

# **STRATTON PARISH COUNCIL**

Official Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of  
Stratton Parish Council  
held on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at Stratton Village Hall

**UNADOPTED - DRAFT ONLY**

## **Present:**

Cllr A Aylott, Cllr C Hobbs, Cllr P Hallett, Cllr H Richardson,  
Cllr A Wheeler, D/Cllr T Yarker, and 16 members of the Public.

## **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all attendees and introduced the Public Participation item on the agenda.

## **76/16. Public Participation**

A number of points of view were expressed by members of the public over the recent general question raised by the Parish Council over use by owners and dogs of the flood alleviation/playing field area. Several comments were made about the need to have fencing around play equipment or distinct areas purely for dog users. All expressed the view that they were diligent and cleaned up after their dogs and did not allow them to roam uncontrolled. They felt that they were possibly being held to blame for a minority who do not take care or have consideration for other users of the area. Comments were noted and taken into account when the item was discussed by Councillors.

D/Cllr T Yarker reported on the recent consultation and voting on the options for the future of Local Government in Dorset. There was a clear majority view for two separate councils based on the rural County and the Bournemouth/Poole conurbation. Final discussions were now going on within each authority, before a final view was presented to national Government. Confirmed that the West Dorset D.C. and Weymouth & Portland B.C. Local Plan has to be revised by 2021, and that siting for an additional 4,500 housing units had to be included in the plan.

## **77/16. Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interest**

The Chairman reminded the Council of its agreed Code of Conduct and the need for Councillors to declare if they had any interest in any of the items to be discussed in the agenda which had not already been entered in the members' Register of Interests. No declarations made.

## **78/16. Apologies**

Cllr Peter Jackson and C/Cllr Jill Haynes. Chairman also informed meeting of the fact that the Parish Clerk was not present, and that he was currently in hospital recovering from a serious condition. All wished the Clerk a speedy recovery. Chairman reminded all that the Council was still short of one Councillor and that with the Clerk not well, that the public would have to expect that not everything could be done as quickly as desired.

## **79/16. Minutes of last Parish Council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

The Chairman asked if there were any reasons why the minutes of meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> November 2016 should not be signed as a true record. Cllr Wheeler stated that Minute 66/16 was slightly incorrect. Cllr Jackson's name had been mentioned, whereas Cllr Wheeler had made the comment. Also, the metal

railings mentioned were next to The Rise and not Penn Hill as quoted. No other items were raised, and the Chairman duly signed and dated the minutes.

### **80/16. Matters Arising**

- a.) Item 61/16a & 9/16. Administration of Grants – the Grant Panel had met in early December and agreed the amount and beneficiaries of grants for this year. Donations have now been made and several letters of thanks received. Agreed that the Parish Council would consider any grant to the Royal British Legion as part of the annual grants procedure, rather than as a separate item at the time of the Remembrance Ceremony. A small Grant balance remains to be distributed when required.
- b.) Item 61/16d & 44/16f. Wrackleford Auxiliaries – a donation has been made as agreed at the last meeting and a thank you letter received from the group organising the memorial fund.
- c.) Item 63/16. Red Telephone Box. Confirmed that an objection had been submitted against the Planning Application by BT to remove the telephone box. No decision yet made by W.D.D.C. Planning. All agreed that if the application was not approved that the Parish Council would offer to purchase the Telephone box from BT under the £1 general sale agreement they offer. Result of the planning application to be awaited and monitored.
- d.) Item 71/16. Letter of thanks sent to Mrs S Every. Noted that Mrs J Adams was now assisting with flower troughs and has been reimbursed for the winter plants.
- e.) Item 72/16 Christmas Arrangements. Thanks given to the Parish Clerk for arranging event, thanks also passed to Mr & Mrs Rod Lamont at the Saxon Arms for their help with refreshments. All agreed event well supported and was worthy of doing again. Arrangements to be discussed at a latter Parish meeting.

### **81/16. Finance**

- a) Income and Expenditure. Details of recent income received and expenditure made was reported.

