

## Stratton Parish Council

Official Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Stratton Parish Council held on 19th March 2019 at the Stratton Village Hall

### **Present**

Cllrs A Aylott, C. Hobbs, G Hollinshead, A. Wheeler, D/Cllr F Horsington and one member of the public.

### **Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Ordinary Meeting.

### **Apologies**

Cllr P Hallett, C/Cllr J Hayes. D/Cllr T Yarker and Clerk Mr C Boulton.

### **79/18 Public Participation**

#### West Dorset District Council/New County Authority Update

D/Cllr F Horsington confirmed that the new Dorset Council has set a budget, and that council tax rates had been harmonised across the Dorset Council area. 82 new unitary councillors are due to be elected on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May. For planning purposes, area groupings will be created, with Stratton likely to be included in a group which would probably meet at Sturminster Newton.

#### Public Input

Report on behalf of the Heart of Stratton defibrillator group – official launch of the defibrillator took place on the 2 February, with 50 villagers present. The first awareness session on using the equipment took place on the 20<sup>th</sup> February, with 39 people in attendance. Future awareness sessions are being planned for groups of 6 or 7 people at a time.

A number of potholes opposite The Rise have been reported by Colin Jackson on the Highways Report line. These have been dealt with, although heavy rain has caused some of the new tarmac to be washed away. A follow up visit is to be made by Highways.

Wreath stand - a request was made for consideration as to whether additional and different types of fixing could be put on the railings to cater for different types of remembrance contributions.

Notice Boards – a request was made for rules and requirements for the use of the noticeboards by the public to be posted on Noticeboards and/or on the Parish Council website.

Dorset Best Kept Village. The question was asked as to whether Stratton would be entering the Best Kept Village competition. This item was discussed later in the Meeting – Minute 85/18 (H).

As this was the last meeting that could be attended by the County Councillor and District Councillors, The Chairman and Councillors all gave a vote of thanks for the help and assistance the County Councillor and District Councillors had given over the years. As D/Cllr Fred Horsington was not seeking election to the new Dorset Council, Councillors also wished him a happy retirement from public service.

### **80/18 Code of Conduct/ Declaration of Interest**

Chairman reminded Councillors of the need to declare any interest in any of the items to be discussed in the agenda which had not already been entered in the Member's Register of Interests. There were no declarations.

### **81/18 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting and Extraordinary Meeting of Stratton Parish Council**

Councillors agreed the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 15th January 2019 and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

**82/18 Finance**

## A) Income and Expenditure

Details of income received and expenditure made since the previous meeting was circulated:

**Accounts to 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

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

| Account     | Parish    | V/Green   | Parish Plan | VAT    | Balance   |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|--------|-----------|
| Balance b/f | 13,919.44 | 33,994.68 | 2,296.01    | 661.95 | 49,548.18 |
| Receipts    | -250.00   | 500.00    | 0.00        | 0.00   | 250.00    |
| Payments    | 1,101.76  | 420.00    | 440.00      | 206.29 | 2,168.05  |
| Balance c/f | 12,567.68 | 34,074.68 | 1,856.01    | 868.24 | 47,630.13 |

## Receipts

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| WDDC War Memorial Grant                                  | 250.00  |
| Maintenance – additional work (PG – to VG Account)       | 500.00  |
| Maintenance – additional work (PG – from Parish Account) | -500.00 |

## Total

250.00

## Payments

Parish

|                                       |        |
|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Poop Scoop Dispenser                  | 111.11 |
| Laptop Computer                       | 766.64 |
| Parish Clerk Salary – Jan/Mar Quarter | 370.30 |

Village Green

|                                      |        |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Village Green Maintenance (February) | 210.00 |
| Village Green Maintenance (March)    | 210.00 |

Parish Plan

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Playing field tree survey and report                 | 360.00 |
| Playing field - trim overgrown area by boundary wall | 140.00 |

## Total

2,168.05

## B) Budget Monitoring

The final budget monitoring position for the financial year was reviewed and areas where income and expenditure were still expected to occur were discussed and agreed.

## C) Virement

After discussion it was agreed that a virement of funds was required to ensure that the Village Green account did not incur a deficit on the year. Chairman confirmed that the previously agreed amount of £500 (from Planning Gain funds) for additional maintenance works carried out had now been transferred from the Parish account to the Village Green account. Although income was still due for interest on the National Savings account, there was a likely deficit of about £650 > £670. Councillors agreed that as several budgets within the Parish Account would be underused that an amount of £680 be vired from the Parish account to the Village Green account.

**83/18 Highways**

A) Grimstone A37 – traffic speed

Additional road markings had not yet been done. Dorset Highways to be contacted again.

B) Public Footpath Sign – Sawyers Lane. Work now completed and the old post now re-installed, albeit at a lower height than previously.

**84/18 General Maintenance**

A) Current maintenance issues

A review was held of the Maintenance Schedule, with new dates for completion of some items included. Councillors agreed that several long-standing issues needed to be resolved, even if this meant the Council would need to pay for professional services to complete them.

