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Stratton Parish Council
Official Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Stratton Parish Council held on
21st January 2020 at the Stratton Village Hall

Present

Cllrs A Aylott, C Hobbs, A. Wheeler, and ten members of the public.

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Ordinary Meeting of Stratton Parish Council.

Apologies

Apologies received from Dorset Council Cllr. David Taylor.

57/19 Public Participation

Mrs G. Slade made comment about the number of incidents which had occurred on the A37 road from the railway bridge up to the entrance of the village. Nine incidents since 2007, two road deaths in 2002, concern over speed of traffic, poor road surface, risk to users of the footpath. Mrs J Grocott made comment that it was felt that there should be a 30mph restriction from the railway bridge to the village entrance, a reduction of the speed limit, permanent speed signs, an extension of crash barriers alongside the road. Comments were made that a group of people were setting up an action group/working party to try and achieve these aims and wanted to have the support of the Parish Council. The group would be making formal representations to the Dorset Council, carry out a letter campaign, an e-mail campaign, involve the PCSO, Dorset Police, and make use of local and national press.

Mr S Wingfield-Digby made comment about the various entrances and exits from the A37 through Higher and Lower Wrackelford, and that the speed of traffic made it dangerous for vehicles trying to exit or enter the flow of traffic. He asked whether the speed limit on the road could be reduced.

58/19 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.

59/19 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Stratton Parish Council

Councillors agreed the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 19th November 2019.

60/19 Finance

A) Precept for Year 2020/2021

Chairman confirmed that the precept figure as agreed at the last meeting had been passed to the Rates Section, Dorset Council for introducing in 2020/21. (Minute 47/19 A) – 19th November 2019)

B) Income and Expenditure

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

Accounts to 21st January 2020

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

Account	Parish	V/Green	Parish Plan	VAT	Balance
Balance b/f	13,697.08	37,885.35	1,784.71	579.05	52,788.09
Receipts	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payments	670.65	200.00	00.00	000.00	912.32

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Balance c/f	13,026.43	37,685.35	1,784.71	620.72	51,875.77
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Receipts

Nil

Payments

Parish

Section 137 – 1 st Charminster Guides/Brownies	75.00
Section 137 – Stratton Allotment Society	100.00
Section 137 – Children’s Xmas Party	150.00
Section 137 – Stratton Youth Club	150.00
Section 137 – Stratton Boules Court	25.00
West Dorset Myeloma Group – Donation	50.00
Heart of the Community – Training (Planning Gain)	75.00
Paper, Postage & Parking – Expenses	17.32
Stratton Village Hall – September & November	30.00

Village Green

AG Tree Services – Hedge Trimming	240.00
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Parish Plan

Nil

Total

912.32

C) Budget Monitoring

The ongoing budget monitoring position for the current financial year was reviewed and accepted. Several budget headings were highlighted as likely to be underspent.

D) Section 137 Grants

Chairman confirmed that all Section 137 grants had been paid as agreed, and that letters of thanks had been received back from all but one group. (Minute 47/19 D) – 19th November 2019)

E) Banking Arrangements

Chairman confirmed that an application had been made for Councillors to receive a Direct Debit card for purchasing items on behalf of the Parish Council. Cards with appropriate pin numbers had been received and distributed to Councillors. (Minute 47/19 E) – 19th November 2019)

F) Vacancy - Parish Clerk

Cllr Hobbs confirmed that no applications had been received by the deadline date of 30th November 2019. Several people had been spoken to but no one had made an application. Agreed to repeat the advert on the Parish web site and in the Chalk Stream magazine. Details to again be passed to DAPTC who would circulate around the County. Cllr Hobbs to also look at the process of putting an advert in the Dorset Echo.

61/19 General Maintenance

A) Playing Field Skate Ramps area

Chairman confirmed that although a contractor had been instructed to do the work. No work had yet been done, it was accepted that the extreme wet conditions had delayed the work (Minute 23/19 D) – 16th July 2019, Minute 34/19 A) – 17th September 2019, and Minute 48/19 A) - 19th November 2019)

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B) Village Green Maintenance

Councillors discussed the current contract process and agreed to split the work into three areas instead of two. This to try and alleviate the problems faced this year through the injury to Kevin Kirk. Agreed that the Maintenance schedule of works required would be re-written into three sections and agreement be made at the next meeting on which contractors to contact.

62/19 Planning

An update on the following planning notices has been received:

WD/D/19/001942 – Langford Farm – Change of Use of Barn – Application approved 15 January 2020 by Dorset Council. Subject to conditions.

WD/D/19/001943 – Langford Farm – Alterations and conversion – Application approved 15 January 2020 by Dorset Council. Subject to conditions.

WD/D/19/003097 – Land Charminster west of Industrial Estate – 82 houses. Application just received from Dorset Council for Parish comment. Although not in Stratton Parish the land does border Stratton so comment can be made. Councillors to pass their comments to Chairman so that a response can be made.

