

STRATTON PARISH COUNCIL

Official Minutes of the Annual Meeting of
Stratton Parish Council
held on 16th May 2017 at Stratton Village Hall

Present:

Cllr A Aylott, Cllr C Hobbs, Cllr P Hallett, Cllr H Richardson, Cllr A Wheeler,
D/Cllr T Yarker, and 3 members of the Public.

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all attendees

1/17. Apologies

Apologies received from C/Cllr J Haynes and D/Cllr F Horsington

2/17. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

D/Cllr T Yarker took the Chair for the election of a new Chairman.

Cllr A Aylott was proposed by Cllr C Hobbs and seconded by Cllr P Hallett, with unanimous backing by all Councillors.

Chairman called for the proposal of a Vice-Chairman. Cllr C Hobbs proposed by Cllr A Wheeler and seconded by Cllr P Hallett, with unanimous backing by all Councillors.

3/17. Public Participation

D/Cllr T Yarker reported on the Local Government review occurring in Dorset. The Secretary of State had asked the Councils to hold further discussions to reach agreement on their future. Matters now delayed due to the requirement to hold County Council elections and the forthcoming General Election. No clear position likely to be known until the Autumn.

4/17. Acceptance of National Legislation and Local Conditions

Chairman outlined the basic legislation which the Parish Council had already adopted and those local conditions and policies it held. He reminded Councillors that these were the bones of how the Parish Council operated. All Councillors agreed and reaffirmed their intent to follow the legislation and local conditions.

5/17. Declarations of Interest

Chairman reminded the Council of the need for Councillors to declare if they had any interest in any of the items to be discussed in the agenda which had not already been entered in the members Register of Interests. No declarations made.

6/17. Parish Councillor - Resignation

It was reported that Cllr Peter Jackson had submitted his resignation. Thanks were given to Peter for all his work over the past two years, especially with regard to the Adventure Play Area. Cllr C Hobbs confirmed that WDDC had been informed and the appropriate form regarding a vacant position was being forwarded.

7/17. Co-option

It was confirmed that no one had come forward to fill the existing vacant Councillor post within the Council. In view that there were now two vacancies, a further appeal would be circulated requesting that anyone interested in becoming a Parish Councillor should put their name forward to the Council. It was hoped that someone from Ash Hill would come forward to represent that part of the Parish.

8/17. Specific Duties of Councillors

A list of the specific duties of Councillors was reviewed for the new financial year, and the following duties were agreed:

Social Care	–	Cllr C Hobbs
DAPTC	–	Cllr A Aylott
Children’s Playgrounds	–	Cllr P Hallett
Village Hall committee	–	Cllr P Hallett
Footpaths and Rights of Way	–	t.b.a.
Highways	–	t.b.a.
Trees	–	t.b.a.
Transport	–	Cllr H Richardson
Notice Boards	–	Cllr P Hallett
Crime Prevention	–	Cllr C Hobbs
Housing	–	t.b.a.
Finance	–	Cllr A Aylott
Communications	–	Cllr C Hobbs
Maintenance	–	Cllr A Aylott
Allotments	–	Cllr A Wheeler

As the Council is two Councillors short it was agreed that those areas marked as t.b.a. would be covered by all Councillors at present.

9/17. Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 16th March 2017

The Chairman asked if there were any reasons why the minutes of the meeting of 16th March 2017 should not be signed as a true record. No matters raised, Chairman duly signed and dated the minutes.

10/17. Matters Arising

- a.) Item 96/16b, 80/16b, 61/16d & 44/16f. Wrackleford Auxiliaries – Chairman confirmed that the memorial had now been built on the Village Green, and that the unveiling ceremony was due this coming Saturday. Members of the public were invited to attend.
- b.) Item 99/16. Speed of Traffic Update. Confirmed that the Traffic Sub Group had had no time to discuss or agree any action on the survey results received. This work still to be done.
- c.) Item 100/16a. Dead Trees – Playing Field. Confirmed that there had been no time to take up the matter of dead trees with Wrackleford Farms Ltd. This still to be done.

11/17. Vacancy for Parish Clerk

Cllr C Hobbs confirmed that one application had been received for the position of Parish Clerk. An interview had taken place with three Councillors present, and agreement reached to appoint Mr Chris Boulton as Parish Clerk as from the 1st June 2017.

12/17. Request for a Memorial on the Village Green

Cllr C Hobbs stated that a request had been received from the family of a long-standing Stratton resident to

put a memorial on the village green. This followed the unfortunate death of Mr Ron Sawyer last year. Options had been discussed with the family on what type of memorial. A discussion was held by Councillors and it was eventually felt that it would be more appropriate if a public bench was provided. Chairman confirmed that one of the existing benches was coming to the end of its life, and this fact had been discussed with the original provider, who had agreed that their bench could be removed. Agreed that this location could be used for the installation of the new bench. Cllr C Hobbs to contact the family and confirm matters.

