

**Minutes of the Meeting of Stanford Dingley Parish Council held on
Monday 3rd October 2016 at 7.30pm in the Club Room.**

Present: Mr. Mark Hawkesworth (Chairman); Mrs. Dawn Bellin; Mr. Christopher Dent; Mr. Harry Fullerton; Ms. Jane Body; Mrs. Helen Pratt (Clerk); Cllr. Quentin Webb.
Parishioners: Mrs. S. Scott Johnson; Mrs. Helen Brooks.

1. Apologies.

Cllr. Graham Pask

2. Open Session.

2.1. The Club Room.

Mrs. Scott-Johnson asked about the following:

- The amount of the grant for improvements to the Clubroom and how the total expenditure on improvements to the Clubroom was to be met.
- When the Clubroom would be unavailable for hire.
- Whether or not the tables, chairs, cutlery and glasses would be available for hire during the period the Clubroom is unavailable.
- Why some of the existing tables and chairs are to be replaced and how the old tables and chairs would be disposed of.

Mr. Dent reported that he had informally been told that the project has been awarded a grant of just over £11,000. The total cost of the improvements is £24,000 including labour, most of which is being provided by volunteers. Work will begin at the end of November and is expected to be complete in May 2017. During the work, the tables and chairs to be kept will be stored and probably not available for hire, but the cutlery and glasses were likely to be available.

The replacement chairs and tables will stack on a trolley, therefore being more space efficient and easier to move round. It was suggested that the old chairs be offered to the church or possibly the Community Furniture Project.

It was suggested that the hiring charges should be reviewed when the improvements have been made and that a notice should be placed in "Newslink" detailing the period of closure of the Club Room and subsequently the new hire rates and booking contact.

Mrs. Helen Brooks commented that notices of meetings are not being placed on the notice boards. Mr. Fullerton, the councillor responsible for the noticeboards apologised.

Mrs. Brooks went on to ask where users of the improved Clubroom were going to park and how astonishing it was that a grant had been approved for a community building which has no parking. Mr. Dent commented that it will be up to event organisers to arrange parking and that currently there is no other option for a village hall within the parish.

3. Declaration of Interests.

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Approval of the minutes of meetings held on:

4.1 Monday 1st August 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1st August 2016 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Friday 16th September 2016

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on Friday 16th September 2016 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman

5. Clerk's Report

5.1 Finances

- 5.1.1 Financial Statement.
The Clerk had circulated a financial statement, which was approved by those present.
- 5.2 External Audit
Mazaars, the external auditors have now completed their audit of the Parish Council. During the audit they identified that the fixed assets of the Parish Council did not include the new notice boards, as a result the audit form was returned for correction.
- 5.3 Correspondence.
- 5.3.1 Tilbrook's
Tilbrook's accepted the drop hands offer of £13,000, prior to the date of the oral hearing scheduled for 21 September. SDPC had previously paid Tilbrook's £13,000 on account, so no further payment is required. A copy of the order resolving this matter has been received.
Given the impact this has on the precept and the length of time this issue has been on going, parishioners need to be informed. Mr. Hawkesworth had drafted a letter to parishioners which he circulated to councillors prior to the meeting, and which had also been reviewed by Mr Dent. Ms. Body said that she felt that inflammatory remarks, feelings, opinion and sentiment should be removed. Ms. Body was concerned that SDPC should not have to make another public apology. Mr. Fullerton proposed that Mr. Dent review and edit the letter over the next day or two, before it is distributed by hand to parishioners. CD
Mr. Fullerton thanked Mr. Hawkesworth for drafting the initial letter.
- 5.3.2 District Parish Conference- Tuesday 18th October.
It was agreed that Mr. Dent would attend the District Parish Conference. CD
- 5.3.3 Grit Bins.
WBC has agreed to make a goodwill gesture and refill all grit bins (and loosen any hardened salt before refilling) at the beginning of the winter. SDPC will be responsible for grit required in the future.
Options were considered for management of grit and it was decided that if grit is required, it would be ordered from a local supplier.
- 5.3.4 Libraries at home service
The Clerk drew attention to a request from WBC Library service for volunteers to take books out to those who are dependent upon the mobile library service. It was agreed the associated poster should be put on the notice boards. HF
- 6. Planning.**
- 6.1 Planning applications to be considered:
- 6.1.1 16/02441/FULD – Saffron House.
Demolition of existing barn and construction of a dwelling.
It was agreed that SDPC has **no objection** to this application. It was noted that no orange notice has been displayed by WBC.
- 6.2 Planning Decisions made by WBC:
- 6.2.1 16/01784/FUL – Bushnells Green Farmhouse (Adjacent Parish).
Erection of a new agricultural barn.
SDPC had **no comments** on this application which has been **approved**.
- 6.2.2 16/01782/FULD – Bushnells Green Farmhouse (Adjacent Parish).
Retention of existing timber lodge as farm worker accommodation. Non compliance with condition 12 of approved 13/03014/FUL.
SDPC **supported** this application; however it has been **refused** by WBC.
At least 10 letters of support were submitted to WBC for this application. In order for it to have been considered by the Planning Committee, it would have had to have been called to the committee by one of the District Councillors.
- 6.2.3 16/01511/HOUSE – Kings Copse Bungalow (Adjacent Parish).

