

STRATTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chair A Aylott

Clerk D Northover

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 27th September 2022 at 7.00pm at Stratton Village Hall

Present:

Clrs A Aylott (Chairman), M Garner, C Hobbs, S Joslin and D Northover (Clerk) and eight members of public.

22-30 To acknowledge the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, the succession of King Charles III and the Royal Proclamation.

The Council acknowledged the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, the succession of King Charles III and the Royal Proclamation and observed a minute's silence, in thought.

To receive apologies of absence

No apologies for absence were received.

22-31 To receive declarations of interest on agenda items - None

22-32 To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 12th July 2022

Councillors agreed to the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting.

22-33 Public Participation

A resident asked for confirmation of the saplings to be delivered for the Queen's Canopy. There was concern that if one species was crab apple this could be poisonous to dogs. Also, what proportion of the playing field would the canopy take up and what its density would be. The Chairman confirmed which trees the Woodland Trust were supplying, crab apple was not one of the species. They would come with stakes and protective plastic casings to ensure they had the best start they could. The Chairman confirmed that the canopy would take up no more than a quarter of the field, being sited at its western end. Advice would be taken from a variety of sources to determine how best they should be planted.

Gill Slade asked where it was anticipated the new bench would be situated. The Chairman confirmed that no location had been determined but it should be close to the tennis court, but out of the way of any ground's maintenance needs. A plaque would be supplied as part of bench's order.

Gill Slade also intended to create a photograph archive of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations in the village, using what money remained from the sale of the Jubilee mugs. Councillors considered this a good idea.

The meeting was informed that Cllr Joslin (in a private capacity) was to arrange for two more quiz nights at the Saxon Arms as fundraising events. An item on the agenda later in the meeting would deal with the A37 Highway Safety issues raised by the interest group.

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22-34 Finance

a) To consider receipts and payments due to be paid or paid since the last meeting

To acknowledge the necessary payments made and monies received.

Accounts at 27th September 2022

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

Year to date totals

Account	Parish	V/Green	Parish Plan	VAT	Balance
Balance b/f 01/04/22	17,336.54	39,249.47	1,698.06	203.49	58,080.58
Receipts	10.00	2.19	0.00	0.00	12.19
Payments	85.37	487.50	0.00	59.50	632.37
Balance c/f	17,261.17	38,764.16	1,698.06	262.99	57,460.40

Receipts

Donation mugs - Cllrs Aylott and Hobbs	10.00
NS&I Final Interest	2.19

TOTAL

£ 12.19

Payments

(inc VAT)

Parish

Hire of Village Hall	85.37
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Village Green

Rick Healey - Replace bridge steps /broken slats	140.00
Rick Healey - Remove and replace rotten fence posts	50.00
AG Tree Services - cutting of village green hedge	357.00

TOTAL

£ 632.37

b) To receive the Budget Monitoring report

The budget monitoring report was received and noted.

c) Transfer of investment and Funds

The Chairman reported that the NSI account had been closed, with a sum of £20,000 from this now being invested in a 6-month bond with United Trust. This would provide in the region of ten times the interest the funds would have been earning had they remained in the previous account.

Councillors welcomed this.

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d) To publicise S137 grants to be considered for 2022-23

The ability to apply for funds under the Council's S137 grants scheme had now been published on the Council's website, in The Chalk Stream and on social media, with submissions to be made to the Clerk by 31 October 2022. It was reported that as to date no such requests had been received. The Chairman mentioned that a new Coffee Group had expressed an interest and would be advised to submit a request. Submissions could then be duly considered at the November meeting.

22-35 Planning – Updates on recently considered planning applications were provided: -

- P/FUL/2022/00090- 7a Furbers Paddock, Stratton – Change of Use - **Granted**
- P/HOU/2021/03195 -18 Dorchester Road, Grimstone – First Floor Extension - **Granted**
- P/FUL/2022/02153 – 24 Dorchester Road, Grimstone – Convert Barn – **Decision awaited**
- P/HOU/2022/03604 -15 Church View Stratton Dorset DT2 9WD - Erect raised decking with glass balustrade - **Granted**

22-36 To receive reports on General Maintenance

a) New Play equipment

An order had been placed for the provision and fitting of new play equipment – a double swing unit and the ride on horse. This would ensure the issues raised by the RoSPA report were satisfactorily resolved. A date for this work to be done had yet to be confirmed.

b) Maintenance requirements

The Chairman provided an update on the installation of new posts and hedge trimming on Village Green, and of the gully clearance around the Playing field.

c) Three Year Tree report

The tree report was in the process of being completed and would be with the Clerk soon. Notice was given to the condition of the Willow tree on the Playing Field and some of the trees around the green. These would invariably be picked up in the report.