Cllr Hobbs reported back on the BT application to remove public telephone booths. Position was not clear on the Dorset Council planning site. Comment made there that there was a split decision, but nobody knows what the split decision was. Cllr Wheeler understood that there was some national talk about making the 'red' telephone boxes Grade 2 listed. Cllr Hobbs to follow up.

63/19 Future Policy Changes/Areas of Improvements

A) The review of Maintenance works had been reviewed and as discussed would be split into three areas. This still to be finalised.

B) Need to start looking at making contact with the other Parish Councils within the Charminster St Marys Ward to see if co-operation would be beneficial in any way for the different parishes.

64/19 Wild Field Flower Meadow

Chairman confirmed that contact had been made with Mr Nick Page, Dorset Wildlife Trust and that he had as yet not taken a soil sample. He promised that this would be done once the land had dried out. So, no answer would be received before late Spring. (Minute 39/19 – 17th September 2019 and Minute 53/19 – 19th November 2019). Chairman thanked Mr M Jury for forwarding details of potential grants for planting wild flowers.

A general point was raised as to whether Councillors should consider and discuss whether a more ecological position be taken by planting additional trees on part of playing field, especially water tolerant willow. This to be discussed/considered at a future meeting.

65/19 Highways

A) Safety of A37 Road. Various discussions held on the previous comments made under Public Participation on the safety aspects of the A37. Councillors allowed members of the public to make further comments and express their views. Chairman confirmed that the Council had already made contact with Highways, and had expressed a strong desire to be involved with the feasibility study they plan to carry out. This desire had been acknowledged. The Parish Council fully supports the idea of carrying out a review of the safety of the A37 and that improvements be made to increase safety. The Parish Council however, wants to work with Highways to get the best result possible and not make fixed demands. Consideration has to be made of the position of the Dorset Council, as they are the sole provider of funds for any highway improvement. Chairman also pointed out that two other factors are involved – the completion of Stage 3 of the Dorchester to Grimstone Improvement to the Cycleway (which is

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funded by National Government grants), and the temporary work carried out by Wessex Water where their pipe is still situated above ground alongside the cycleway/pavement. It is likely that the Police would be involved to review traffic speed limits along the whole length of the A37 within Stratton parish.

- B) Pavement Parking. Cllr Wheeler reported that there was no law against parking on pavements, apart from in London. He felt however, that more and more parking on pavements was taking place in Stratton, and requested that people should act in a considerate manner and ensure that their vehicles do not cause obstructions to pedestrians. Equally people were parking across 'dropped kerbs' which was illegal, again people needed to be more considerate and not obstruct such areas. After discussion it was agreed that a general notice and request for considerate parking be put on the Parish Council web site.
- C) Road Safety. Cllr Wheeler reported that he was concerned about road safety within Stratton, he felt that there had been an increase in the number of children, especially younger children who were riding bicycles, skateboards, scooter's etc in public areas and were constantly going on and off of the roads without showing or taking care of the possibility of oncoming traffic. He was concerned that a road accident was likely to occur. Again, agreed after discussion that a general notice and request for parents to ensure that their children are fully aware of the potential danger of their actions, and for appropriate consideration of other road users be shown be put on the Parish Council web site.

66/19 Correspondence

Confirmed that all relevant information received by the Parish had been circulated to Councillors.

67/19 Items for the next Agenda

New Parish Clerk, Tree Report – review, Contracts for future maintenance.

68/19 Public Participation

Comment made on several issues. i) Mrs G Slade asked for conformation of what support the Parish Council would give with regards to the A37 safety. Chairman confirmed the previous comment that the Parish Council fully supported a review of safety and for improvements to be made, but would work with Highways.

ii) Mr C Jackson raised comment about the footpath from Locks Lane and across the railway line, saying that he had contacted Railtrack and they had arranged works to clear the pathway. Mr Jackson was thanked for this.

iii) Mr C Jackson raised a question as to whether the Parish Council felt that its communication with the public was adequate and that it needed to be constant. Councillors felt that information it had to pass on was not every day and infrequent, as such although timing was sometimes slower than desired it was doing as much as possible in line with the number of councillors and the current lack of a parish clerk,

iv) Mr M Jury asked whether the lack of response to the vacant parish clerk position was due to the restricted salary on offer. Chairman confirmed that the amount listed was the current recommended NALC scale for a parish the size of Stratton, and that no, if necessary, the Parish would increase the salary if it was found appropriate to do so.

v) Mrs G Slade made reference to the wild flowers on the playing field and whether this would restrict use of the area. Confirmed that only part of the playing field was being considered and that no there would no restrictions.

Date of the next Meeting

Ordinary Meeting – 17th March 2020 at 7pm

Meeting closed at 8.35 pm