

STON EASTON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT STON EASTON VILLAGE HALL, ON THURSDAY 3rd MARCH 2022 COMMENCING AT 7.30pm.

Present: Cllrs Tom Osborne (Chair), Rob Winkworth, Julian Carver, Steve Huckle, Tom Killen and Ainslie Davies; also in attendance Cllr Mike Pullin and Alan Butcher (acting Clerk)

22/03/1 - Apologies for absence. None received.

22/03/2 - Declarations of Interest: No declarations made

22/03/3 - Public Participation:

The Chairman adjourned the meeting for public participation on matters included on the agenda only.

- i) The matter of the Parish Council grant for the car park at Ston Easton Village Hall was raised and there was a discussion about quotes received. There was preference for the quote received from a local contractor and discussion about the suggestion that the stone required could be obtained from local quarries at a preferential rate. See also agenda 03/7v
A request from Ston Easton Village Hall to change the day of Parish Council meetings held at the hall to Wednesdays rather than Thursdays. This was agreed, revised dates are 6th July, 2nd November and 1st March 2023. It was noted that the village signs were still to be erected. Cllr Osborne to speak to Cllr King on the matter.
- ii) Report from County and Ward Councillors.
 - a) Cllr Pullin reported on Somersets efforts to support Ukraine and advised locations where donations could be left for transport to Poland. He advised he would not be standing for the new Unitary Authority and introduced candidates for the forthcoming elections. There was a brief discussion about the arrangements for transition to the new Unitary Authority.
 - b) Cllr Killen also advised that he would not be standing for the new UA but would continue with Mendip until it disappeared in 2023. He also advised that investments made by the district council had made a significant contribution to the council's finances over the last few years.

22/03/4 - Confirmation of the Minutes of previous meetings:

- i) Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st February 2022 - were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

22/03/5 - Parish Council Response to Planning Applications

- i) No planning applications have been notified prior to the meeting

22/03/6 - Financial:

- i) Payment to P K F Littlejohn for administration charge £336.00. This covered administration charges in respect of the AGAR report for 2019/20. This was agreed, Cllr Osborne to arrange online payment.
- ii) Payment to S Huckle for defibrillator pads £46.19 had been made to Cllr Huckle online. A further £80 was authorised for the purchase of additional pads as required.
- iii) Payment to Glasdon Ltd for Dog bin. The bin and invoice had yet to be delivered.
- iv) Cllr Winkworth raised a matter of an outstanding invoice to Mark Long for £60 for paint. The clerk advised that an invoice was required before payment could be made. Cllr Winkworth to contact Mark Long for copy of the invoice; it was agreed that the invoice could be paid online when received.
- v) Accounts to 31st March 2021. The clerk outlined the steps he had taken to prepare the accounts from bank statements. He had found no invoices for any of the payments in the paperwork he had to hand. The accounts had been circulated to councillors before the meeting. He raised a number of matters of concern; the lack of invoices prevented the reclaim of VAT which during the year was approximately £500 and the question of tax due on the previous clerk's salary as there appeared to be no record of payments. Cllr Winkworth to seek to obtain invoice from Glasdon for the village signs and Clerk to seek more information on the councils PAYE payments. It was proposed and seconded that the accounts for the years 2020/21 as circulated be accepted, this was agreed unanimously.
- vi) Completion of Annual Governance and Accountability Return for year ended 31st March 2021. The clerk advised that following the inclusion of his email address on the website he had been contacted by PKF Littlejohn about the non-completion of the Annual Governance and Accounting Report for 2020/21 and that, following a conversation with PKF Littlejohn, the council had been given a deadline of 7th March to complete the formalities.
 - a) Certificate of Exemption. The council's income and expenditure both fell below the threshold of £25,000 and the council was exempt from AGAR. The Certificate of Exemption had been circulated and was agreed unanimously. The Certificate was signed by the Chairman and Clerk as RFO.
 - b) Annual Governance Statement. The clerk advised that it was not possible to answer "yes" to those questions concerning financial management and, as a result, the Statement did not present a good picture for the year in question. The clerk advised that robust procedures would be implemented in following years to avoid a repeat of this situation.