13/17. Finance

- a) Annual Governance Statement - The Annual Governance Statement as contained in Section 1 of the Annual Return for Smaller Authorities for the year ended 31 March 2017 was read to Councillors who all agreed that a 'Yes' answer should be made to all statement questions numbers 1 to 8, and that that question 9 was 'Not Applicable'.
- b) Accounting Statements - The Accounting Statements as contained in Section 2 of the Annual Return for Smaller Authorities for the year ended 31 March 2017 was discussed by Councillors. It was agreed that the figures entered in this section were a correct and true record of the Council's financial position for the year. Question 11 to show a 'No' entry.
- c) Income and Expenditure. Details of recent income received and expenditure made was reported.

Accounts to 31st March 2017

Monies in the Village Green account cannot be used for any other purpose

Account	Parish £	V/Green £	Parish Plan £	VAT £	Balance £
Balance b/f	8,373.99	34,154.06	-70.81	2,874.49	39,582.75
Receipts	-500.00	773.60			273.60
Payments	126.24	181.80	271.25	77.36	656.65
Balance c/f	7,747.75	34,745.86	-342.06	2,951.85	39,199.70

PAYMENTS IN

National Savings & Investments - Interest	273.60
Virement to Village Green Account	500.00
Virement from Parish Account	-500.00
TOTAL	£ 273.60

PAYMENTS OUT

Stratton Village Hall - Hire	45.00
Clerk's Salary	131.12
DCC - Speed Survey	300.00
Correction of entry of 1 August 2016	55.00
Cheque from 2015/16 never cashed - Reversed	-50.00
VAT Adjustment	-2.00
VAT Adjustment	2.00
Wessex Grounds Services - March	152.16
Clerk's Expenses/Poster Campaign	23.37
TOTAL	£ 656.65

Accounts (1 April) to 16th May 2017

Monies in the Village Green account cannot be used for any other purpose

Account	Parish £	V/Green £	Parish Plan £	VAT £	Balance £
Balance b/f	7,747.75	34,745.86	-342.06	2,951.85	39,199.70
Receipts	2,400.00	900.00	1,000.00		4,300.00
Payments	675.69	306.26	850.00	160.46	1,992.41
Balance c/f	9,472.06	35,339.60	-192.06	3,112.31	41,507.29

PAYMENTS IN

Precept – WDDC – First Tranche		4,300.00
TOTAL	£	4,300.00

PAYMENTS OUT

DAPTC – Annual Conference		60.00
Dorset Waste Partnership - March		11.96
Savills – Lease Agreement Fee		720.00
Wrackleford Farms Ltd – Allotment Rent		250.00
Microsoft Office - Software		87.54
Zurich Municipal – Insurance		707.71
Wessex Ground Services - April		155.20
TOTAL	£	1,992.41

- d) Budget Position - The final budget monitoring position for 2016/2017 was circulated. The position for the current year was also reported. No known variations were highlighted. The Internal Audit of the previous year's financial activities has been arranged and will be carried out shortly.
- e) Review of Asset Register - A review was carried out of the Asset Register. The new Adventure Play Equipment has now been included on the Register following its completion last Autumn. All assets have been updated with the current insurance value.
- f) Review of Risk Assessment - A review was carried out of the Risk Assessment form held by the Council. Two new areas have been included to represent current areas of concern – Equality Policy and Safeguarding Policy. Councillors agreed that all other areas were satisfactory and did not require alteration.
- g) Signatory changes to Accounts - Following changes to Councillors it was necessary to change signatories to the Lloyds Bank Current Account. Cllr A Wheeler to become a signatory, with Cllr P Jackson being deleted. Address for future bank statements to be changed to the new Parish Clerk's address. Signatures to the National Savings Investment Account also to be changed with Cllr A Aylott becoming a signatory, while Cllr G Slade is deleted. Address for the NSI Account also to be changed.

14/17. Adventure Play Area

- a) A review was held of the finances, both income and expenditure of the Adventure Play Area. As at the 31 March it was noted that there was a deficit of funds to the extent of £3,008.07. Chairman confirmed that this amount had already been met from Parish funds, and was why the Parish Plan reserve was showing a minus position. It had previously been discussed and agreed that any deficit was to be met by a mixture of future fund raising and by contributions from the Parish precept. An amount of £500 had already been paid into the Parish Plan Reserve from the 2017/18 precept. After discussion it was agreed that the virement of a further £500 be made from the Parish account balances. A small control account would be set up to monitor and control the clearing of the deficit.

- b) It was confirmed by the Chairman that problems had been encountered with the new swings, and that two retaining bolts had become loose. The Supplier had been contacted and a visit made by their Maintenance Officer. The matter had then been referred back to the actual manufacturer of the equipment. The swings at present had been removed for safety reasons. The last information received was that the whole top wooden strut had to be replaced on this piece of equipment. No date was yet known when this work would be carried out.

