

STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 11th September 2017 in the Meeting Room, Williams Hall

Present Nick Sloan (Chairman), Graham Glead (Vice Chairman), Glynn Banks, David House, Peter House, Heather Venn (arrives later), John Hembrow, David Fothergill (County Councillor- arrives later).

In Attendance Becky Goodchild and 2 members of the public.

Public Question Time - No issues raised.

Apologies for Absence - Ann Finn, David Fothergill (arrives later).

1354. Declarations of Interest and dispensations - None received.

1355. Minutes of previous meeting - The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 14th August were agreed by all to be accurate, and signed by the Chairman.

(HV enters)

1356. Planning

36/17/0020 Normans, Griggs Hill - Erection of single storey extension to rear. Following discussion it was agreed that the following response be made: 'We support the application because it will have no detrimental effects or impact on anyone else.'

New wall in Curload - Following concerns that the new wall reduces visibility for drivers pulling out onto the road from neighbouring properties councillors agreed that a letter would be written to the Planning Department urging them to obtain advice from Highways concerning visibility splays. The PC believe that a retrospective planning application is in the process of being submitted.

NS to circulate a draft letter to the Planning Department.

Review of outstanding Planning Enforcement cases - A letter from Planning Enforcement stating that properties in the parish are currently under review had previously been circulated and noted.

Planning applications not referred to the Parish Council for comment - Following a previous planning application which was not referred to the PC it was questioned why this was the case. TDBC advised that the application concerned was a larger householder notification and that legislation requires that neighbours but not the Parish Council are consulted.

1357. Maintenance of finger posts (I) - NS advised of quotes obtained for replacement arms of £325 or £375 depending upon the amount of writing. We now are waiting for Skanska's quote to remove the posts.

1358. Slurry smells and farming practices - Following complaints by members of the public about the intensity of slurry smells recently this issue was mentioned in the Parish Council News section of the Autumn newsletter. A subsequent complaint about the paragraph by a local farmer initiated a discussion about the role of the PC and how much it should be involved in farming issues. The PC agreed that farming practices are primarily a concern of the NFU however complaints made to the PC should be addressed by the PC as the public's representative particularly where safety is concerned. It was suggested that discussion with an NFU representative at a PC meeting would be useful.

GG to invite the Somerset County Adviser from the NFU to a future PC meeting.

NS to respond to the local farmer.

1359. First Aid training for village organisations - So far 10 members of the public have

requested a place on a training session to be arranged, most on behalf of local organisations.

NS to find out dates available for a training session.

1360. NHS Health Checks Programme - The health checks session will be taking place at the Village Hall (Meeting Room) on 17th October. Each appointment will last for half an hour. An online booking page is being set up and will be available shortly via a link from the village website. It will also be possible to book via Nick Sloan or Heather Venn and details will be provided in the shop.

Clerk and GG to complete and return risk assessment forms to ToHealth.

1361. Village plan - Housing - An item ('What Future for Stoke St Gregory') was put into the recent issue of the Newsletter by the PC. The item was intended to generate discussion about a possible need for affordable housing. One complaint was received stating inaccuracy of the sentence about the Willowset which indicated a drop in numbers but this is not the case. HV advised that she will be standing down from attending the Housing Group meetings due to commitments.

(DF enters)

HV requested that the Community Asset issue be put on the next agenda for review.

1362. Maintenance of finger posts (II) - DF advised that he has chased up the requested quote from Skanska and he awaits a response.

1363. Village fête: Should the PC have a presence there? - It was agreed that the PC would not have an official presence at the fête although some councillors will attend.

1364. Parish Clock repair - It was agreed that the quote from Cumbria Clock Company to repair the strike fault would be accepted.

JH to ask the PCC if it could contribute to the cost.

1365. Vacancy on the Parish Council - If no election is called the Parish Council hope to co-opt a new member at the next meeting (9th October). Notices will be displayed on the noticeboard and in the shop, and information will be available on the village website as a News item. Application forms will be available from the Clerk and will also be downloadable from the website.

1366. Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner's Pride Awards - Nominations can be made all year round and decisions are made quarterly. Individuals can nominate.

NS to put information about making a nomination onto the website.