Section 73: Variation of Condition 2 – Plans approved, of approved application 16/00172/FULD – Replacement bungalow.

SDPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

6.2.4 16/00650/FULD – Land adjacent to Middle Cottage.

Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of replacement dwelling.

SDPC had **no objection** to this application which has been **approved** by WBC.

6.3 Planning Enforcement Update.

The items below were discussed and it was agreed that the Chairman and Clerk would contact the WBC Enforcement team.

MH
HP

6.3.1 The Boot.

Issues continue with the noise from dogs causing a disturbance and keeping people awake at night. It is suspected that some form of kennels is being operated from the site. It is understood that in order to operate a kennels, a license from WBC is required.

6.3.2 Sunridge, Bucklebury Road.

The planting scheme approved as part of a planning application has not been implemented.

6.3.3 Height of the ridge on Stanford Barns Development.

The height of the ridge on the new dwelling is believed to be higher than that on the approved plans. This has been previously reported to the WBC Enforcement team.

6.4 Update on Planning Training – Chris Dent.

Mr. Dent attended the training, organised by BALC and taken by Stephen Lugg from HALC. It was noted that planning departments have been reduced by 70%, leading to high pressure, increased workloads and increased turnover of staff. Parishes were encouraged to build relationships with planning officers, possibly as groups of parishes.

Advice given by councils under pre-application advice does not guarantee success with planning applications.

The value of Neighbourhood plans could not be emphasised enough and it was noted that Parish Plans/Design Statements were having less influence on planning developments. The idea of parishes in the Pang Valley working on one Neighbourhood Plan was discussed in outline.

7. Reports:

7.1. Activities Committee.

The Activities Committee has decided to seek legal advice after Ms. Body brought it to the attention of the Committee that the play equipment would contravene the covenant (in that it constituted a ‘building’) and that if any one beneficiary of the covenant objected, the project couldn’t go ahead.

Whilst the legal advice is sought, it was requested that the field should be mowed regularly and chain harrowed in the spring, enabling it to be used for various activities. Possible activities including camping weekends with BBQ, rounders and football etc. have been suggested.

A quote to cut the field has been received for £100 per cut.

Unfortunately the bonfire night event cannot take place due to insurance; however there is the possibility of combining with the event at The Bull. A Halloween trick or treat event is to be held with those wishing to be approached placing a pumpkin/candle in their windows. A Race Night is being organised for Saturday 19th November at the Boot. The Children’s Christmas Party is to be held on Saturday 10th December from 3pm to 5pm at The Bull.

7.2. Dredge Gang.

Paul Lemm has scheduled the Dredge Gang to meet on the 8th October for river clearance and 3rd December for leaf clearance. Gully and ditch clearance, followed

by litter picking will be organised after Christmas. A further meeting is being considered to clear and improve the footpath between the pubs which is becoming overgrown.

Ms. Body raised concerns about the clearing of the river carried out by the Dredge Gang and suggested that they should consult with an environmentalist; Mr.

Hawkesworth responded that the Dredge Gang clear a 1m wide channel down the middle of the river and remove any debris between the banks in order to prevent flooding, and that the works had been approved by the Environment Agency.

It was suggested that the Dredge Gang should have a more formal setup, particularly as Paul and Jill Lemm may be leaving the village.

Mr. Hawkesworth circulated a paper about the structure of the Dredge Gang including the aims, scope of project work, funding and possible affiliations.

7.3. Footpaths.

The stile opposite the church was reported to be broken and has quickly been repaired by the landowner.

