

STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 11th December 2018

in the Williams Hall

Present , Nick Sloan (Chairman), Graham Glead (Vice Chairman), Ann Finn, Glynn Banks, John Hembrow, David House, Peter House, Sara Sollis, Heather Venn, Phil Stone (District Councillor), David Fothergill (County Councillor) arrives later.

In Attendance – Becky Goodchild, Andy Lehner (West of England Developments), and 27 members of the public.

Public Question Time:

Proposed housing development on land adjacent to Willey Road - Members of the public raised the following concerns and questions about this planning application:

An increase in traffic along Willey Road which is narrow and already busy, being the main route into the village. Concern that the main entrance to the new development should not be from Willey Road. Lack of a pavement along Willey Road.

Concerns re increase in traffic along Meare Green. *Purchase of a SID is currently being considered by the PC.*

Is the housing development planning application linked to the application from The Recreation Ground? *The planning application for The Recreation Ground has been submitted by the Playing Field Management Committee, and will be funded by West of England Developments should the housing development application be approved.*

Do councillors have interests that will affect their decision? Does being a member of the Playing Field Management Committee, the PC or Heart of the Village present a conflict of interests? *Declarations of Interest are made following opening of the meeting (after the public section).*

Were villagers asked what they would like e.g. pavilion or other amenities? *The results of a questionnaire completed by attendees at the consultation demonstrated that a new pavilion was priority.*

Closeness of boundaries to existing properties and impact upon Church Close and Willey Road residents.

The consultation meeting organised by West of England Developments was not sufficiently advertised. *HV advised villagers to comment on this to TDBC.*

Concerns regarding existing rising main. What are the drainage plans? *AL advised that Wessex Water have total responsibility for sewage. A small pumping station for surface drainage will be fed from some of the new plots. This will be completely underground with only a manhole showing.*

Can the school support an intake of extra children? (There are also plans for a housing development in Burrowbridge.) *HV advised that the headteacher of SSG Primary School has requested that parents make comment to TDBC asking if CIL money can be used for the school to accommodate extra children.*

Is there evidence of a need for housing? *Councillors commented that while the 2016 housing survey conducted by TDBC did not demonstrate a high need for more affordable housing, the survey did not cover small open market housing, and the response rate was low. There are people known locally in need of both affordable and open market housing. Housing is generally getting bigger with a constant flow of planning applications for extensions to existing properties.*

Could the new affordable housing end up on the open market? *AL advised that affordable housing is proposed in the application and if approved such housing would have to be built accordingly. It would be unlikely for TDBC to not require these homes as there is a shortage of affordable housing.*

Will further housing be built on the remaining part of the field? *The second half of the field would remain in ownership by the current owner. It was acknowledged that the Village Plan is out of date and there is a need to refresh it.*

Why are there more houses on Plan D than on the original 3 plans? *The plans were altered following the consultation to allow for more bungalows and smaller houses as well as a larger buffer zone.*

Blocking of views from current housing. *AL advised that all concerns were taken on board and considered following the consultation to produce the current plan which is intended as the best compromise for all.*

(2 members of public leave)

(DF arrives)

Who will maintain the buffer zone? *AL advised that there are 2 options:*

- 1. The allotments committee will be offered the freehold to the allotments land, and the PC will be offered the freehold to the buffer zone at no charge.*
- 2. Maintenance will be carried out by a management company and funded via contributions from the new householders.*

(3 public leave)

Meeting opens

Apologies for absence – David Fothergill (County Councillor) to arrive later.

139. Declarations of Interest and dispensations

SS declared an interest in planning applications 36/18/0047 (The Recreation Ground) and 36/18/0048 (Land adjacent to Willey Road) and advised that she would abstain from the vote.

(HV leaves)

GG advised that he was mistakenly listed as the applicant on application 36/18/0047 (The Recreation Ground). The applicant is the Playing Field Management Committee and GG therefore had no conflict of interest.

GG advised that he would abstain from voting if there is financial discussion re Heart of the Village.

JH declared an interest in applications 36/18/0045 and 36/18/0050 (Huntham Farm).

(HV returns)

140. Minutes of previous meeting - The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 12th November were agreed by all to be accurate, and were signed by the Chairman.

141. Planning

36/18/0048 Land adjacent to Willey Road – Erection of 34 dwellings (7 bungalows and 27 houses) with associated works including drainage, landscaping and highway works. Councillors discussed all comments that had been made by the public with particular reference to the need to make a decision that would be good for the community as a whole, and the long term viability of the village.

PS asked for clarification on how much of the facilities on the playing field would be delivered and when. AL advised that all of the playing field facilities would be provided before the housing development building begins.

The planning envelope was discussed and the frustration that TDBC have refused otherwise suitable applications solely on the grounds that they lay outside. It was acknowledged that the PC had sought other land for development with no land owners coming forward.

DH advised that when this application is considered at the TDBC planning meeting the comment from the PC only counts as 1 point. Villagers are advised to make their comments for or against the development to TDBC.

The PC voted in favour of the housing development (7 for, 1 against, 1 abstained). The following response was agreed:

We support this application because it is agreed Parish Council policy that the housing stock in Stoke St Gregory has become increasingly skewed in the direction of larger and more expensive properties. We have been made aware of a strong demand locally for smaller and more affordable houses, both as starter homes and for downsizing. We are also conscious of the need to support services in the village, particularly the school, the shop and the pubs, and we feel that a moderate increase in population is necessary to make the community more viable.

