

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF STAPELEY & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD ON 15 JULY 2019 IN STAPELEY COMMUNITY HALL, PEAR TREE FIELD,  
STAPELEY, NANTWICH**

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|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>PRESENT:</b>       | Councillor M Theobald                       | Chairman               |
|                       | Councillor E Boughey                        | Councillor J Davenport |
|                       | Councillor S Ford                           | Councillor P Groves    |
|                       | Councillor G Gwinn                          | Councillor J Hillman   |
|                       | Councillor K Nord                           |                        |
| <b>APOLOGIES:</b>     | Councillors M Docker and S Gwinn-Freemantle |                        |
| <b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b> | Borough Councillor A Martin                 |                        |

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**40 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.

**41 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 17 June 2019 be approved as a correct record.

**42 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**43 CHESHIRE EAST BOROUGH COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

Borough Councillor Andrew Martin reported on Cheshire East Council's proposed boundary review, which was a three-year project. This would have implications for the parish.

Councillor Ford took the opportunity to raise an issue about Wybunbury Lane/London Road and this was responded to by Councillor Peter Groves.

**44 AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS**

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

|           |                              |                                                                           |
|-----------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| £243.90   | HMRC                         | Tax on Clerk's salary and employer's NI                                   |
| £20.00    | Target Windows               | Window cleaning at community hall                                         |
| £1,134.00 | Crystal Clean South Cheshire | Cleaning Community Hall.<br>(£945.00 net and £189.00 VAT)                 |
| £720.00   | JT Property Maintenance      | Remedial work on conservation area at Talbot Way. (£600 net and £120 VAT) |
| £1,951.20 | Amberol Ltd.                 | Purchase of six benches<br>(£1,626.00 net and £325.20 VAT)                |
| £224.40   | JDH Business Services        | Internal audit – accounts 2018-2019<br>(£187.00 net and £37.40 VAT)       |

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|------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| £3,336.94 <sup>1</sup> | Water Plus       | Period 9 January – 10 April 2019.                                                                                              |
| £213.00                | The Leaflet Team | Distribution of parish newsletter together with 'Walk Stapeley 2'. (£159.00 for newsletter and £54.00 for additional leaflet.) |

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#### 45 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS – 2018-2019

The accounts had been audited by the Internal Auditor and the accounts were now available for approval and submission to the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn.

##### 45.1 Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit

The Parish Council was asked to review the effectiveness of internal audit, using a checklist enclosed with the agenda.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council record its satisfaction that there was a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements, for the year 2017-2018-2019.

##### 45.2 Approval of the Accounts – 2018-2019

The following documents were submitted:

- (a) Annual Governance and Accountability Review (AGAR)
- (b) Bank Reconciliation – 2018-2019.
- (c) Fixed Assets list.

The order in which the sections of the AGAR were to be approved was specific. Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement) must be authorised first and the minutes must demonstrate this, with Section 2 being considered after Section 1.

##### 45.3 Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement – 2018-2019

The Parish Council was asked to consider points 1 – 9 as it was the Council's responsibility to ensure that there was a sound system of internal control including arrangements for the preparation of the accounting statements.

**RESOLVED:** That the Annual Governance Statement 2018-2019 be approved.

##### 45.4 Section 2 – Accounting Statement 2018-2019

**RESOLVED:** That Section 2 (Accounting Statement 2018-2019) be approved for submission to PKF Littlejohn LLP, the external auditor.

##### 45.5 Appointment of Internal Auditor – 2019-2020

The Parish Council was asked to consider appointing JDH Business Services as the internal auditor for 2019-2020.

**RESOLVED:** That JDH Business Services Ltd. be appointed as the internal auditor for 2019-2020.

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<sup>1</sup> Subsequent to the meeting, the Clerk declined to issue this cheque as she was in discussion with Water Plus in respect of the significantly high level of payments requested.

## 46 PLANNING MATTERS

### 46.1 Planning Applications

There were no planning applications for consultation.

### 46.2 Barrier at Cronkinson Farm Pub – Planning Application 19/0888N

Members noted the up-to-date position in respect of this matter.

## 47 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Parish Council's Financial Regulations were out-of-date as the National Association of Local Councils updated them.

A revised version was submitted, and the Parish Council was recommended to adopt them.

**RESOLVED:** That the revised Financial Regulations be adopted.

## 48 LAND AT TALBOT WAY – CONSERVATION AREA

**48.1** It was reported that the initial work on the Conservation Area at Talbot Way had been carried out.

**48.2** The Parish Council was asked to consider a quotation for the on-going maintenance of the Conservation Area, with effect from October 2019.

The quotation for the following work was from JT Property Maintenance Ltd which was owned by the person who had previously carried out all the work on the Conservation Area when the contract was with Greenspaces South Cheshire CIC.

- Undertake monthly visits to strim grassed areas and control weeds at front edge.
- Trim front hedge three times per year and remove waste.
- Trim back trees and rear shrubs once annually.

Total annual cost: £2,000 plus VAT

Members were advised that they could waive the Financial Regulations if they wished and the Clerk had suggested an appropriate justification which would obviate the need to seek other quotations. Financial Regulation 11.1 (c) stated that the Parish Council had the power to *waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition and the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.*

The Clerk suggested the following as a reasonable explanation for waiving the Regulations:

*The previous contractor ceased work without notice to the Council. There has been a hiatus between the cessation of the previous contract and the commencement of a new contract. The proprietor of this company is the individual who worked for the previous contractor and carried out the work to a high standard. He has now set up his own company.*

*For this reason, the Parish Council is satisfied that the high standard of work will continue by awarding the contract to JT Property Maintenance Ltd.*

Members were disinclined to accept the quotation and preferred that the Clerk seek three additional quotations. As this was a specialised area of work, the Clerk asked Members to suggest appropriately qualified contractors which could be asked to quote.

**RESOLVED:** (a) That in addition to the quotation received from JT Property Maintenance Ltd, for the work on the Conservation Area, three other quotations be sought;

(b) That each company invited to quote be asked to evidence their professional competence in wildlife preservation; and

(c) That Members forward to the Clerk, the names of appropriate potential contractors who could undertake the project.

**49 CONNECTED COMMUNITIES**

Katy Ellison (Senior Community Development Officer) contacted the Clerk requesting a meeting with her and Deb Lindop to discuss the next steps. The Clerk suggested that as both these Officers had indicated at the informal meeting, that the Parish Council was now, more or less compliant with the GRIPP Assessment, it would be beneficial if CVS advised the specific steps required to ensure that the Parish Council was fully compliant.

Ms Ellison agreed to contact CVS and arrange for an Action Plan to be prepared for consideration by the Parish Council. The Action Plan was not yet available.

**50 PARISH NEWSLETTER**

The Parish Council received a second version of the draft newsletter. There were two articles required to complete it (Chairman's Message and Neighbourhood Plan item) following which it could be issued to Johnsons for printing. The revised timetable was noted.

- Approval of the newsletter at this meeting 15 July
- Final articles to be included 19 July
- Clerk to update the newsletter and submit to Johnsons 22 July
- Johnsons to design and print (5 days turnaround) 29 July
- The Leaflet Team to distribute week commencing 29 July

**51 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

16 September 2019

(Note: Councillors P Groves and M Theobald gave advance apologies for the meeting.)

Agenda Item: Plaques for fitting to each of the new benches.

.....Chairman