B) Chairman confirmed that the Council had set up and agreed contracts for next year's maintenance of the Village Green and Playing Field.

C) Tree Report - Playing Field

Chairman confirmed that the tree report had now been posted on the Parish website. A letter has been sent to the Tree surgeon requesting the potential cost of remedial work and the best time to carry it out where the cutting down of trees was required. A reply is still awaited. Initial work on clearing the undergrowth on the top ledge had now been carried out as previously promised. Until a clear action plan can be put together it was not possible to fully reply to the residents in Church View. A letter of action taken to date would be sent to them.

D) Dog Fouling and Waste Bin by the Almshouses

New dog bag dispenser has been purchased and installed on the Bus Shelter. Locating the existing waste bin to the opposite side of the Bus shelter still to take place.

**85/18 Correspondence**

A) Church curtilage trees. Confirmed that an E-mail from residents in Bull Close had been received requesting that the trees outside the church be reduced in height. The E-mail had been forwarded to Wrackleford Estates as owners of the trees. A reply had been received from Wrackleford Estates saying residents could reduce the height of the trees as long as they dealt with the Tree Preservation Orders on the trees and paid for any works themselves.

B) Dirt Jumps on the playing field. A request had come from a young resident in the village that the dirt jumps on the playing field be re-introduced. Chairman confirmed that discussions had taken place with the young resident and his parents, outlining what had been agreed by previous Parish Councils. This allowed young residents to carry out ground works to alter the track or make jumps, as long as anything done was within the curtilage of the humps, and that no excess material was put on the rest of the playing field or caused a dangerous obstacle. After discussion Councillors agreed that the previous position was still acceptable, although there should be some parental control over any 'digging' or 'alterations' carried out. Markers or a white line would be put around the bumps to clearly show the boundaries involved. If Councillors felt that something dangerous to riders or general public occurred then this permission would be rescinded.

C) Citizens Advice for Dorchester, Sherborne & District & North Dorset Annual Report had been received and circulated to Councillors.

D) Information on how to become a Councillor had been received from the Electoral Registrar and circulated to Councillors. Internet links to information and nomination forms have also been put on the Parish web site as well as being included in the latest edition of the Chalk Stream.

E) Chairman confirmed that a contract for the continued collection of waste from the playing field had been received from DWP.

F) Locks Lane – Trees. A request had come from Highways on who owned the trees and grass area at Lock Lane. Cllr Hobbs confirmed that after investigation this was found to be the Locks Lane Residents Association. Details of Highways concerns about a dangerous tree to be passed to the Locks Lane management committee for action.

G) Confirmation received that a ROSPA inspection of the Play-area would take place in May.

H) Dorset Best Kept Village. Information had been received and after discussion it was agreed by Councillors that Stratton would enter the competition this year. Clerk to arrange application. Colin Jackson offered to carry out an independent pre-event inspection based on the criteria detail received. Councillors thanked Colin Jackson for this offer.

### **86/18 Planning Gain Wishlist**

Chairman confirmed that all the objectives that Councillors had set in motion had been completed. It would be up to the new Parish Council to consider any new objectives.

### **87/18 Hannah Richardson Memorial Bench**

Contact had been made with the friends of Hannah and confirmed that a bench or picnic table could be put in Stratton. Current information is that, in the first instance, a bench will be placed in the grounds of County Hall subject to permission being granted by Dorset Council. The Parish Council accept this position but will happily assist if permission is not forthcoming, for the memorial to be sited in the parish.

### **88/18 Elections – May 2019**

It was confirmed that Stratton had taken the lead with the other three local Parishes of Bradford Peverell, Frampton and Sydling St Nicholas to put an article in the Chalk Stream in the hope of encouraging people to come forward and stand for election, as councillors, on the parish councils. Details and the article are also on the parish website and have been circulated by Stratton Active as well. The Parish Council has also organised an informal Open Session on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at the Village Hall between 14:00 and 16:00, when Councillors will be present to answer any questions from anyone interested in standing as a Parish Councillor.

### **89/18 New Computer**

A new laptop computer has been purchased. A Dell 15" screen, mid-range business laptop, with 4 years on site (next business day) support, together with a solid-state hard drive. The parish clerk has confirmed that the existing software held by the Council has already been transferred, together with all data, to the new laptop.

### **90/18 Items for the next Agenda**

Action Plan on Tree Report, Best Kept Village competition, General Maintenance – Policy.

### **91/18 Public Participation**

A comment was made about Councillors agreeing potential alteration of the dirt jumps on the playing field.

A question was raised about funds being moved into the Village Green account. The Chairman confirmed this was not to purposely increase the capital balance, but to meet expenditure where it appeared that such expenditure could not be met without reducing the capital amount held in the account. The Finance Policy protects the Village Green capital. In an ideal situation, the Parish should be increasing the capital amount, year on year, to cover inflation. The current budget position does not permit this and the best that can be achieved is to maintain a balanced position.

### **Date of the next Meeting**

Annual Parish Meeting – Tuesday 14th May 2019 at 7pm

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council – Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019 (following Annual Parish Meeting)

Meeting closed at 9.15 pm