline Cornell suggested that the primary school be used to disseminate a newsletter to parents and was asked to put on paper her ideas.
- The Chairman thanked Elaine Waymouth for her contribution of £10 to pay for paint/oil to renovate the parish seats.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Wednesday 22 February 2012 at 5.00 pm. A meeting of the Staplegrove Children's Playground Trust will follow.