

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of  
STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021  
at 6.15pm by zoom**

**PRESENT:**

Parish Councillors: Joan Bird, Michael Clark (chair), Alan Debenham, Simon Moon, Ian Talbot, Ros Went; Clerk Janet Coates

County Councillor Rod Williams, District Councillor Dixie Darch

**MINUTES**

1. **To receive apologies for absence** – apologies received from Cllr Sully
2. **Declarations of interest not already recorded** - no additional declarations made
3. **Election of Chair and vice-chair for 2021-22.** Cllr. Clark proposed Cllr Talbot for chair, seconded by Cllr Went. Cllr. Moon proposed Cllr Clark for vice-chair, seconded by Cllr. Bird. Cllr Talbot and Cllr Clark were unanimously elected as chair and vice chair respectively. The clerk will arrange for them to sign their acceptance of offer declaration.
4. **To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18th March 2021** - amendment to paragraph 10 ii to include Cllr before Moon. The minutes were then agreed as a correct record and will be signed by the chair.
5. **Police Report** - clerk reported that she had sent out the April newsletter, 95 crimes across the Taunton West area in the last month. It is hoped that the Police will be able to attend future meetings when they are held in the Village Hall.
6. **Questions from members of the public** – the clerk had received two questions by email. One resident has questioned the recent removal of the traffic light at the Staplegrove Rd/Manor Rd junction, when turning right into Manor Road coming from town, once you have passed beyond the white line there is no traffic light for reference. Cllr Talbot gave an update on the background to the phasing of the traffic lights at this junction and the removal of the traffic light. Cllr Williams has also raised the issue with SCC Highways. It was agreed that Cllr Talbot will contact Alyn Jones Operations Director for SCC Highways to discuss further.

The second resident has asked if a dog waste bin can be installed at the Children's Playground. The clerk has replied explaining that the Parish Council is against a dog waste bin in the playground as this might encourage people to exercise their dogs there. The clerk has asked Somerset West and Taunton about the cost of a larger bin / extra collection; the clerk has had a reply that the bin could be replaced by a larger one as part of a general review of bins in the area; hopefully in the next year.

**7. Clerk's report to include correspondence and actions from last meeting**

- i. **Somerset Unitary – response sent to Government –** clerk reported that she had emailed the Parish Council response summarising the reasoning for the response which is detailed in the minutes of the March 2021 meeting.
- ii. **Somerset Playing Fields Association Annual awards** - Cllr Moon agreed to send in a nomination for the Children's playground.
- iii. **Report of possible landslip on Staplegrove Road –** clerk reported that she had not yet had a response from SCC highways and will follow up again.
- iv. **Duckpond footpath** - two issues to report, firstly, a local resident has tripped recently on a small bump that has formed in the newest area of tarmac. Cllr Talbot and Cllr Clark will try and tamper the bump down. Secondly, one dog owner is not picking up after their dog and there are at last 6 piles of dog poo along the path. Agreed that the clerk will report issue to Somerset West and Taunton and print some posters to go with the ones already there to try and encourage the dog owner to pick up after their dog.
- v. **Noticeboard at Staplegrove School –** this is now in place.
- vi. **Keep Britain Tidy campaign –** campaign is running from 28<sup>th</sup> May to 13<sup>th</sup> June and clerk will advertise it.
- vii. **Ruishton and Thornfalcon Neighbourhood Development Plan – consultation now open. –** Clerk will send email to Cllr Debenham as requested.
- viii. **Bus Back Better strategy – national initiative –** Clerk reported that National initiative has been launched and that local input might be requested at a later date.

- 8. Update - North Taunton Development** - the last two meetings have been cancelled by Simon Fox of Somerset West and Taunton as no progress until phosphates issues are addressed. Cllr Clark expressed concern that this could have on the spine road construction as no developer has been named for the east side yet and the deadline for the HIF funding for the road is March 2023. Cllr Darch replied that the section S106 funds are being agreed and she thought a developer will be named shortly.

