

STRATTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chair Matt Garner

Clerk Vacant

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Stratton Parish Council held on Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 7.30 pm at Stratton Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Andy Aylott, Cheryl Hobbs, Matt Garner & Simon Joslin, 5 members of the public and Dorset Councillor David Taylor.

23-1 Election of Chairman for 2023/24 and signing of the acceptance of office

Cllr Aylott confirmed his intention not to continue as Chair of the Council. Councillors expressed their gratitude for Cllr Aylott's service. Cllr Aylott proposed Cllr Matt Garner as Chair, seconded by Cllr Hobbs. Agreed – That Cllr Matt Garner be elected Chairman.

23-2 Appointment of Vice Chairman for 2023/24 and signing of the acceptance of office

Cllr Simon Joslin was nominated by Cllr Aylott and seconded by Cllr Garner. Agreed – That Cllr Simon Joslin be appointed Vice-Chairman.

23-3 To receive apologies of absence

There were no apologies. All councillors were present.

23-4 To receive declarations of interest on agenda items

There were no declarations of interest on the agenda items

23-5 Public participation

1. Phone Box – question asked whether the 'listing' of the Phone Box had been completed. Cllr Hobbs reported that this was still ongoing. Action CH.
2. Dog Waste – the issue of inappropriate deposition of dog waste in the bin by the bus stop on Dorchester Road was again raised. After discussion regarding potential alternatives/repositioning/removal it was agreed that Dorset Council should be approached to see if there were any other options available. Action – MG
3. Coronation Event – thanks received for the Council's support for what was a very successful community event.

23-6 To approve the minutes of Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 14th March

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

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23-7 To confirm the Roles and responsibilities of Councillors for the coming year

Allotments - Cllr S Joslin
Ancient Monuments - Mrs M Putnam (voluntary)
Children's Playgrounds - Cllr A Aylott
Communications - Cllr C Hobbs
Crime Prevention - Cllr C Hobbs
DAPTC - Cllr A Aylott
Finance - Cllr A Aylott
Footpaths and Rights of Way - Cllr M. Garner
Highways - Cllr M Garner
Housing - Cllr M Garner
Maintenance - Cllr A Aylott
Notice Boards - Cllr S Joslin
Parish Plan - Cllr A Aylott
Social Care & Safeguarding Officer - Cllr C Hobbs
Transport - Cllr S Joslin
Trees - Cllr S Joslin
Village Hall Committee - Cllr C Hobbs

23-8 To reaffirm and accept the National legislation and Local conditions/policies of the Council.

The Chairman outlined the basic legislation which the Parish Council had already adopted and those local conditions and policies it held.

Members were reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions:

- i. Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability);
- ii. Crime and Disorder;
- iii. Health and Safety;
- iv. Human Rights;
- v. Age Discrimination;
- vi. Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups;
- vii. Freedom of Information;

As well as abiding by its own Standing Orders, the Code of Conduct for Councillors (as adopted from standard NALC code, as part of Localism Act 2011) and those specific adopted policy documents affecting Stratton – Finance Policy/strategy, Trees Policy, Equalities and Safeguarding Policy and Communication Policy.

Councillors confirmed their acceptance of this general duty.

23-9 Finance

The Accounts for 2022-23 was read out during the Annual Parish Meeting in detail.

a. To confirm the Council qualifies as exempt from external audit and approves the certificate of Exemption 2022-23 - The Council confirmed it is exempt from external audit - all Councillors agreed

b. To approve the Annual Governance Statement 2022-23

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The Council confirmed its responsibility for ensuring that there were sound systems of internal control, including arrangements for preparation of the accounting statements and confirmed the accounting governance statements to 31st March 2023.

c. **To approve the Accounting Statements 2022-23** - The accounting statements were approved for the year to 31st March 2023.

d. **To receive the Internal Audit Report** – the internal report was read out by the Chairman and was accepted by the Councillors.

e. **Audit Regulations and Certificate of Exemption AGAR**

The Council confirmed that it would apply for the AGAR audit exemption.

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f. To consider receipts and payments due to be paid or paid since the last meeting

To acknowledge the necessary payments.

Accounts at 31 March 2023					
<i>Monies in the Village Green account cannot be used for any other purpose</i>					
Year to date totals					
Account	Parish	V/Green	Parish Plan	VAT	Balance
Balance b/f	14,622.60	37,312.10	1,000.00	386.60	52,548.10
Receipts	0.00	250.00	0.00	0.00	250.00
Payments	2,120.54	210.00	0.00	54.49	2,385.03
Balance c/f	12,502.06	37,352.10	1,000.00	441.09	50,413.07
Receipts					
Playing Field					
United Trust Bank - Fixed Bond Interest					250.00
TOTAL					£ 250.00
Payments					
Parish					
Mrs M Harding - Reset E.Mail and Website					50.00
W.H Smith - Stationery					14.97
Stratton Village Hall - Hire of Hall					65.62
S137 Grant - Toddler Group					36.00
HMRC - Income Tax					319.08
Tom Gamwell - Website Maintenance					40.00
HMRC - Income Tax					28.00
Salary - Parish Clerk 1/5/22 - 31/03/23					1,519.36
Personnel Advice & Solutions - Advice					60.00
Playing Field					
Alan Goldstone - Tree on Playing Field & street Light					252.00
TOTAL					£ 2,385.03