Accounts to 12th January 2017

Monies in the Village Green account cannot be used for any other purpose

Account	Parish £	V/Green £	Parish Plan £	VAT £	Balance £
Balance b/f	8,882.58	34,661.26	11,311.56	361.24	54,494.16
Receipts	50.00		612.43		662.43
Payments	1,185.51	253.60	11,994.80	2,456.93	15,890.84
Balance c/f	7,747.07	34,407.66	-70.81	2,818.17	39,265.75

#### **PAYMENTS IN**

Wrackleford Trustees - Play Area Donation	500.00
Summer Fayre - Donation	50.00
Play Area - Donations	30.00
Activities Fayre - Play Area Donation	70.43
Play Area - Donations	12.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 662.43</b>

## PAYMENTS OUT

Web Domain Registration	11.99
Wessex Grounds Services	152.16
Stratton Village Hall	103.75
Viking Stationery	100.49
Royal British Legion	20.00
St John's Ambulance	25.00
Stratton Childrens Party	120.00
Stratton Web site	35.00
Stratton Youth Club	120.00
Chalkstream	60.00
Dunovarian Silver Band	150.00
Clerk's Salary	393.53
Wrackleford Auxiliaries	100.00
Wessex Grounds Services	152.16
Mrs J Adams - Flowers	10.00
Wicksteed Leisure Ltd - Play Area	14,336.76
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 15,890.84</b>

- b) Budget Position. Current budget position reported. Position in line with expectation apart from the two areas previously highlighted – External Audit fee and compulsory Tree work.

### **82/16. Adventure Play area**

a.) Update on costs. Invoice for second tranche now received and about to be paid. Various small final donations also received. Deficit of approx. £2,000 being met by Parish Plan account. This as previously agreed to be repaid through future years precepts. Full and final costs of project still to be reported.

b.) Use of playing field. Report made by Cllr. Hobbs on recent consultation with Parishioners over potential conflict of use of playing field by children and dog users. Reported that the Parish Council has to date not followed the W.D.D.C 2007 regulation advising of banning dogs from areas where play equipment was situated. The full consultation report is shown as Appendix A. General discussion held on mixed use and acceptance that Parish Council wanted to allow as many people and different activities to take place. Noted that as the area is a designated Flood Alleviation area that the Environment Agency has strict restrictions on fencing which would obstruct movement of flood water and floating debris. Confirmed that the Parish Council had taken previous action by providing dog waste bags and has a designated dog waste bin at the entrance of the playing field. All dog owners should act in a responsible manner and clean up after their animal and use the facilities provided. It was agreed that the current mix of free use by children, others and dogs would continue but be reviewed after this summer. It is now up to all dog owners to be responsible and clean up after their pets, to ensure that their animals are under control and do not frighten children using the play equipment. All these requirements are enshrined in both criminal and civil law relating to dogs in public places. If owners do not act in a responsible way then the Parish Council will have to consider banning all access by owners and dogs to the whole playing field. It was agreed that the Parish Council would review signage in the area, and use various communication channels to promote responsible dog ownership around the Parish.

### **83/16. Speed of Traffic**

a.) Road Speed Survey. As previously agreed a new road speed survey has been arranged and will be conducted shortly.

b.) Cllr. Hobbs reported that posters were being received from local children as part of the 'Road Safety'

campaign. Checks to be made with Charminster School for any final posters before a decision made on best poster. Agreed that poster would be used with a general letter around Parish reminding people of road speed. Possible that the results from the speed survey would be included.

#### **84/16. General Maintenance**

Reported that no works carried out since last meeting. Cllr. Hallett confirmed that he was shortly arranging for the purchase of the materials to fix the bus shelter by the old alms-houses. Cllr. Jackson had reported outside of the meeting that the Highways Department of the County Council had confirmed they were responsible for the maintenance of the railings and fences by The Rise, but that there was no maintenance currently planned by Highways as this had a very low profile in times of extreme budget restriction.

#### **85/16. Planning Matters**

Application No: **WD/D/16/002262** – Development for 5 Dwellings and garages at land adjacent to 72 Dorchester Road. Confirmed that to date no decision had been made on this planning application by W.D.D.C.

Chairman confirmed to the meeting that an apology had previously been made by the Parish Council as an incorrect submission had been made to the Planning authority. This error however, had been corrected and the Planning authority informed of the Council's correct response, and that it objected to the planning application **WD/D/16/002262** as it stood.

#### **86/16. Parish Plan - Initiatives Review**

- a.) Cllr. Wheeler was taking the lead on reviewing the initiatives in the 2015 Parish plan. Previous reports would be used to update current position to enable Councillors to review outstanding issues and potential desired actions. Position to be clarified ready for next meeting.
- b.) Allotments. Chairman confirmed and reported on recent contact with Wrackleford Estates and Saville's acting on their behalf. Saville's had now confirmed that there would be a charge of £750 for preparing any legal rental agreement with the Parish. After discussion it was felt by Councillors that although this charge would have to be accepted, that before doing so the various 'Heads of Terms of Agreement' and associated costs should be passed to the Council for consideration. Chairman agreed to contact and reply to Saville's on this basis.
- c.) Agreed that those in the Parish who were interested in having an allotment should now start to organise themselves under a formal Allotment Society. Two members of the public agreed to start this process once the Chairman had passed over his current list of names and addresses of interested people. Chairman agreed to forward list to them.

