

STON EASTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of STON EASTON PARISH COUNCIL held at
Ston Easton Village Hall on Tuesday 8 March 2016 commencing at 7.30pm

1. Apologies and declarations of interest

Apologies had been received from Ainslie Laird and Jacky Smith
There were no declarations of interest

2. Public participation

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 14 January 2016 were agreed with no amendments

4. Matters arising

- a. TK reported that a Speed Indicator Device at Emborough is to be installed.
- b. TK reported that he is awaiting an additional quote for the improved signage for Ston Easton and will report back to a future meeting.
- c. It was agreed that the Clerk will put together a quarterly Parish Newsletter and format in pdf. The first edition will be distributed in hard copy but it is hoped that future newsletters will be circulated via e-mail where possible.
- d. TO confirmed that the heated defibrillator cabinet has now been installed at Clapton Village Hall. SH proposed payment of £78.00 to Luke Holland. This was seconded by JC and agreed. **Action:** Clerk to try and sell previous cabinet.

5. Highways matters

The following issues were discussed.

- a. TK confirmed that railings at Emborough crossroads, damaged when straw bales fell from a trailer, have been reinstated.
- b. DW reported that the verge opposite the church in Ston Easton has been damaged by large farm equipment turning. It was suggested that a letter could be sent to the farmer concerned.
- c. Pot holes in Langley's Lane have been reported
- d. JC reported an issue recently with articulated lorries attempting to access Forticrete via Greenditch Lane. It was acknowledged that this is a Satnav problem. **Action:** Clerk to write to Dennis Smith at Forticrete and query whether it would be possible to have NO ACCESS TO FORTICRETE signage at end of Greenditch lane.
- e. RW added issues with the drains by Langley's cottages, potholes by Whitebridge and degrading of surface by the electricity substation.
- f. Path/pavement between Easton Court and trade entrance to Ston Easton Park is in very bad condition and cannot easily be used by residents.
- g. Sign on A39 has still not been replaced following an accident last year
- h. Silt and grit has been washed down and has blocked the gully outside Clapton Village Hall. SH confirmed that he has reported this to Highways. DW suggested that the silt could easily be removed with a tractor.
Action: Clerk to report issues e-h above to Highways

6. Reports from District / County Councillors, Village Agent and PCSO

Jacky Smith had submitted the following Village Agent report: *January to March has proved to be a very busy time for me. Helping set up a new monthly community event, dealing with unwanted cold callers, blue badge applications and finding care company capacity on the Mendips are just a few of the issues that have arisen. The main issue to report is the sad news of a telephone scam that I reported in my March newsletters to the parish magazines. Caller pretending to be from the London Metropolitan Police Fraud Squad investigating unusual activities on people's accounts. They "groom" their victim, usually older and more vulnerable residents, to feel no one can be trusted and to help them with their investigations, they persuade the person to part with vast amounts of cash. I am sad to say a local resident has been affected as well as other people in the Mendip area. The police are aware of this and are trying to investigate but of course not an easy task.*

Tom Killen gave an update from MDC which included the following:

Finance - There have been recent announcements from Central Government regarding future grant funding for local authorities. MDC will need to find savings of approximately £1m per year for the next 4 years and will then be self-financing with Council Tax and Business Rates income.

Council Tax will increase by 1.75% in April, the first increase since 2011. There will also be 1.25% levy for the Somerset Rivers Authority. MDC has entered into a new joint contract for back room services with 4 other councils on Oxfordshire and Hampshire. This will achieve savings of £10m for Mendip over the 9 year contract term. Local Plan part II is ongoing

Devolution - Mendip is working with Devon and Somerset and has submitted a bid which is currently being considered. The Government is offering additional funding areas which appoint a mayor.

Waste - Consultation is currently being carried out on proposals to go to three-weekly refuse collections on the basis that all plastics will then be recyclable. There will be special arrangements for large households and those which need to dispose of nappies. RW was concerned that a three-weekly collection would lead to an increase in flytipping.

DW queried whether the recent appeal on the application in Old Gore Wood had resulted in any costs the Council. TK confirmed that the only costs had been officer time.

SH was concerned that development on the borders around Longvernal and Chilcompton (White Post) will result in Clapton increasing in size by development creeping in from the BANES border. TK confirmed that no land is being developed in the Somerset side of the border at the moment

There was some concern at the lack of a report from PCSO. SH said that he had reported an abandoned car behind the village hall which had been removed.

7. Planning

TK confirmed that he had considered the information before him at this meeting but had not predetermined any applications.

2016/0350/CLE – Easton Cottage, Easton Court, Ston Easton - Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for the existing use as a separate dwelling.

Objections had been received from two local residents who made the following points:

- The conversion of the garage into a "granny flat" was done without planning permission. No one objected at the time because we were told by the owner at no 4 that the accommodation was for his elderly mother but she never moved in.
- Parking is a problem already and if, as we believe, the owner intends to sell off the main house, a family bringing in maybe 2/3 more cars will add to the problem. This will mean very difficult access for emergency vehicles if they are needed etc.
- Our main objection is that the owner did not apply for planning permission in the first instance and was deceptive about his motives.
- There is insufficient evidence to prove that the Easton Cottage has been occupied continuously for the past 4 years.

RW queried whether MDC enforcement officers were dealing with this matter and TK confirmed that the enforcement team had been unaware that this issue was ongoing. RW expressed concern about an increase in situations where planning procedure is not being adhered to and development is taking place without any control. It was generally agreed that the situation was far from ideal and car parking is an issue in Easton Court. The development has resulted in two dwellings sharing one parking space. TK pointed out that residents of Easton Cottage would have no legal right to parking space on the site.

The Clerk confirmed that Parish Council's response to the application in March 2013 had urged MDC to take the views of the residents into account. DW proposed that the response to this application for a Lawful Development Certificate should remain the same. This was seconded by SH and carried.

8. Financial matters

- a. The bank balances of £2085.20 and £2628.61 were noted
- b. Payment of the Clerk's expenses of £26.00 was proposed by RW and seconded by DW
- c. TO reported that the Get Active committee was now looking into planning permission and applying for two more grants. £18,000 has been raised to date and there is another fundraising event in September.

9. Draft Schedule of Meetings 2016/2017

The schedule of meetings for 2016/2017 was approved

10. Correspondence

- a. HM Queen Elizabeth II 90th Birthday commemorative coin

b. Smaller Authorities Audit Arrangements from 1 April 2017 The Clerk suggested that Option 3 which related to Parishes with precepts and expenditure under £25,000 be adopted. This was proposed by SH, seconded by DW and agreed.

c. ONS Geography Products and Services Review Consultation. Noted

11. Matters for report and items for next meeting

RW said that when he was carrying out litter picking recently there was a significant amount of bagged dog waste in the hedges at Underhill and Clapton Lane. He queried whether the Parish Council could provide dog waste bins at these sites. TK confirmed that MDC will empty bins if they are provided by the Parish Council. **Action:** Clerk to investigate purchase of dog waste bins.

RW proposed that a litter pick be carried out in both villages in the next few weeks. TO and RW to organise Ston Easton. SH agreed to mention this at the Clapton Village Hall Committee meeting. DW mentioned that the rubbish has not yet been cleared from Ston Easton Village Hall. **Action:** TO will arrange for this to be moved.

RW queried whether the loose stone on bus shelter had been repaired.

12. Date of next meeting Clapton Village Hall. Thursday 12 May 2016 **Annual Meeting at 7.30pm Parish Council Meeting at 8.00pm**