

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF STAPELEY & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON 15 MARCH 2021**

**(THE MEETING WAS HELD VIA VIDEO-LINK IN ACCORDANCE WITH  
REGULATIONS INTRODUCED UNDER REGULATION 78 OF THE CORONAVIRUS ACT 2020)**

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**PRESENT:** Councillor J Hillman In the Chair  
Councillor M Docker  
Councillor J Davenport  
Councillor S Ford  
Councillor J Gibbs  
Councillor G Gwinn  
Councillor A Jacobs  
Councillor K Nord

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Borough Councillor A Martin  
One member of the public

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors M Theobald and P Groves

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**288 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest which they had in any item of business on the agenda, the nature of that interest, and in respect of disclosable interests, to leave the meeting prior to the discussion of that item.

No declarations were made.

**289 MINUTES**

**289.1 RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the extra-ordinary meeting held on 9 February 2021 and the ordinary meeting held on 15 February 2021 be approved as correct records.

**289.2 Minutes of a Meeting of the Complaints Committee held on 8 February 2021**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting of the Complaints Committee meeting held on 8 February 2021 be received.

It was noted that these were submitted for information only, as it was the Committee itself which had the power to approve or amend the Minutes.

**290 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

In accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders, members of the public were able to ask a question of the Parish Council or make a statement.

There was one member of the public in attendance, and he expressed interest in volunteering to tidy up the common area around Hawksey Drive/Pear Tree Field but sought the Parish Council's permission.

As the Parish Council was not responsible for this area of land, which was likely to be the responsibility of Cheshire East Council, Councillor Gibbs agreed to accept him as a volunteer on the Litter Action Group which would be re-commencing its activities in April. Councillor Gibbs would forward details to the resident.

**291 REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLORS**

Borough Councillor Andrew Martin reported that the Community Governance Review recommendations from the Sub-Committee, were due to be submitted to the Constitution Committee at its meeting later in the month.

(Note: Borough Councillor Andrew Martin withdrew from the meeting at this point in the proceedings.)

## **292 COMMUNITY HALL**

### **292.1 Re-opening**

The Parish Council reviewed the position in respect of the re-opening of the Community Hall.

It was understood that owing to a lockdown relaxation, it was possible that multi-use community facilities could open from 17 May 2021. Members commented that the Rhino Safety risk assessment carried out in 2020 may need updating in line with Government guidance.

**RESOLVED:** (a) That the Community Hall remain closed for the time being; and

(b) That an extra-ordinary meeting of the Council be held in early April to discuss this matter in full to decide on detailed measures to be introduced to ensure safety for all users of the hall.

### **292.2 Use of Hall by PCSO and Police Officer**

It was reported that PC Marc Harley had confirmed that the conditions for use of the Community Hall were acceptable.

### **292.3 Fire Risk Assessment**

It was reported that the biennial fire risk assessment was carried out at the Community Hall in early March and the following documents had been provided:

- Fire Risk Assessment document
- Fire Safety Log Book
- Fire Emergency Plan

The assessment had highlighted several areas where action was required. It was agreed that the Clerk provide a list for the next meeting to indicate the status of the various actions.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk submit to the next meeting a schedule of actions required, as identified in the fire risk assessment.

## **293 WEBSITE – MONTHLY REVIEW**

The Website Group had been unable to meet.

## **294 RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Councillors A Jacobs and M Theobald had been unable to meet to discuss the preparation of a revised risk management strategy.

At the meeting held on 15 February 2021, Councillors Jacobs and Theobald, who both had previous experience of preparing risk assessments, agreed to produce a more meaningful document for the next meeting. This was not yet available but would be submitted to the April 2021 meeting.

## **295 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **295.1 Receipts and Payments Statement**

The Parish Council received a receipts and payments statement for the period to 31 January 2021. A more up-to-date statement would be submitted to the next meeting.

### 295.2 Authorisation of Payments

The Parish Council is asked to reimburse the Clerk for the cost of subscribing to Zoom to enable Parish Council meetings to be held for more than 40 minutes on each occasion. A copy of her credit card bill was submitted as evidence.

To avoid any perception of 'double-dipping' the Clerk confirmed that her other Parish Council paid its own fee for its annual Zoom subscription.

£143.88 C M Jones – Reimbursement for Zoom payment

### 295.3 Payments

**RESOLVED:** That the following payments be authorised.

£250.00 Armstrong Fire Management Ltd.

£635.30 (£529.42 net and £105.88 VAT)  
Dame Hygiene Services Ltd - Community Hall: nappy disposal bin  
and waste collections.

£1,900.00 CES – management of the conservation area on Talbot Way.  
The fee is payable annually.

£42.40 Shires Payroll Services

## 296 INSURANCE RENEWAL

The Parish Council's insurance renewal was due on 1 June 2021. Came & Company, the brokers, had sent pre-insurance information for consideration by the Council. The following documents were submitted.

- Copy email from Came & Company dated 8 March 2021.
- Pre-renewal invitation.
- Terms of Business Agreement
- Guide for Employers (new requirement)

Any issues or queries raised could be referred to Came & Company and the Parish Council could make its decision at the meeting in April or May 2021.