The heavy gate at Smeetons field on Bridleway 16 has been shut to keep the sheep in; unfortunately riders and walkers have been bypassing the junction via Mr. and Mrs. North's field. Sallie Jennings from WBC has responded that all equestrian gates will be checked this winter as part of the WBC programme.

It was noted that the diverted footpath at Kimberhead Farm (Footpath 27/1) is very muddy.

Comments were made about the gates around Mazelands Farm; these should be inspected by WBC during their winter programme.

7.4. Flooding.

Thames Water is carrying out works to reduce the water ingress into the system, following the smoke tests. This includes work at Frilsham and installing a leak tight liner in one section of pipe in Stanford Dingley.

WBC will be repairing ditches around Butchers Piece to drain ground water. The ditches have not been maintained in decades.

A condition of the planning permission for the Middle Cottage development is that a new ditch is dug perpendicular to the existing ditches.

WBC has surveyed the existing ditches but is looking to riparian owners to pay for the works.

Brian Connorton has handed over the draft of the Flood Plan. This now needs to be made into a practical guide by Mr. Hawkesworth and Kevin Waldie.

The Pang Valley Flood Forum (PVFF) is trying to organise the coordination of the various sluices on the Pang at times of flood alert and flood warning. In Stanford Dingley an operating procedure needs to be determined for The Mill Sluice.

WBC has obtained a grant to carry out a detailed scheme for a by-pass channel. A consultant is working on the scheme and will be presenting the business case to get the scheme funded.

On the 15th/16th September there was 58mm of rain. Because the groundwater levels were low, the surface water effect was not very noticeable and river levels were little affected.

7.5 Website.

The Clerk reported that she had attempted to upload agendas to the website, but had experienced problems with permissions. Ms. Body commented that Holly Lombardo had had to ask the development company to address the problem.

8. Club Room.

8.1 To Receive an Update on the Improvements

Mr. Dent reported that he had received informal notification that the grant application for the improvements to the Clubroom had been successful. He is now

MH

awaiting the formal offer and the terms and conditions.

There was a discussion about how the finance will be managed. The Clerk suggested that the existing Business Instant account (which currently has very little money in it) is used to hold the grant money and any other money obtained for the improvements. Improvements will then be paid for with money from the Business Instant account via the main Treasurer's account.

Mr. Dent said that he needed to document health and safety aspects and risk management of the works.

A schedule of works and their associated costs had been circulated to councillors. It was agreed that the Clubroom Working Group should have a Terms of Reference. Stanford Dingley Parish Council agreed in principal to the refurbishment of the Clubroom going ahead.

8.2 To discuss future management plans.

Once the improvements have been completed it is planned that there will be a Management Committee for the Clubroom.

9. Playground.

Ms. Body commented that any form of playground would contravene the covenant on the Village field. The Activities Committee has a member who is a property lawyer and familiar with Land Registry matters and is investigating the matter. Ms. Body commented that her opinion was based on information she had found on the internet about what constitutes a building. The Activities Committee will determine whether or not to pursue a playground based on the investigation.

Mr. Hawkesworth will talk to Andrew Waters about cutting the village field, which will need to be included in the budget for next year.

It was suggested that putting sheep in the field over the winter would keep the grass down.

10. Transparency Code.

The Clerk commented that under the Transparency Code, the Parish Council could apply for funding for a laptop. It was agreed that this would be sensible.

HP

11. Village Green

Concern has been raised about the trees on the Village Green; all of which have TPOs on them.

Mr. Hawkesworth has obtained one quote for the work, but it was felt that another quote should be obtained. Ms. Body agreed to discuss and obtain a second quote for the work from a tree surgeon who is coming out on Friday.

JB

12. Bus services used by parishioners.

The bus service which served Chapel Row and therefore the residents of Stanford Dingley has been severely cut.

The Clerk reported that in Bucklebury a new charity is being set up: Bucklebury Community Bus Charity (BCBC). Initially this is to transport pupils between Upper Bucklebury and Kennet School. Once this has been achieved, the aim is that the minibus will be available for use in the community during the day, possibly for trips to Thatcham and Newbury market dependent upon demand.

It was agreed that Steve Manson (the Chairman of BCBC) be made aware that Stanford Dingley parishioners may be interested in using any spare capacity in the minibus and that the Parish Council is fully behind the venture.

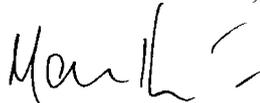
14. Date of next meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 16th January 2017. The venue needs to be confirmed as the Clubroom will be unavailable.

HP

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Signed:



Date: 16 January 2017