

Minutes of the meeting of STAPLEGROVE PARISH COUNCIL held on Thursday 20th January 2022 at 5pm

PRESENT:

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

District Councillor Dixie Darch; County Councillor Rod Williams
Two members of the Public

MINUTES

1. **To receive apologies for absence** – apologies received from Cllr. Sully
2. **Declarations of interest not already recorded** – no additional declarations made
3. **To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 18th November 2021 and the extraordinary meeting held on 6th January 2022** – both sets of minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, Cllr Talbot, who also recorded his thanks to Cllr Clark for acting as chair at the extraordinary meeting.
4. **Questions from members of the public** - no questions from the public.
5. **Clerk's report to include correspondence and actions from last meeting**
 - i. **Police Report** the clerk reported that she has forwarded the monthly newsletters and that a new poster has been sent to include the latest PCSO Alex Bryant, the personal numbers of each PCSO are no longer included and the clerk will put up the posters in due course.
 - ii. **Petition: online meetings for councils** - the clerk reported that there is an online petition to ask the Government to legislate that councils meetings can take place online and in person. The clerk will forward the email to anyone who wants to sign the petition.
 - iii. **Footpath T 24/4 S106 money** – the clerk reported that following the last meeting, Cllr Sully has advised the clerk to ask the S106 officer if S106 money can be used to tarmac this footpath. The clerk reported that she needs to look at all the emails again on this matter as she feels this question has already been asked. The clerk will report at the next meeting.
 - iv. **Connecting Our Garden Communities – response.** The clerk reported that she had responded and requested that Manor Rd/Corkscrew Lane is considered as a route that needs improving for cyclists/pedestrians/all road users as it a vital route connecting Staplegrove to The Academy and the Leisure centre on Cheddon Road.

- v. **Grove** the clerk reported that since the last meeting, the tree felling had been completed and through a combined effort of councillors and residents; new trees had been planted, bug hotels constructed and woodland bulbs planted.
- vi. **Correspondence** – the clerk reported that she had circulated latest emails from Somerset Waste Partnership on the new recycling systems.

Cllr Talbot asked that item 14 Queen's Platinum Jubilee be taken now before the budget item as any potential spend for the Jubilee needs to be added into the proposed budget. This was agreed. (see item 14)

6. Budget 22-23 and Parish Precept – agree budget and precept for next financial year - Cllr Talbot presented the draft budget for 2022/23 and asked that £750 is added in to cover costs for celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and that the precept request to Somerset West and Taunton (SWT) also be increased by £750. Cllr. Talbot explained that his budget projects running costs of £14,910 for 2022/23 and he proposes using £2000 of the council's reserves to meet this and requesting precept of £12,910 which equates to about £16 per household for the year. Cllr Talbot proposed that his recommendation on budget and precept and use of reserves is agreed. All councillors agreed to his proposal.

7. North Taunton Development - update to include Wetlands Application 34/12/0017 – Cllr. Talbot reported that after the well-attended extraordinary meeting on 6th January the Parish Council had submitted its list of objections and included more reference to potential increased risk of flooding in the area. The consultation period has been extended by a further 2 weeks as the applicant had the wrong address on the application. Discussion took place on the phosphates issues with contributions from Cllrs Debenham, Darch, Talbot and Williams, it is accepted that this application is being made to 'unlock' the planning application (34/19/0036) of phase 1A housing but leaves the question what about phosphate mitigations for the remaining phases of house building? On the question of the calculations on phosphate removal, Natural England will decide if the calculations 'pass muster' and Somerset West and Taunton are beholden to their decision. In summary, this is a national problem and needs a wider strategic solution that will bring about changes in land management and some farming practices.

8. Community Governance Review - Taunton Town Council – update clerk reported that following the meeting on January 6th, she had submitted the Parish Council comments which stated that the council's preference was for the parish to stay as it is and that the unparished area of Taunton should become 'parished'. Cllr. Talbot said he had attended the Somerset Association Local Councils zoom meeting with the other 'affected' parishes. The majority view was that Parishes wanted to stay as an independent parish. Kingston St Mary had submitted a proposed minor boundary change which affects Staplegrove. The first stage of the consultation closed on 12th January, the next stage will be the proposal for the new Taunton Town parish area.

9. Somerset Unitary – update – Cllr Williams gave an update, there is a very detailed programme plan and a new programme manager, Alyn Jones has replaced Carlton Brand. The next meeting of the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Advisory board is on 3rd February and is open to anyone, the clerk will forward the invitation. The clerk reported that the next meeting for Parish/Town Council chairs and clerks is an on-line meeting on February 17th. No further update on Local Community Networks.