**9. Update on plan for a combined footpath/cycle track on the southern part of the Grove** Cllr Talbot, Cllr Clark and the clerk had met Sarah Elwood the SWT cycling champion at the site in April to explain the reasoning for the plan. Cllr Williams reported that SCC Highways had subsequently met with Sarah Elwood and that Sarah Elwood would be leading on this and contacting the Parish Council about the next steps.

**10. Update on Bindon Road congestion** Cllr Williams reported that as requested at the last meeting he had raised the issue with Alyn Jones the SCC Operations Director for Highways. The position is; there is recognition that the traffic does not flow well along Bindon Road but whilst there remains opposition from residents to double yellow lines, SCC are not prepared to pursue the matter further. SCC suggest that the Parish Council test public opinion on the issue, Cllr Williams offered to support Cllr Talbot with drafting a poll/survey that could be put on the website/facebook. Cllr Talbot will also contact Alyn Jones to discuss further.

**11. Approval of annual insurance with Ecclesiastical and annual subscriptions to Somerset Area Local Councils – SALC and Somerset Local Council Clerks SLCC** - these were approved for the coming year 2021-22

**12. Planning Applications – details on Somerset West and Taunton website**  
An update on the Shepwell application 34/20/0024 from Cllr Talbot and Cllr Darch; work had been started by the developer ahead of the planning decision. An intervention from SCC Highways has led to the suspension of this work and SWT planning are also involved. The clerk also reported that application 34/21/0007 had been withdrawn

**i. 34/21/0010 Proposal: Erection of a two storey extension to the side and rear and a single storey extension to the front of 36 Mallory Close** Cllr Talbot asked the councillors to let the clerk know by 11<sup>th</sup> May if they had any comment, otherwise the Parish Council had no comment to make.

### **13. Financial Matters**

**i. Bank Reconciliations – February 2021 and March 2021** - these had been circulated with the agenda. Cllr Talbot confirmed he had carried out the independent check and had found 13p discrepancy and the clerk had rectified the records. The clerk reported that the Parish Council financial regulations state that a councillor other than the chair needed to carry out the independent check so Cllr Talbot cannot do them anymore, Cllr Clark agreed to do it instead. Cllr Talbot will continue to lead on budget setting

- ii. **To note and approve the 2020-21 payments and receipts account and asset register** - these were noted and approved. Cllr Bird asked what the road signs were and if they were still needed. Cllr Clark reported that they are People at Work signs and were bought when Charlie Saville worked on the verges of the highways. Agreed that they were useful to keep.
- iii. **To receive and note the Annual Internal Audit Report** – the Annual Internal Audit report was received and noted. There were no compliance issues. The Internal Audit report that is produced for the Parish Council has some matters to consider and this will be an agenda item at the next meeting.
- iv. **To approve the Annual Governance Statement (section 1)** - this was approved . The clerk and chair will sign after the meeting
- v. **To approve the Accounting Statements (section 2)** - this was approved. The chair will sign after the meeting.
- vi. **To approve the Certificate of Exemption for External Audit** – this was approved. The clerk and chair will sign after the meeting and the clerk will send to the External Auditor by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.
- vii. **Clerk’s salary** - the clerk requested that from April 1st 2021 she is paid at SCP 12 ( £11.53) rather than SCP 10 (£11.08) as she thinks that the levels of responsibility and complexity of the role and her experience should be reflected in a higher pay point. A recent advert for a Parish clerk at Porlock for similar responsibilities and hours had been advertised at starting from £11.50 per hour. This request was agreed and approved.
- viii. **Receipts and Payments since last meeting see table below.** It was noted that the first half of the annual precept has been received. The payments were approved.

**Receipts and payments for approval since the last meeting**

<b>Receipts</b>		<b>£</b>
	Santander – bank interest – April	0.14
	Precept	6467
<b>Payments</b>		
	Clerk’s salary – March	392.28
	Andrew Hull – installation of noticeboard	105.00
	Training Course with SALC	20.00
	Charlie Saville – footpath maintenance April	195.00

**14. Proposed dates of meetings for next 12 months** – clerk reported that she has booked the Mary Mercer room at the Village Hall for future meetings on the following dates

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021 – 5pm

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021 – 5pm

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021– 5pm

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 – 5pm

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022 - 5pm