

# **STOKE ST GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

Held in the Williams Hall at 7.30pm on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2019

**Present** – Nick Sloan (Chairman), Graham Glead (Vice Chairman,) Sara Sollis, Ann Finn, David House, Peter House, John Hembrow, Phil Stone (District Councillor) David Fothergill (County Councillor)

**In Attendance** – 17 Members of the public.

**Apologies** – Heather Venn, Glynn Banks, Sam Smith, Neil Sollis, Karen Upshall, Bill Coombes, Tina Stodgell

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018** – The minutes were agreed by all and signed by the chairman.

**Chairman Report** – There have been no changes to the PC Members; Rebecca Goodchild will be standing down from her role as Clerk in May. NS thanked RG for all her hard work and commitment over the past 7 years and he and the PC wish her all the best for the future. Out of 3 exceptional candidates for the role, Kelly de Silva was appointed as the new Clerk commencing from the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2019.

NS thanked each member of the PC individually for their commitment and hard work over the past 12 months and for their attendance to PC meetings. He wished HV a speedy recovery and thanked Phil Stone and David Fothergill for their conscientious attendance at PC meetings.

There are only 8 candidates for 9 roles on the PC with Glynn Banks standing down, so there will be no elections this year, the PC will be looking to co-opt a ninth parish councillor in May. NS will be standing down as Chairman in May, so a new Chairman will be appointed

NS reports on some of the regular low-level issues that have arisen repeatedly over the last 12 months, such as road flooding, farm traffic and included a brief breakdown of planning applications submitted. Since January 2014 there have been 39 house enlargements, 14 changes of use to residential, 21 agricultural buildings, 1 application for a small house to be built - which was refused by TDBC - and the Willey Road housing development, which is currently under consideration by the planning department.

NS asked if anyone who knew of anyone looking to reside or work within the village and had any input to contact him.

The Huntham Lane signpost situated opposite Meare Green Farm was significantly damaged recently, there has been speculation over who may have been responsible, and it would be appreciated if that person came forward to face their responsibility and offer to replace the sign.

The new SSG website is up and running for over a year. All PC documents and information brought to the attention of NS and GG is available on there, however it is felt it is not being utilised to its full potential, so any feedback would be appreciated.

## **Talk by candidates who will be standing for election as District councillor in May.**

Three of the four candidates that are standing for the North Curry and Ruishton ward addressed the APM attendees with an insight into their background and manifesto for the impending elections on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019

**Sue Buller – Liberal Democrats**

**Debbie House – Conservative & Unionist Party**

**Phil Stone – Liberal Democrats**

**Bill Coombes – Conservative & Unionist party** (unable to attend and apology received)

### **Village Hall Report**

GG reported that 2018 had been a successful year for the village hall for both new activities and occasional users. Bookings are strong and the new booking system is working well for the community asset. The trustees are stable, with Ann Merritt stepping down and Athena Dare replacing her. GG thanked Ann for her services.

Financially, the hall is in good health. Solar panels turnover £4k per annum and coupled with a legacy donation this has allowed for some investment to be made such as replacing fencing, a flagpole, internet - controlled heating, improvements on decor, pathway lighting and curbs highlighted. GG thanked trustees and individual members for their continued support.

### **Playing Field Report**

GG presents on behalf of Neil Sollis (unable to attend and apology received)

A considerable amount has been achieved, but there is still a considerable amount to be done. The pavilion is in a poor state of repair and funds have not been generated for the works required. The current application is on the back of the Willey Road housing development that is being considered at present. After a winter of varying weather conditions, the plumbing urgently needed replacing in a building that is already 120 years old. There has also been a new bench installed and fencing erected in the playing fields.

The cricket team have been promoted, the tennis club is going well and events such as the African festival, fete, village bonfire and armistice commemoration events have all been well received.

The Stoke stampede has proven to be a very special major event generating £4k with its continued growth and success.

### **Head Teacher Report-** presented by Liz Moorsom

LM reports that after her first year in the role of headteacher there are 89 children on the school roll, with a network of 4 teachers, support staff and governors. The school is currently over- subscribed.

The school's last OFSTED report stipulated that improvements were required, and all have been working hard together to achieve this by maintaining good progress for all children, extending and enriching the curriculum and strengthening the school's links with the local community.

The school has played a part in a series of successful events including egg shackling, egg decorating, a French concert and French lessons, services in the church and remembrance events within the village, (LM thanks Sue Hembrow for her part) with science and sports weeks planned for the coming weeks.

LM expresses that space is an issue and expansion may be required in the future.

NS thanks LM, with assurance that the PC would support the school with expansion, should it be required.

### **Heart of the Village Report**

GG presents on behalf of Sam Smith (unable to attend and apology received)

The village is in need of a vibrant social hub. With the possible closure of the local pubs and village shop, we are left with the 'last pub in the village scenario'.

Bursary support from the Plunkett foundation was made available on the back of the survey and the business plans are being compiled, for the Royal Oak to be acquired as a community shop/pub/café.

Shares for the enterprise would be available at £25 per share with a minimum of 4 shares. The announcement that the Village Store would cease to trade by the end of the year adds further urgency to pushing ahead with the HOTV project. GG expresses that the specific skills required, as well as the energy and momentum to make this happen are not underestimated. The recent HOTV meeting was successful and overall support for the community enterprise was good.

GG thanked Ian and Karen Upshall for their continued work and commitment with the running of The Village Store over the past 8 years.

### **Reports from village organisations**

Written reports from other village organisations were made available for people to read.

### **Any other matters for discussion**

NS reports that the PC accounts were not available due to annual leave but would be published on the website in the immediate future.

A member of the public raised the issue of the current state of disrepair of the village footpaths and stiles. They expressed that the pathways were a vital asset for the access to SSG and that he has reported a list of issues that have not been remedied. He uses the example of footpath T2510 - 10 on which 11 stiles have issues. These have not been rectified and he asked for investigation and investment.

NS responds that it is an ongoing issue on the agenda and the PC will be addressing the issue in the upcoming PC meetings and that the comments have been noted.

A member of the public thanked NS for his time chairing the parish council and for all the work he has done within the parish.

NS thanked all for attending this meeting.

Wine and chat completed the meeting which concluded at 9.10pm