

STON EASTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of STON EASTON PARISH COUNCIL held at
Clapton Village Hall on THURSDAY 14 January 2016 commencing at 7.30pm

Present:

Tom Osborne (Chair) Julian Carver, Steve Huckle, Ainslie Laird, David Watts, Rob Winkworth
Fiona Lyons (Clerk), Jacky Smith (Village Agent)

1. Apologies and declarations of interest

Apologies had been received from Tom Killen

2. Public participation

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 November 2015 were agreed with no amendments.

4. Matters arising

- a. Speed Indicator Device at Emborough – deferred to next meeting
- b. Improved signage for Ston Easton – deferred to next meeting

- c. TO reported that the Village Hall Trustees had met recently to confirm show what was happening at the village hall. There are plans to resurface the tennis court and refurbish the playground. There is a lot of support in the village and they hope to obtain grant funding. It was stressed that there will be no financial impact on the Parish Council. RW was concerned re cost of maintenance and repairs also lack of young children in the village to use the facility. He pointed out that Ston Easton Park had offered the use of their tennis courts for people in the village.

DW queried whether the area around village hall was being tidied up? TO confirmed that some earth will be removed and large stones will be placed around the area.

5. Highways matters

The following issues were discussed

It was noted that some work had been carried out on potholes in Langley's Lane but only a temporary repair had been done.

Gully blocked and water lying across lane on Clapton Road and a similar problem on the lane from Ston Easton to Chewton Plain

The degraded tarmac at the junction of the A37 and A39 has still not been rectified and is getting worse.

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

Harvey Siggs

Jacky Smith said that the number of calls about the Warmer Homes were significantly down on last year as a result of the warm weather during December.

The *Get Active Project* has been awarded £15,000 in Local Legacy funding from MDC and this will enable the committee to apply for external funding from the Sports Council etc. The village hall trustees have agreed to help clear the site and this can also be used as match funding. TO queried whether the Parish Council could apply for the grant funding in order to claim back the VAT. **Action:** Clerk to investigate

Jacky thanked the Clerk for completing the recent online surveys relating to the Village Agent scheme

Jacky said that some Parish Councils circulate a regular Parish Newsletter to all households in their villages and she wondered whether this was something that SEPC would consider to raise the profile of both the Council and the Village Agent scheme. It was noted that this had been done in the past and could also be circulated by e-mail if people request it. The Clerk agreed to put together a draft Newsletter including a *Useful Contacts* section and circulate to councillors for comment. **Action:** Clerk to put together a draft Newsletter

AL said that she had attended the Rural Forum at MDC and was interested to learn that Mendip Community Transport had purchased two new minibuses, she queried whether these could be used by residents within the Parish. Jacky said that the use of the minibuses was quite restricted but there is a volunteer car service for people to get to medical appointments etc. It was agreed that a Newsletter could be very useful to publicise this service.

Harvey Siggs had submitted a report which included the following:

Highways

The repair of "highway dangerous defects" (Immediate and 24hr priority) for November 2015 was 97% on time (415 defects found and 404 repaired within target time). 11,983 potholes have been identified for repair since 1st April 2015. This compares to 12,659 potholes for the same period last year. Next year's surface dressing programme has been issued and is around £2.5m. Winter Service salt bag pick up for PC's was held on 21/11/15 with a 42% take-up. It has been a very mild winter so far with only 3 winter service actions back in November.

Somerset Waste Partnership - Business Plan 2016-21

On December 18th, SWB considered a Draft Business Plan for 2016-21. This contained proposals to explore the benefits of recycling more through adding plastic pots, tubs and trays, cartons, small electrical items and batteries to the range of materials already collected at the kerbside. This could be made affordable through changing the frequency of refuse collection to three weekly, an option successfully trialled in Taunton Deane 12 months ago. The Board have agreed to receive a detailed report on the option which is expected to come to their meeting in March 2016.

Flood and Water Management – Somerset Rivers Authority

A meeting has been held with the Secretary of State to discuss the SRA becoming a precepting body and interim funding from government to allow the work of the SRA to continue whilst precepting legislation is put in place. Maintenance of the 8km dredge undertaken last year has commenced with a contractor appointed by the Drainage Board. Six of the SRA funded schemes under the Enhanced Maintenance Programme being delivered by SCC have been completed and the remainder are on course to be completed this year.

Budget

The Government Autumn Statement saw further reductions in the Rate Support Grant, but also gave some clarity on future direction. Somerset has not raised its Council Tax for a number of years, but will consider whether the 1.99% allowable without a referendum should be taken. Council Authorities with the responsibilities for Adult Social Care have been granted permission to raise an additional 2% Council Tax specifically for support to Adult Social Care. The Secretary of State has also agreed to allow a 1.25% rise to support the funding of the Somerset Rivers Authority.

7. Planning

a. Applications

There were no applications to consider

b. Approvals/Rejections

There were no items to note

c. Appeal decision - Old Gore Lane, Emborough

Disappointment was expressed following the Planning Appeal decision allowing development of the site at Old Gore Wood as a gypsy and traveller site. It appeared that the concerns of residents had been over ridden by the inspector.

8. Financial matters

- a. Dispensations – all Councillors present applied for a dispensation to allow consideration of item 8b. All Dispensations were granted for the duration of this administration (until 7 May 2019).
- b. Council Tax Base and setting the Parish Council precept for 2016-2017
There was some discussion as to whether the precept should be increased this year to raise some additional funds to cover carrying out repairs to potholes etc. or possibly to enable the Parish Council to grant additional funding to the Get Active project. There was a general consensus, however, that the precept should remain at the same level as previous year. SH proposed that the precept should stay the same at £4600, this was seconded by RW and carried unanimously.
- c. Clerk's expenses – Payment of the Clerk's expenses of £35.75 was proposed by prop RW, seconded by DW and carried.

9. Correspondence

- a. MDC Calendar of meetings 2016/17
- b. Somerset Rivers Authority update
- c. Community Council for Somerset PC Membership details
- d. Royal British Legion
- e. Mendip Society

10. Matters for report and items for next meeting

Signage, Speed Indicator Device for Emborough

11. Date of next meeting Ston Easton Village Hall. Tuesday 8 March 2016