#### **87/16. Highways**

Thanks given to the Highways Department of the County Council for the recent re-surfacing of Dorchester Road at the western end of the village

#### **88/16. Correspondence**

Cllr. Hobbs reported on receiving circulars about Avian Flu, these to be circulated shortly. Chairman confirmed that many electronic surveys or questionnaires were being received these days. He reminded all that it was up to individual Councillors to respond to these surveys or questionnaires if and as they wanted to. Just because something was received by the Parish Council it did not always mean that a corporate Parish response would be made. The only thing Councillors need to be aware of was that if they did respond, then that was their personal view and not a Parish Council view.

#### **89/16. Items for next Agenda**

Potential concern over LED bulbs in street lamps. Background to this being investigated, but might have to be included at the next meeting. Cllr. Hobbs said that she would be preparing the next agenda in the absence of the Parish Clerk at present. If any Councillor had a specific item please let her know.

### **90/16. Public Participation**

Comment made that although Christmas arrangements had gone well, that there was no specific lead person present who clearly told people what was coming next. Not clear what songs were about to be sung and their page number. Agreed to look at this issue for the next time. No other issues raised by the general public.

### **91/16. Date of next Meeting**

Confirmed that the March meeting was on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 7:00pm.

The meeting closed at 21.00pm.

### **Appendix A**

#### **Response to Banning dogs on the Playing Field**

##### **Background**

In response to representations made to the Council regarding concern for children because of dogs running around the playing field and dog faeces not being removed, residents were asked their opinion on whether dogs should continue to be allowed unfettered access to the playing field or banned from it.

The options residents were asked to comment on were:

- a) No dogs at all on the Playing Field,
- b) Dogs to be allowed at all times
- c) Dogs only allowed at certain times of the Year. (This scheme is being used by many Authorities where dog walkers have access to public beaches).

The request for comments was circulated via the Council's website and Facebook page, strattondodrset.com, StrattonActive and by posters on the Council's notice boards and in the village bus shelters.

##### **The Response**

13 replies only were received.

1 on Facebook – one comment with two 'likes' (counted as 3).

9 by email

1 by letter

Of the 13 respondents, 11 are on the electoral roll, including one person who has now moved right away from the area.

2 respondents said they had children

8 had a dog

1 did not have a dog

4 responses were unclear as to whether they had a dog or not.

3 responses mentioned children. 10 replies did not mention children in any context.

Most of the responses (save one) were not specific with regard to the options above but making a judgement from the comments received;

## **Ban dogs 2 : Not to Ban dogs 11**

### **Comments**

A great number of responses included comments about a minority of irresponsible owners spoiling things for responsible ones.

Two respondents blamed foxes for uncollected 'deposits'. (NB Wild animal faeces do not contain parasite eggs that **cause** toxocariasis (Roundworm) in humans. The eggs can live in sand and soil for many months).

Dog owners will only go elsewhere so 'problem' not contained.

Hardly seen any children.

More children using the playing field.

Haven't seen any dp (dog poo)

Need to watch where you walk.

Children do not clean up after their dogs.

Ludicrous to ban all dog owners and parents are responsible.

No proof dogs damaged the play equipment.

What happened to the dog ban signs from 2003?

The playing field is often flooded and unsuitable for children to play in.

Children's health should come first

### **Solutions Suggested**

1. Fence off play equipment (Special dispensation would need to be obtained as no fencing is permitted by the Environment Agency because the area is a flood plain. )
2. Section of the field to be available for dog walkers.
3. The Council to provide another area for dog walkers.
4. Cut back the trees around the play area so that overlooking houses can see who the culprits are.

### **Recommendations**

With so few responses received there appears to be insufficient information to come to an informed decision.

1. As the new play equipment has only been installed for a short while and with children unlikely to be using the field so often during the winter months and dark evenings it would seem appropriate to monitor the situation for the time being and revisit the issue after summer 2017.

2. A reminder about responsible dog ownership to be promoted by the Council (via the website, etc.)

Cheryl Hobbs

10th January 2017.