

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF STAPELEY & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2014 AT STAPELEY COMMUNITY HALL, PEAR TREE FIELD, STAPELEY**

PRESENT: Councillor S Gwinn-Freemantle Chairman
Councillor J Davenport
Councillor M Docker
Councillor P Groves
Councillor J Hillman
Councillor K Lawrence
Councillor M Malbon
Councillor K Nord
Councillor M Theobald

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Andrew Martin Cheshire East Council

APOLOGIES: Councillor S Clough

212 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited to make any declarations of interest in any item of business on the agenda. No declarations were made.

213 COMMUNITY HALL

The Parish Council was invited to review arrangements for management of the hall. The Clerk's report (with minor amendments) which had been submitted to the meeting held on 9 January 2014 was considered.

The Parish Council was not required to make a decision at this meeting; the purpose was to discuss various options for the future management of the hall, given that following receipt of legal advice, the proposed operational arrangements with Nantwich Town Council would no longer be practicable.

It was noted from the report that despite a two-thirds page spread in the last newsletter, there had been no enquiries, although Pear Tree School was trialling an afternoon event for one hour each week during January.

The cost of operating the hall for the next year was approximately £20,000 and the income was unlikely to exceed £5,000. The costs could be offset by the income of £12,000 which had been accrued during 2013.

The following suggestions/issues were discussed:

- Continue to operate the hall with regular users only.
- Consider smaller scale commercial activities to increase income.
- Advertising outside village halls, generally, appeared to attract clients. However, in view of the extensive operating costs of the hall, the Parish Council would not be able to purchase additional signage.
- When a management system was in place, a flyer could be distributed to each household in the parish advertising the re-launch of the hall.
- Transfer the operation of the hall to a management company.
- It was important to subsidise the hall for at least a further 12 month period. Many "fledgling" village halls did not become well-used until they had been operational for 3-4 years.

- Councillor Peter Groves reported that during the election period in 2011, residents had been enthusiastic about the community hall and were keen for it to be opened.
- A custodian/caretaker might be the best option for managing the hall on a day-today basis.
- Possibly advertise the availability of the hall through school newsletters.
- Invite local newspaper reporters to carry a feature on the hall to increase awareness of the facilities.
- A Member stated that from a commercial perspective, the “5 Ps” should have been in place prior to signing the hall lease (ie product, price, promotion, place, people).
- Although there had been commerciality of use for a few months during 2013, Members accepted that the most appropriate use of the hall was community use.

The Clerk was asked to amend the community halls tab on the website indicating that casual bookings could now be accepted. Councillors Gwinn-Freemantle and Hillman were thanked for their offer to open and close the hall for “one off” events, in the interim, until a system of management had been put in place.

The Clerk was asked to

- Contact Cheshire Community Action to obtain a draft job description/ person specification for a Village Halls Caretaker/Key-holder.

214 PUBLIC INQUIRY – MULLER HOMES

The Clerk updated the Parish Council on arrangements for the Public Inquiry.

- Ruth Stockley (barrister-at-law) had been instructed to act on behalf of the Parish Council.
- A list of evidence, previously submitted to the Parish Council (23 July 2013) comprised the evidence to be submitted.
- The costs were broadly in line with estimates previously reported to the Parish Council.
- Although four-days had been allocated for the Inquiry, if it was fewer than four days, the Parish Council would still be liable for counsel’s costs for those four days. If the Inquiry ran beyond four days, it would be adjourned and re-convened on another occasion.

215 FEBRUARY AND MARCH MEETINGS

The following were noted:

215.1 Broad Lane Methodist Chapel was being refurbished in February and was, therefore, unavailable for the Parish Council meeting to be held on **6 February**. The meeting had been booked in the **Community Hall**.

Mary Hennessy-Jones had indicated that Pear Tree School would no longer be available for Parish Council meetings owing to the shift pattern of the caretaker. The Parish Council had a statutory right to hold meetings in a school, but it was suggested that when necessary, the community hall be used as first resort.

215.2 David Wilson Homes was making a presentation to the Parish Council on **Thursday, 6 March**. The presentation related to Phase II of the company's development on the former Stapeley Water Gardens site. It was a full application and they were allowing a question and answer session from parish councillors and members of the public. In view of the likely interest from residents, the meeting was being arranged in the Community Hall and would commence at **7.00 pm**. This would allow half an hour for the presentation, with the Parish Council meeting commencing at **7.30 pm**.

.....Chairman

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm and concluded at 9.15 pm