Came and Company had asked for a valuation on the Community Hall, and this prompted Members to query the need for the Community Hall to feature on the schedule. It was a Cheshire East Council asset, and therefore, the Parish Council had no insurable interest in the building. In the event of any damage to the building; for example, complete destruction, any insurance pay-out would be to the Borough Council and not the Parish Council.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk make enquiries to establish (a) the need for a valuation of the Community Hall; and (b) the reason for its inclusion on the insurance schedule.

## 297 PLANNING

The Parish Council was invited to comment on the following planning applications:

21/0908N 1 Garnett Close, Stapeley CW5 7RF  
Proposed two-storey extension to side and rear to form extra living  
accommodation.

**RESOLVED:** That the following observation be made on planning application No. 21/0908N:

- From a neighbouring perspective, the plan is over-bearing on adjacent properties and will adversely affect their light.

- 21/1242N 84 Broad Lane, Stapeley CW5 7QL  
Variation of condition 2 on approved application 20/4283N - Single storey extension to rear, two storey extension to side and dormer extension to loft area(s), re-submission of application No 20/3474N
- 21/1053N 120 London Road, Stapeley CW5 7JN  
Variation of condition 2 on approved application 20/4283N - Single storey extension to rear, two storey extension to side and dormer extension to loft area(s), re-submission of application No 20/3474N

**RESOLVED:** That no observations be made on planning applications Nos. 21/1242N and 21/1053N.

## **298 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

The Parish Council received the Community Governance Review draft document which was considered by Cheshire East Council's Community Governance Sub-Committee at its meeting held on 26 February 2021. The next stage would be for the Sub-Committee to make recommendations to the Constitution Committee which was due to meet on 26 March 2021. If those recommendations were accepted, there would be a 12-week consultation period.

Members were reminded that the Parish Council considered a pre-consultation document at its meeting in January 2020 at which time, it made significant comments on the proposals.

## **299 NEWSLETTER**

Members are invited to suggest articles for inclusion in the next newsletter. The Clerk had identified the following which may be appropriate.

- Chairman's message which can incorporate any changes to Covid-19 regulations.
- Details of the two new councillors
- Update on re-opening of the Community Hall.
- Reminder to residents that the hall will be used on 6 May 2021 for the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire East.
- Calendar of Parish Council meetings with effect from the Annual Meeting which should be 17 May 2021. The regulations may change to allow physical meetings, or to continue with remote meetings. NALC is pushing for remote meetings to continue until October.
- Dog-fouling.
- Budget for 2021-2022
- Item regarding the damage to the Community Hall fencing. This is being repaired and will cost hundreds of pounds but the precise estimate from Trentham Fencing has not yet been received. It will help to remind residents that it is their Council Tax which is paying for this vandalism.

Arising out of discussion, a Member suggested that a pedestrian gate could be installed in the fencing, towards the MUGA end of the car park. People usually opted for the line of least resistance and although the gates to the Community Hall were no longer locked, ball players had been vandalising the fencing to gain easy access to the car park. A gate in the fencing could deter this.

Members commented that perhaps there should be an article in the newsletter to encourage the residents from the Stapeley Gardens estate to become more involved in parish life, possibly by suggesting that residents might wish to join the Stapeley Litter Group; at present there were no litter-picking activities on that estate.

**300 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That in accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items owing to the confidential nature of the business to transacted and the public interest would not be served in disclosing that information.

**301 REVIEW OF GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

Members had indicated that they wished to review all contract arrangements between the Parish Council and its regular contractors.

The following was the work currently carried out.

- Talbot Way communal area – strim and mow (lawned area which the Parish Council owns.)
- Pear Tree Field – path and triangle – mow/prune.
- Community Hall area – strim, mow and litter pick.
- Weed-spraying all areas as appropriate.

**RESOLVED: (a)** That to ensure that local contractors were given the opportunity to provide a grounds maintenance service to the Parish Council, a specification be drawn up and an advertisement be placed in the next newsletter; and

(b) That in the meantime, the Clerk seek assurance from the current contractor that he had appropriate insurance in place.

**302 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE – CONSERVATION AREA, TALBOT WAY**

Cheshire Ecological Services Ltd (CES), the contractor who currently maintained the conservation area at Talbot Way had advised that it now traded through Cheshire Wildlife Trust and had submitted a quotation for the work to be carried out during 2021-2022.

Members were reminded that at its meeting in January 2020, the Parish Council was informed that the Clerk had sought four quotations for the work at Talbot Way Conservation Area. Only two had been received, one of which was Cheshire Ecological Services Ltd.

A quotation for the work for the next year was submitted, and the Parish Council is invited to consider the quotation, taking into account that this is specialised work, and the successful contractor was required to hold a Great Crested Newts licence.

**RESOLVED: (a)** That the quotation submitted by Cheshire Ecological Services Ltd. be declined; and

(b) That the Clerk seek other quotations for the work.

**303 STAFFING MATTER**

The Clerk's salary had been increased to £13,695.00 with effect from 1 April 2021, as agreed at the December 2020 meeting as part of the budget proposals for 2021-22.

The Parish Council was asked to approve a revision in the standing order for the Clerk's monthly salary.

**RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council approve a revision in the standing order for the Clerk, as indicated, with effect from 1 April 2021.

**304 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

19 April 2021.