22-37 Highways and Rights of Way

a) Highways Letter

Cllr Garner confirmed that a response had now been received for Dorset Council Highways to the Parish Council's concerns about the safety of the eastern approach to the village from the A37. Whilst recognising the concerns there were a series of reasons why Highways considered there to be little opportunity for any fundamental improvements - principally given the data on collisions with no reported injury statistics – as such it was not considered a safety issue comparative to other sites in Dorset. The conclusion drawn by the Road Safety Team was that there was not a significant enough risk to justify any further remedial works being considered. However, should circumstances change, it could be revisited.

Councillors recognised the reasoning for the response given and understood what limited prospects there were for any further safety improvements being made. Councillors appreciated the comprehensive response received from the Highway Officer.

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The Chairman reported that some separate safety enhancements had been made in that vicinity, in that eight trees had been partially felled next to the westbound carriageway to reduce the safety hazard there. Before the onset of winter, the ice road signs, and variable message signage should return for the village's use once more. Whilst flooding under the bridge was now better managed than previously, there was still a risk of this happening and effecting the condition of the highway in freezing weather. It is understood that the environment agency was in contact with the landowner in an attempt to get the height of the river bank reduced.

22-38 Correspondence

a) Defibrillator

As to arrangements for the defibrillator - how it should best be managed, the responsibilities it entailed and who by, and what arrangements should be put in place for its future management - the Chairman reported that following successful negotiations between the Defibrillator Group and the Parish Council, an accord had been reached on how the management of the defibrillator would be assumed and what responsibility there was for this. This was based on the issues raised in previous Council meetings and taking these into consideration to ensure the best way to address them all. A Memorandum of Understanding had been drafted - to the satisfaction of both parties. This provided for the current arrangement to be maintained - with the Group still assuming day to day control and responsibility for its management and maintenance, but with the Parish Council being the named party in the lease agreement with the South West Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust.

This accord was like that on which the Parish's allotments arrangements were based. The Parish Council would make payment of the lease for the next 4-year period on the basis that the Group would maintain its responsibility. The Voluntary Group would contribute towards the lease cost though their fundraising. However, should circumstances change and the Group disbanded, the Parish Council would not assume the day-to-day responsibilities, and its retention then could not be guaranteed.

The principle of the benefits of the defibrillator was accepted by all and it was recognised that it was in the interests of all that it was managed and maintained correctly - with the Council and the Group alike, pleased to see the beginning of a satisfactory resolution to the matter.

b) New bench

The provision and siting of the new bench in the playing field was discussed, with Gil Slade confirming it would be accessible to all and was sustainable. Where it was to be situated and how it would be used were discussed. She agreed to consult parents who would use it to ensure where it was located would be safe and convenient to them, whilst taking into account the views shared prior in the meeting by the Chairman. Councillors were happy with this – having seen what it would look like and details of the proposed order - and agreed that it should be purchased

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c) Red Telephone Box

Cllr Hobbs explained that the village's red telephone box had become a feature of the village for nearly 100 years and would hope that it could be retained in perpetuity. On that basis, she was proposing to pursue the opportunity to get it listed – as an historic asset. It remained illuminated and BT had agreed that it would be cleaned and painted, in any event. It still provided a practical benefit to the village, given that there could be issues with mobile coverage by some providers. The Council agreed that this should be pursued.

d) Queen's Canopy

Given the imminent arrival of the saplings from the Woodland Trust, discussion centred on when these would be delivered - between 31 October and 11 November - and the practicalities of how they would be planted, by whom, on what date and what space was required between each. Again, expert advice would be sought by the Council on what was most appropriate in terms of this. Three offers of help had been received with planting, and publicity would be stepped up to attract more volunteers. Councillors were appreciative of the offers already received.

22-39 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 8 November 2022 starting at 7.00 pm in the Village Hall.

This was the annual budget meeting setting the precept for 2023/24, other items for consideration would be: - an update on the defibrillator lease arrangements, overgrowth encroaching on the tennis courts, purchase of new garden bench, new play equipment.

22-40 Public Participation

Whilst there were no issues raised by the public on what they had heard at the meeting, Cllr Joslin raised some late questions and mentioned that from advice given to him, each sapling could require up to 50 litres of water fortnightly for the first 3 years to become well established. Discussion to be held about the practicalities of achieving this. He reaffirmed his suggestion for a woodland walkway through the canopy. Moreover, he mentioned the condition of most Ash trees nationally and their imminent demise from disease through ash dieback and how this might affect the Parish, they was a need to look at those ash trees in the village. The Chairman considered this was something that might well be identified in the tree survey.

Meeting ended at 20:05.

CORRECTION – Minute 22-33 During the meeting it was stated that Crab Apple trees were not part of the Woodland Trust pack. This was incorrect on checking the Woodland Trust list includes – Holly, Hazel, Crab Apple, Downy Birch, Hawthorn, and Goat Willow. A decision will have to be taken at the November meeting as to whether the Crab Apple saplings be planted.

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Signed Chairman

Date