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Accounts at 16th May 2023					
<i>Monies in the Village Green account cannot be used for any other purpose</i>					
Year to date totals					
Account	Parish	V/Green	Parish Plan	VAT	Balance
Balance b/f 01/04/23	12,502.06	37,352.10	1,000.00	441.09	50,413.07
Receipts	4,095.00	2,255.00	0.00	0.00	6,350.00
Payments	1,281.21	838.37	0.00	126.00	2,245.58
Balance c/f	15,315.85	38,768.73	1,000.00	567.09	54,517.49
Receipts					
Stratton Allotment Society - Rent - Inv 108					250.00
Dorset Council - 1st Tranche - Precept					6,100.00
TOTAL				£	6,350.00
Payments					
Parish					
DAPTC - Annual Subscription 2023/24					234.77
Dorset Council - Dog Bin Collection					171.34
Wrackelford Farms - Allotments 1/4/23 to 31/3/24					250.00
Zurich Municipal - Insurance					625.10
Village Green					
Alan Goldstone - Trees on Playing Field/Village Green					756.00
Zurich Municipal - Insurance					208.37
TOTAL				£	2,245.58

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g. To receive the Budget Monitoring report

The budget monitoring report was received, no comment at present.

h. To review the Asset Register and Risk Assessments

A review was carried out of the Asset Register, all assets have been updated and the new insurance values are to be entered on the Register. A review was carried out of the Risk Assessments. The Asset Register and Risk Assessments were agreed.

23-10 Parish Clerk – following the retirement of David Northover a vacancy has again arisen for the position of Clerk. It will be advertised again on the Council's website, promoted on Facebook and sent to DAPTC for inclusion on their job board. Action CH/MG.

23-11 Planning – To consider any planning applications in circulation

- CS12228901 – Proposed Telecommunication Upgrade – Grimstone Farm
- P/FUL/2023/01985 – Lower Wrackelford Farm, creation of Dog Exercise area.

There were no objections or comments from councillors to either proposal.

23-12 Register of Interests

Councillors Joslin & Garner are still to complete the on-line register of interests held by Dorset Council. There appear to be some practical challenges associated with accessing the on-line portal that have yet to be resolved. Action – MG to follow up

23-13 Data Retention & Protection

Following on from the issues associated with the 'failure' of the Parish laptop, Cllr Garner suggested that the Council should consider a more robust approach to the storage of data. Action – MG to follow up and propose solution(s) to the Council for consideration.

23-14 - To receive reports on General Maintenance

Trees – the Tree Preservation Orders have been granted for the proposed works as part of Phase 5 & 6 of the latest tree report. Action – SJ to follow up.

The fence enclosing the play area on the Village Green requires further attention as well as a replacement gate. Cllr Aylott also reported that some repairs have been undertaken to the side steps of the climbing frame. Action – AA to follow-up outstanding repairs.

23-15 - Highways and Rights of Way

Ice Warning Signs – have been put away for the summer and are being looked after by Mr & Mrs Bowman.

Cllr David Taylor provided an update on the flooding issues on the A37 under the railway bridge. In brief, this has now been acknowledged as a priority issue and will be taken forward by Dorset Highways. However any solution will be subject to funding being available from Central Government. The Parish Council will continue to monitor the situation.

Cllr Taylor also informed the council that National Cycle Network Route 26 linking Bath/Bristol with Portland (via Stratton) was now complete.

23-16 - Correspondence

A suggestion was received that the Council could support the creation of 'bug hotels' from the arisings from the recent tree works on the Playing Field. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Joslin would find out more. Action - SJ

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23-17 To reaffirm the arrangements for dogs

The Parish Council agreed that the arrangements for dog use of the Playing Field be maintained, on the basis that dog owners remained responsible for dogs in their charge.

23-18 Public Participation

The opportunity was provided for public participation.

A question was asked about arrangements for a Christmas Tree on the Village Green. After discussion it was agreed that as long as Mr Cartwright is content to continue with the current arrangements, the council would be too.

It was pointed out to the council that the memorial to the Wrackleford Auxiliary on the Village Green would benefit from professional cleaning this year.

A suggestion was made by Cllr Hobbs that the Council should promote a 'best house' competition to coincide with the Village Fair – this was agreed. It was also agreed that a £25 prize would be offered.
Action CH

23-19 To consider items for the next meeting.

Highlighted items for inclusion on the next Agenda –

Christmas Tree

Clerk's position

Trees

Flower ('best house') competition

Phase 5 & 6 of tree work and mulching for Queens Canopy Trees

Progress on A37 flooding

Dog waste & bins

The next meeting is on 11 July 2023 at 7.00 pm.

Meeting ended – 21:00