1367. Footpaths – Should the PC take over the maintenance of stiles? - DF advised that the PC would need to have public liability insurance for this. It was acknowledged that maintenance of the stiles could be costly. Maintenance is currently the responsibility of SCC and it was agreed that the PC will not take this on.

1368. Tree warden - The PC have in previous years had a voluntary tree warden but do not currently. NS questioned whether the PC should look to have a tree warden again. It has been noted that the planning department do not appear to follow up on whether conditions of granted applications have been adhered to including the planting of trees. This could be part of the role of a tree warden.

1369. Highways:

SID on Meare Green - The most recent SID readings were taken at the position requested this time and reflected appropriate speeds for the section of road.

Community Speed watch – Deferred to next meeting as AF not present.

Give way sign and painting of road markings by the Royal Oak -

DF to chase this up.

Overgrown hedges - It has been noted that there are several stretches of road that are

effectively being narrowed by overgrown hedges, particularly along Curload. Land owners are responsible for their own hedges and keeping them cut back from the road edges. NS advised that further information about this is available on the village website.

Tractor driving - A complaint was received about a tractor knocking off a tree branch as it passed along Curload. It was agreed that this type of event is a police matter rather than for the Parish Council to address.

1370. Allotments - No issues raised.

1371. Playing Field - GG advised that the grant application to Sporting England was rejected. However Tesco in Langport is hosting Bags of Help and SSG allotments is one of the 3 local causes that can be voted for to receive funding. Voting is currently under way and shoppers at the store will be given a number of votes relative to the amount they have spent on that occasion.

GG advised that Taunton Model Engineers have shown interest in setting up a track for their trains on SSG playing field. We wait for their response.

1372. Pavilion - No issues raised.

1373. Village website – Nextdoor - Some villagers have encountered this online neighbourhood social network recently. Councillors were divided on its usefulness and decided not to actively promote it at this point.

1374. Broadband - The relay for Rural Broadband Southwest wireless broadband is in place on Currymoor pumping station enabling connection for properties along Curload and Athelney. Gigaclear have the contract for the 2nd phase of rollout of superfast broadband. Villages will be prioritised according to interest and individuals can express their interest via the Gigaclear.com website.

1375. Flood issues

Flood Plan review - The next flood meeting is to be arranged.

Dark Lane drainage - Drainage appears to have been satisfactory during recent heavy downfalls.

1376. Police issues - No issues raised.

1377. Financial Matters

Authorisation of cheques:

959 A McKenzie – Reimbursement for payment of website privacy fee (Easyspace)	£13.57
960 Rockwell Printers – Printing of Newsletter (Autumn issue)	£59.00
961 The Society of Local Council Clerks – Annual membership renewal	£78.00
962 A McKenzie – Payment for taking August meeting minutes (Clerk annual leave)	£25.00
963 G Wagen James – Mowing of burial ground	£62.40

Standing order

1-10-2017 R. Goodchild - Clerk's salary for September 2017	£311.43
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It was agreed that the above cheques be signed and payments be made.

Received - HM Revenue and Customs – VAT repayment	£3,223.55
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Other financial items:

Privacy fee for website - Clerk to ensure this is cancelled via AM .

Bank reconciliation to end of July 2017 - Checked by NS. NS suggested that the layout of the bank reconciliation be altered in future to enable checking of the accounts by a councillor to be simplified.

Clerk to include totals of receipts and payments of current month.

Poppy Appeal donation - Following discussion all agreed that this year's contribution from the Parish Council would be £50.00.

Future practice for councillor checking of monthly accounts and bank reconciliations - As BC will no longer be checking the accounts monthly it was agreed that councillors will in future take turns at this. This could be monthly or 3 monthly. Councillors to take turns in alphabetical order (surname).

Need for a councillor financial role? - PH offered to take on a financial role for occasional issues.

1378. Pending / Feedback from meetings: None

Scouts - GG advised that as some leaders as recently given up their role there is a need for more people to take on these positions to enable beavers, cubs and scouts to continue. There is also a need for more parent helpers. Non-payment by some parents of children attending the groups is becoming an issue as there are some costs in running the groups and their activities.

Countryside Alliance Awards - For next agenda

Reeves Feast - For next agenda as Barbara Carpenter's role will become vacant.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

The next meeting will be held on October 9th at 7.30pm in the Meeting Room at the Williams Hall. Please email any items for the agenda to the clerk and the Chairman by 26th September if possible.