15/17. Allotments

- a) Chairman confirmed that since the last meeting the Lease Agreement had been agreed with Savills who were working on behalf of Wrackleford Farms Ltd, and following confirmation with Councillors, that the Lease Agreement had been signed by the Chairman and the contract enacted as from the 1 April 2017. An invoice for the first years rent had been received and paid to Wrackleford Farms Ltd. As had the Lease Arrangement fee to Savill's.
- b) A Letter of Agreement had now been written and agreed with the Stratton (Dorset) Allotment Society on the day to day responsibilities of the S(D)AS. The meeting was held, while the Letter of Agreement was officially signed by Cllr. A Aylott on behalf of the Parish Council and Mr Mike Jury, Chairman of the Stratton (Dorset) Allotment Society.

16/17. Parish Plan – Review of Initiatives

Cllr A Wheeler confirmed that he had now carried out a review of all the initiatives contained in the 2015 Parish Plan. Details were circulated to Councillors on these initiatives. A general discussion took place on various findings, and the expressions of thought that Cllr Wheeler had received from members of the public when he investigated matters. Comments in some cases went further than the original proposed initiatives. It was accepted by Councillors that not every initiative would result in a 100% satisfaction position. As some matters were not achievable or would never satisfy each and every person. Finally agreed that all Councillors would review the list, and pass comment to Cllr Wheeler on any initiative if it was felt that the current position was different to that listed. Any initiatives not yet acted upon would then be discussed at the next Parish meeting.

17/17. General Maintenance

- a) Review of Maintenance Activities - The list of maintenance issues had been updated with new target dates. Cllr P Hallett to review the list to check whether new targets were appropriate. Confirmed that initial work on the bus shelter at Manor Close had been done, and that the central Notice Boards had so far had two coats of Cuprinol. At present work on the Bus Shelter by the Almshouses would come later in the year rather than sooner, as previously planned.
- b) Notice Boards – It was confirmed that since the last meeting that a copy of the resident's Land Registry plan of property owned had been received. Details had also been fully checked with the Highways Authority, Dorset County Council who have confirmed their interest in the lay-by part of the resident's property as it was registered under the Highways Act 1980, Section 36 (6) as being on 'a list of streets within their area which are highways maintainable at public expense'. Chairman confirmed that a further meeting had been held with the residents, to discuss their previous request to remove all of the Notice Boards. A new position was being suggested by the residents in that following the removal of one of the three Notice Boards for repair, that they were content for the two remaining Notice Boards to remain in place on their property, as long as the third Notice Board was not returned. After discussion Councillors felt that this position was acceptable and agreed not to replace the third Notice Board, or to take any further action under powers it held in legislation. The Council would also ensure that out of date adverts, were cleared down on a more regular basis. Also, any future maintenance would only take place once the resident had been informed of the timing for the work to be carried out.

18/17. Planning Matters – Process Chart

Cllr H Richardson gave a review of the new process that Parish Councils had to follow to view and make comment on planning applications with W.D.D.C. Although the Council held a .gov e-mail address, it was not certain whether this was a correct e-mail address or whether the Council had to purchase another .gov e-mail address. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr C Hobbs and Cllr H Richardson would take the matter up when the new Parish Clerk was in post, to check and confirm the correct access point. The process that Councillors had to follow would then be completed.

19/17. Highways

The Chairman confirmed that discussions had recently taken place with Highways Officers on several minor points.

- a) White Lines and No Entry Sign - That the exit to the new allotments required greater safety. Highways confirmed that all the white line road markings at this junction required renewal, and that a No Entry sign would be erected on a post opposite the allotment exit point to ensure that vehicles turned left and not right on exiting the allotments. Work on the white lines and erection of the No Entry sign has now been carried out.
- b) Trees in The Square – Discussion held on tidying up the two trees in The Square, as since they had been planted no care or pruning had taken place, both trees were now misshapen and one had buddleia growing from its base. Highways have confirmed that following an internal discussion with the County Trees Officer, that the Parish Council could carry out sensitive pruning and re-shaping of the trees if it wished.
- c) Grassed Area in The Square – Discussion held on the possibility of removing the small grassed area by the Boules Court, as it rarely received maintenance and attracted cat litter and occasionally dog mess. Highways to provide a price for removing the grass/turf and replacing with a tree guard and tarmac. Subsequent price quoted (of £2,500 plus) was felt to be excessive, although it was felt that the Village Hall Committee and Boules Club would be likely to assist with donations. Further discussion to be held with Highways to see if the price can be reduced with some of the work being done by the Parish.

20/17. Correspondence

Correspondence had been received of a planned ‘Beacons of Light’ tribute to be held on 11 November 2018 as the Nation’s Tribute of the 100 year’s remembrance of the ending of the First World War. Councillors agreed that the Parish should be involved with this Tribute. Matters to be discussed at future meetings. An initial contact will be made with Mr Thomas Pope of Wrackelford Farms Ltd to see if the Farm would be willing to take part as they have on previous similar events.

21/17. Items for next Agenda

Parish Plan - Action review and Planning Process

22/17. Public Participation

Comment made that the decision to reduce the number of Notice Boards in the central part of the Village would be accepted by residents, and that it was good to see that the Parish Council and householder had met to discuss and had come to a point of mutual agreement.

23/17. Date of next Meeting

The date for the next meeting was to be Tuesday 18th July 2017 at 7:00pm.

The meeting closed at 21.30pm.