(15 members of public leave)

Extension of the envelope boundary was discussed. PS advised that if the development takes place the boundary will be reviewed.

36/18/0037 Land adjacent to Leeswood - TDBC: Refusal 9-11-2018

36/18/0038 5 Church Close - TDBC: Conditional approval 12-11-2018

36/18/0042 The Cottage Meare Green – Erection of a two storey side extension and raising of roof.

The PC agreed to make no comment on this application.

36/18/0043 Crossways Farm, Slough Lane – Replacement of agricultural buildings with the erection of 2 dwellings with associated works.

The following comment was agreed: We support this application because it will provide two smaller dwellings in a parish in which there is a strong demand for starter homes and houses to downsize to.

36/18/0045 Huntham Farm – Erection of a steel framed building to cover silage clamp.

The following comment was agreed: We support this application since it should have environmental benefit in reducing polluted water run-off, and will have no visual impact on the surrounding area.

36/18/0050 Huntham Farm – Erection of a steel framed building to form roof over silage clamp, Stage 2.

The following comment was agreed: We support this application since it should have environmental benefit in reducing polluted water run-off. Thought should be given to screening the high roof from the south.

36/18/0047 The Recreation Ground – Erection of replacement pavilion, equipment store and multi use games area and provision of car parking area.

The following comment was agreed: We support this application because it will solve many long-standing problems with the village playing field, and provide a very welcome improvement to the facilities available.

(6 members of public leave)

142. Online banking – The clerk advised that the card and reader have been received for viewing only.

Clerk to find out if signatories need to complete a process to enable their access to online banking.

143. Speed Indicator Device – consideration of purchase – The clerk advised that Burrowbridge do not plan to purchase a SID and that North Curry have approached Durston regarding possibility of renting their equipment.

AF to research options of flashing signs, and cost of maintenance etc.

144. Grit bin – consideration of purchase – Locations where a grit bin would be appropriate were discussed. Likely positions would be Griggs Hill (near the Baptist Chapel), Denman Hill, and Dark Lane.

AF to research prices of grit bins for next meeting.

145. Review on online PC communications policy – For next agenda.

146. Annual Parish Meeting speaker – For next agenda.

147. The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and mobile applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 – For next agenda.

148. Footpaths - SS advised that the slope leading to the steps onto the Playing Field is too steep/slippy. This is the responsibility of the Rights of Way Team. SS to report to SCC.

149. Highways – There are blocked drains on Meare Green, Willey Road, and between the top of Griggs Hill and the bend (towards North Curry).

AF to report blocked drains.

150. Allotments – GG advised that Jim Bowery is the new Chairman, Faye Shorley is the Secretary, and Cecil Boobier is Treasurer.

151. Playing Field –

Stoke Stampede – The notification of road closure in the centre of the village has been received (6th January 10:30 – 12:30).

152. The Heart of the Village – GG advised that a meeting recently took place and potential layouts within the Royal Oak are being planned.

(DF leaves)

153. Village website – Website hosting and domain name renewals – Hosting is up for renewal in March and this will probably transfer to Teapot Creative. Release of the domain name is to be arranged. NS advised that CCS have requested that information be posted on village websites, however not all is relevant to SSG.

NS to put a link on the website to the village agent information.

154. Broadband – Nothing to report.

155. Flood

SRA Flood Consultation (Closes 21-12-18) – This consultation is aimed at individuals rather than Parish Councils. Information and a link to the survey is on the village website.

Piping of drainage ditch on Meare Green – AF advised that work to pipe and in-fill a drainage ditch behind Reneath without consent was stopped today by the SCC flood team.

(GG leaves)

156. Consultations and surveys

SCC Rights of Way Team – Parish Paths Consultation (Closes 31-1-18. Circulated 19-11-18)

NS to ask the Footpaths Officer for his input on this survey.

(GG returns)

157. Police issues – No issues raised.

158. Financial Matters

Authorisation of cheques

1025 G Wagen James – Strim, mow burial ground (Oct 2018) £33.00

Standing order

1-1-2019 R. Goodchild – Clerk's salary for December 2018 £317.63

It was agreed that the above cheques be signed and payments be made.

Received

None received

Other financial items

Bank reconciliation to end of October 2018 – Checked by DH

Request received for donation to Citizens Advice Bureau Taunton (Circulated 8-11-18) –

It was agreed that a donation of £100 be made.

Request received for donation to SSG Friends of School (Circulated 4-12-18) –

Councillors suggested that Friends of School make suggestions of specific items that they would like to purchase for the school. The PC would be receptive to considering making a purchase and donating this to the school.

The clerk to relay the PC's suggestion back to FOS.

Donation to Reeves Feast – It was agreed that a donation of £25 be made.

159. Precept planning and plans for future projects – The draft budget payments sheet previously circulated by the clerk was amended and the amount to be requested as precept for the year 2019/20 was agreed at £14,062.

Clerk to submit the precept request form to TDBC.

160. Pending / Feedback from meetings – This item to be removed from the agenda.

161. Other items for discussion

Clerk Magazine – PC response re planning application process – NS advised that he had received a reply thanking the PC for their response.

Loose sheep on Meare Green – Councillors questioned whether there should be a system for identifying loose livestock. Possibly a future agenda item.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10:30 pm.

The next meeting will be held on Monday 14th January 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 3rd January if possible.