

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON
THURSDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 4.30PM
STAPLEGROVE VILLAGE HALL**

PRESENT:

Parish Councillors: Joan Bird (left at 5.15pm), Michael Clark (chair), Alan Debenham, Simon Moon, Ian Talbot, Ros Went
District Councillors: Dixie Darch
Clerk: Janet Coates

1.	<p>To receive apologies for absence Apologies received from Cllr Sully</p>
2.	<p>Declarations of interest not already recorded No additional declarations made</p>
3.	<p>To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on Thursday 19th March 2020 and on Monday 27th July 2020 Having been circulated, both sets of minutes were approved and signed as a correct record of proceedings.</p>
4.	<p>Police matters The Police were not in attendance but had sent a written report which listed reported incidents from 1st April to 2nd September. The clerk summarised the discussion she had with the police about the report; all the concerns for welfare and missing persons had positive outcomes and a large number of the incidents related to the same people/properties in the parish. A number of the anti-social behaviour and public order incidents were repeated incidents by 1 person. Thefts from vehicles and non-dwelling burglaries were very low and there were no reported incidents of a dwelling being burgled in this period.</p>
5.	<p>Question from members of the public (maximum 15 minute session) No questions received from the public</p>
6.	<p>Clerk's report, to include matters arising from previous minutes A matter arising from the last meeting concerned the payment of a pension contribution to the clerk, the clerk reported that she had looked into this and established that as the Parish Council only has 1 employee with salary cost of less than £10,000 then it is exempt from providing a pension scheme. As the clerk's salary is less than £6250 then she has opted out of joining a pension scheme that the Parish Council could make a contribution towards as she would have to match any contribution paid to her which is not financially worth it.</p> <p>i. External Audit The clerk reported that she has submitted the AGAR exemption certificate to the External Audit and has published the AGAR, annual accounts etc.</p> <p>ii. Internal audit actions also see item 7 and 8 In addition to items 7 and 8 that were recommended by the Internal Auditor(IA), the clerk has checked on the policies that the IA reported not in place and has established that</p>

	<p>although there are not separate policies for sickness absence, annual leave etc they are covered in the employment contract which is proportionate to one employee.</p> <p>iii. Letters of thanks regarding donation made to Love Musgrove Covid – 19 appeal</p> <p>Clerk reported that letter of thanks had been received.</p> <p>iv. Update on website</p> <p>New website is operational and meets the new accessibility requirements. Cllr Moon confirmed this as he had accessed the website using his mobile phone and all features available. The content of the website needs more tidying up and the clerk will continue to work on this.</p> <p>v. Tree work in the Grove</p> <p>Chris Groves is due to prune the tree behind the bus-stop w/c 28th September. Gareth Machell is due to prune the trees and cut the hawthorn down behind the old Post Office during September as well.</p> <p>vi. Somerset Playing Fields Association awards</p> <p>The Children’s playground in Manor Road has won an award for the second year running. Cllr Debenham will attend the awards evening on behalf of the Parish Council.</p>
7.	<p>To note and minute retrospectively the appointment on 1st August 2019 of Janet Coates as Clerk and RFO</p> <p>The appointment was duly noted.</p>
8.	<p>To note and minute the decisions taken by the Parish Council during the lockdown period – appendix A</p> <p>The decisions were duly noted. Cllr Bird recommended that for accuracy and completeness the clerk include ‘ the clerk has kept a record of the emails’ against the decision made on 27th March 2020</p>
9.	<p>Anti-social behaviour – the Parks and the Grove</p> <p>Cllr Talbot gave an account of the meeting held in the Hudson Way park in August with Helen Philips (SWaT), PCSO Marshall Bernhardt, Vicky Chipchase (Staplegrave resident) and the clerk. There have been a number of reported and unreported incidents of anti-social behaviour that include littering, bins set on fire, intimidating behaviour from Individuals, dog waste bin broken, overnight sleeping. SWaT have responded quickly by repairing the dog waste bin, removing the tent and clearing litter. The police are making more regular checks through the park but are having to do this throughout the Taunton area due to the number of incidents that have occurred since the end of lockdown. With schools about to go back and the weather not as good, it was felt that the worst has passed. A litter-pick is being planned by the clerk and Vicky Chipchase. Cllr Moon reported that the incidents concerning one individual in the Grove have now stopped following interventions from the Police and other agencies and the shop have agreed to stop selling the individual alcohol. Cllr Moon also reported that Helen Philips from SWaT is investigating an alcohol ban for the area. This will be subject to public consultation.</p>