10. Highways

- I. Update on Bindon Road** - the clerk reported Kate Brown of SCC Highways had emailed in December to state that she and the parking manager would review and decide on the length of the double yellow lines and any single yellow lines and would then issue the proposal as part of a Traffic Regulation Order. The clerk emailed Kate Brown earlier this week for an update and has not had a reply. Cllr. Williams reported that Kate Brown has not been in work recently and he is keeping in touch on this matter. Cllr. Clark reported that there had been an accident in the last week or so where a car had hit several parked cars and the road had been closed for a while. Cllr Clark feels that this supports the case for double yellow lines along the length of the road between Whytes and Chaplins and he asked Cllr Williams to strongly make that case with Kate Brown. Cllr. Williams agreed to report this back to Kate Brown.
- II. Speed Indicator Device** - this has been delivered and Cllr Talbot and Peter Williams are due to go on a course on the installation and moving of the device. Course has been re-arranged due to covid.
- III. Finger-post road sign maintenance – to be discussed at agenda item 18**

11. Parish Council Elections 5 May 2022 -the clerk asked that the Parish Councillors note the date and that she is attending a course on 16th March on 'Preparing for elections'. The clerk has received information on possible costs but no information on timetable for declaring intention to stand etc.

12. Report from Cllr Debenham on Bus Strategy and Climate Change Cllr

Debenham reported on the recent meeting he attended on the Bus Strategy for Somerset. He reported that the Bus Service Improvement Plan was presented but how much of it will be delivered hinges on how much Government funding there will be. The expectation of Parishes is that they keep up-to-date and support the plan by stimulating bus usage, Cllr Debenham asked if bus information could be put on the parish website and the clerk said she will investigate how to do this.

Cllr. Debenham reported that he has also attended a day's training on Carbon Literacy, it was a very full day with lots of data and information some of it new to him. He reported that each Parish Council should have a climate emergency action plan and he could start to put this together. The clerk reported that there are spaces left on this course and she would circulate the invitation. Cllr. Darch said she could run a short workshop on Carbon Literacy/Climate Emergency planning for the Parish Council. Cllr Talbot accepted this offer and also gave thanks to Cllr Debenham for attending the two events.

Cllrs Darch and Williams left the meeting at 6.45pm

13. Annual Review of Parish Council Risk Assessment the clerk reported that the Internal Auditor has recommended that the council's standing orders and financial regulations are reviewed more frequently than every 5 years. The clerk proposed review every 3 years and this was agreed by all. Cllr Moon advised that two references to SWT departments needed updating. The clerk will do this and number the pages of the document for easier referencing.

14. Queen's Platinum Jubilee - update - it was agreed to include in the budget for 2022/23 the funds to cover the cost of re-gilding the clock on the church tower. Cllr Bird reported as the Parish Council representative on the Village Hall committee that activities are being planned to celebrate the jubilee. She asked Cllr. Williams if there are any funds/grants available specifically for the Jubilee celebrations; he replied that no specific funds available but there are community funds. It was proposed by Cllr. Talbot that £750 was put into the budget to cover the cost of re-gilding and donation towards the planned activities. This was agreed.

15. Planning Applications – details on Somerset West and Taunton website

i) **Application :34/21/ 0026/LEW** this has been considered by the planning committee on 16/12/2021 and it was decided to support this application

ii) **Application 34/21/0032/T**: After discussion, agreed to submit no comment.

iii) **Application 34/21/0031**: After discussion, agreed to submit no comment.

16. Financial Matters

- i. **Bank Reconciliations – October 2021 and November 2021** these had been circulated with the minutes and Cllr. Clark had carried out the independent check.
- ii. **Budget – December 2021** - budget position to the end of December was reported on .
- iii. **Receipts and Payments since last meeting see table below** these were noted and agreed.

17. Date of next meeting and setting of Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Meeting of the Council

Thursday 17th March 2022 – 5pm

The Annual Parish meeting has to be held between March and the end of May, and the Annual meeting of the Parish Council has to be held within 14 days of an election in an election year. Both meetings must not start before 6pm. Date of both annual meetings set for Thursday May 12th 2022 at 6pm, the Annual Parish meeting will be held first and then the Annual meeting of the Parish Council will follow.

18 Exempt Session – exclusion of the Public and Press

To resolve that under section 1. Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (admission to meeting) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business because publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted:

Quotes for maintenance of finger-post road signs

As requested at the last meeting in November, the clerk contacted the clerk at Norton Fitzwarren to ask about the contractor they used to carry out the recent work to their finger-post road sign. Norton Fitzwarren did obtain other quotes and would recommend the contractor they used for the quality and timeliness of getting the work done. The clerk proposed that the Parish Council use the same contractor. This was agreed.

Receipts and payments for approval since the last meeting

| Receipts | | £ |
|-----------------|---|----------|
| | Santander – bank interest – December | 0.13 |
| | Santander bank interest - January | 0.14 |
| | | |
| | | |
| Payments | | |
| | Clerk’s salary and expenses – November | 418.77 |
| | Clerks’s salary and expenses – December | 432.74 |
| | SwStumpsGrinders – Tree Felling | 2400.00 |
| | Somerset Association of Local Councils - Training | 25.00 |
| | Woodland Bulbs - Grove | 151.90 |
| | Information Commissioners Office – Annual Fee | 40.00 |
| | Elancity Speed camera | 2296.38 |

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