He also advised that there was no suggestion of any irregularities with the accounts or funds held by the council. The Governance Statement was agreed unanimously and signed by the Chairman.

- c) Accounting Statement. The clerk had completed the statement based on the agreed accounts but had been unable to locate any written asset register. The last amount given for assets was on the 2016/17 AGAR and it was agreed to add the village sign cost to that figure to give an asset total of £6018. The Accounting Statement was agreed unanimously and signed by the Chairman.
- vii) Accounting and payment procedures. The clerk had circulated an example of online accounting and payment procedures used by another Parish Council. The clerk to prepare a suitable policy for Ston Easton which would be circulated for adoption at the next meeting.
- viii) Clerks draft Contract. This had been circulated. Cllr Davies was concerned about matters such as sick pay and sickness absence. Clerk to circulate latest version available from NALC for discussion at the next meeting.

22/03/7 - Parish Council Matters.

- i) Matters arising from previous minutes:
 - a) 21/10/03i) Strapstone Lane Enforcement. Little response had been received to the clerks emails sent after the last meeting. A number of actions were suggested. Clerk to follow up on previous emails.
 - b) 21/10/03ii) Village Signs. Cllr Osborne to speak to Cllr King.
 - c) 21/10/07iv) The Crown Inn, Clapton. Nothing further to report.
- ii) Parish Traffic and Highways Advisory Group – formation and Terms of Reference. These had been circulated. It was proposed and seconded that the Terms of Reference dated 25th February 2022 be adopted which was agreed unanimously.
Details of a meeting which had taken place in late 2021 were discussed and the proposal that an extension to the existing speed limit zones could be implemented by a “fast track” process welcomed although some expressed reservations about the time scale for such proposals.
- iii) Other Highways matters.
 - a) Potholes in Green Street, Ston Easton were noted.
 - b) There was some discussion about the affect of recent closures on local lanes in the Parish and a suggestion that suitable signs should be erected to prevent access by HGV’s down unsuitable lanes.
- iv) Footpaths Report. Anne Huckle (in attendance) gave the following report:
Thanks to SCC Rights of Way team for liaising with landowners and the Ramblers which has led to a number of stiles in the Parish being replaced with gates increasing accessibility to the footpath network. BANES have also cleared access from footpath CL19/20 to Folly Hill. Thanks also to Julian Carver to agreeing to work with SCC to position a stile enabling access to

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footpath CL 19/20 without need to cross his yard. Two members of the public have raised safety concerns on the SCC Explore Somerset tool about cattle on footpath CL19/5/1 at Hay Street but the land owner vetoed SCC suggestion of a simple wire fence to provide protection to both footpath users and cattle. The Parish Council were disinclined to make a separate approach to the landowner.

- v) Grant application for works to the car park adjoining Ston Easton Village Hall. Following discussion, it was agreed to proceed with the quote from R M Penny subject to Cllr Osborne speaking to Cllr King about an alternative supply of stone. It was proposed and seconded that the Parish Council provide a grant £2000 for the works excluding VAT. This was agreed unanimously. Parish Council to place order for the works and pay an invoice up to £2000 excluding VAT on receipt
- vi) Newsletter and website. In hand with Cllr Killen. Cllr Osborne to forward email regarding entries in the Parish Magazine to the clerk
- vii) Cost of replacement defibrillator. The clerk advised a cost including secure cabinet of about £1250. Following some discussion, it was agreed to site the machine in the phone box in Ston Easton subject to a suitable electric supply being available, Cllr Osborne to check phone box. Clerk to circulate options for a final decision at the next meeting.
- viii) Recent litter pick. This had been successful.

22/03/8 - Matters of Report

Cllr Killen advised that the appeal regarding the traveller's site at Emborough would be heard on 15th March 2022 at Shepton Mallet.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm

22/03/9 - Date and Time of Next Meeting.

The clerk advised he had a previously arranged meeting on 17th May 2022. It was agreed to move the next meeting back one week.

24th May 2022 - Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council meeting at Clapton Village Hall.

Alan Butcher,
Parish Clerk,
8th March 2022
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