10.	<p>To note and minute the Planning Applications and decisions since last meeting - appendix B</p> <p>These were duly noted, Cllr Clark updated on the decisions that have been made to date. No decision yet on 34/20/0009 relating to the former Staplegrove Inn. Also no further action/communication has been received from SWaT or Redrow in relation to North Taunton development applications 34/19/0035 and 0036. Cllr Clark wrote to SWaT planners in July to notify them of the amount of public support for the petition against some aspects of the plans and for the extension of the ring road. And of particular concern is the currently proposed western end connection of the spine road to the A358 NOT being at the Silk Mills Road roundabout.</p> <p>The letter is on the website.</p>
11.	<p>Manor Road Playground</p> <p>i. Footpath resurfacing proposed work</p> <p>The clerk reported that she had looked at the cost of wet-pour concrete and it was expensive at £40 per sq.m Other alternatives were discussed and might be considered in the future. It was agreed to try more wood-chippings for this year as tipper-truck loads can be supplied for about £20 by Gareth Machell.</p> <p>ii. Provision of dog waste bin</p> <p>After discussion on the pros and cons of providing such a bin, it was agreed that the clerk would investigate replacing the current bin with a larger one.</p>
12.	<p>Financial Matters</p> <p>i. Bank reconciliations April, May and June</p> <p>These had been circulated with the agenda. Cllr Talbot confirmed that he had carried out the independent check and signed them as correct.</p> <p>ii. Budget Statement 31st July 2020</p> <p>This had been circulated with the agenda. Clerk reported that the first four months of the year incurred some of the annual payments which are relatively high-cost items such as annual insurance, annual membership of SALC and are the busiest months for grass-cutting and footpath maintenance.</p> <p>iii. Receipts and Payments since 19th March meeting</p> <p>See table below. Clerk reported large drop in interest rate is reflected in interest payment from Santander and that SWaT had not invoiced for the 2019 election costs until May 2020. Cllr Darch apologised on behalf of SWaT for the oversight.</p>
13.	<p>Date of next meeting 19th November 2020</p> <p>This date was confirmed and meeting will be in village hall and start at 5pm.</p>

Receipts and payments since 19th March 2020

Receipts		£
	Santander – bank interest - April	8.36
	Santander – bank interest - May	10.10
	Santander – bank interest - June	12.51

	Santander – bank interest - July	10.69
	Santander – bank interest - August	2.62
	Precept from SWT	8146.00
	VAT refund	121.35
Payments	Howard SW LTD - Grass/hedge cutting – April to August	833.40
	Salary – March, April, May, June and July	1858.23
	Website Costs – domain name, hosting and coronavirus page	131.89
	Donation to Love Musgrove – Covid-19	200.00
	SALC – Membership	534.46
	Internal Audit – Jill Larcombe	100.00
	Annual Insurance – Carne and Co	769.06
	Charlie Saville - footpath maintenance May- July	642.50
	SWT – election costs 2019	100.00
	Andrew Hull – repairs to playground wall	200.00

DRAFT

Appendix A

List of decisions made by Staplegrove Parish Council during lockdown period to enable business continuity

24th March 2020

Proposal to approve and adopt Business Continuity Motion in light of Covid-19. Motion approved and adopted unanimously by email by all the Parish Councillors. The clerk has kept a record of the emails.

25th March 2020

Proposal to agree the financial authorisation limits set within the financial regulations agreed at the last Parish Council meeting in January. Proposal to agree the updated Internal Financial Controls Statement.

These were agreed unanimously by email by all the Parish Councillors. The clerk has kept a record of the emails.

27th March 2020

The clerk emailed the Parish Council a summary of the three quotes received for the website work. The decision was made to award the work to Gatekeeper Services.

The clerk has kept a record of the emails.

Monday 30th March 2020

The clerk emailed the Parish Council a summary of the two quotes for the footpath maintenance work. The decision was made to award the maintenance of the footpaths that are not on the highway to The Veg Patch and to ask Howard Ltd to maintain the footpaths that run alongside the highway.

The clerk has kept a record of the emails.

8th April 2020

Decision to donate £200 to Love Musgrove Covid-19 appeal

The clerk has kept a record of the emails.

1st May 2020

Annual Insurance, 3 quotes provided by Carne and Co, decision to accept Ecclesiastical on 3 year term

The clerk has kept a record of the emails.

1st June 2020

Three quotes considered for the work needed after Storm Ciara on the tree in the Grove that overhangs the bus-stop. Decision taken to award the work to Chris Groves Associates. The clerk has kept a record of the emails.

Appendix B

Record of Planning Applications Received During Coronavirus Pandemic

Decisions were made in line with the Staplegrove Parish Council Business Continuity Motion agreed on March 24th 2020

(c) The authority to decide the council's response to planning applications be delegated to the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council. Whenever possible, members of the council in the case of large applications will be informed of applications out for consultation and will be invited to submit comments to the Clerk or Assistant Clerk.

Application Numbers

- **34/20/0004 – 2 storey extension Scott Close** received on 16th March (too late for agenda for 19th March).
Decision - No comment sent to SWT on 30th March 2020
- **34/20/0007 – single storey extension Drake Close** received on 3rd April
Decision – No comment sent to SWT on 28th April 2020
- **34/20/0010 – 2 storey extension Cresswell Avenue** received on 23rd April
Decision – No comment sent to SWT on 4th May 2020
- **34/20/0009 – Staplegrove Inn** received on 19th May
Decision - support application sent to SWT on 21st May
- **34/20/0011LB – internal and external alterations to Stonehouse Farmhouse** received on 11th June
Decision – No comment sent to SWT on 17th June 2020
- **34/20/0012 – construction of 1st floor flat on The Post Office** received on 17th June
Decision – not supported, comments sent to SWAT on 2nd July.
Notification from SWT on 17th August that application has been withdrawn.
- **34/20/0015/T. maintenance work to two trees on the Apple Business park** received on 4th August
Decision – No comment sent to SWT on 17th August
- **34/20/0016 Proposal: Erection of a two storey extension to the side and a single storey extension to the rear of 61 Scott Close, Taunton** received on 13th August
Decision – No comment sent to SWT on 28th August 2020