

Meeting: Stevington Parish Council
28th March 2023 at 7.30pm

Council Cllr. Peter Fisher, Acting Chair (PF)

Members in attendance: Cllr. Jon Abbott (JA)
Cllr. Mouritz Botha (MB)
Cllr. Janet Day (JD)
Cllr. John Strutt (JS)
Cllr. Richard Taylor (RT)

Borough Council Member: Cllr. Jon Abbott(JA)

Clerk to the Council: Rosemary Plum (RP)

Public Attendance: Mr Geoff Lawday, Stevington Traffic Action Group
Ms Tricia Lennie, Good Neighbour Scheme
Mr Dominic Cummings
2 x Residents

MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Apologies for Absence None received	
2. Declarations of Interest None received	
3. Open Forum a) <u>Stevington Community Hub</u> I. Tricia Lennie reported work is due to start later this year for further development of the Stevington Community Hub. The hub is going well and trustees are putting in huge amount of work. b) <u>Good Neighbour Scheme</u> I. Scheme hoping to launch on 8th May at the coffee and croissants morning. II. Request for financial support of £150 for the Good Neighbour Scheme submitted to the Parish Council. Committee formed with Mark Horner appointed Chair, Adrian Paige, Secretary and Tricia Lennie is helping out as Treasurer until the committee is established.	

c) <u>West End Farm</u> I. Resident Dominic Cummings bought West End Farm in 2021. He has lived in the village since 1969 although currently based in London for work. II. On reviewing Neighbourhood Development Plan notes he noted particular interest in West End including 20mph speed limit proposals and prospect of pedestrian safety improvements with more pavements. III. Mr Cummings' land borders the kerb and he's made himself available for conversation about the land and buildings with an open mind to relinquishing some land along the boundary to provide pavements in future. IV. Mr Cummings has a lot of buildings that need costly refurbishment and he noted the NDP proposal to build 15 houses on meadow land he owns it didn't qualify because it's outside the plan. HE also noted the land appears to qualify as a traveller site. V. Mr Cummings advised the Council he is prepared to consider interest in creating another housing development for 2/3 bedroom houses on his land. VI. RT thanked Mr Cummings for his availability for further discussion and advised he should contact Bedford Borough Planning Department for further information. VII. Mr Cummings is aware West End is outside the Stevington planning area, as pointed out by JD.	
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair. PROPOSED: Cllr. Richard Taylor SECONDED: Cllr John Strutt	
5. Matters Arising from the Minutes (<i>for information only</i>) a) <u>Completed/Closed</u> I. Hugo has fixed bench. II. Tree pruning/maintenance – all completed. III. Playing field kick boards – all replaced. IV. Write to Mayor about the DoE – remove from list V. EPM – remove from list VI. Speed Awareness – Agenda item going forward VII. Equipment – All in hand. VIII. Documents – Transfer completed. IX. UPM Minutes UPM X. Facebook – now live. XI. Village welcome pack XII. The Steps – Completed. XIII. Village Hall storage – Completed	

b) <u>Pending/Ongoing</u> I. Litter pick – push back to after May due to change of Clerk and Committee. II. Defibrillator training III. Hard drive back up – next meeting IV. Incident log – take off and add to Agenda. V. Replacement bin at The Cross – JA will continue to chase. VI. Working Group – pick up with new Council VII. Reporting Form – breaches from incident log. VIII. Silver Street enforcement – JA to follow up with Borough Highways Dept. IX. Insulation X. Risk Assessment for Morlock – still not received. RP check emails. XI. Village entry gates – progressing with JA. Money is apparently allocated. XII. Playground checks – Check is weekly inspections are required for insurance. XIII. Add notice on website to contact Parish Council if attention is required to the play equipment. XIV. Archive storage – ongoing XV. Remembrance Sunday – Check with Church who will be doing what.	JA JA RP
6. Clerk's Report (<i>for information only</i>) • Handover completed with outgoing Clerk. • Parish bank account mandate updated and address changed. • Logo and email footer created with Stevington Parish Council branding. • Reporting to Bedford Borough for Highways damage/potholes set up. • Facebook page created for Parish Council. • Use of Clapham Parish Council office space, business address and mobile phone share agreed with former Chair. • Call for nomination papers to be given to Clerk for May elections.	
7. Councillors Reports a) <u>Update from Borough Cllr Jon Abbott</u> I. Local neighborhood plans moved to next stage and public examination will be launched in late 2023. II. Reminder of voter ID required for May elections. III. Wixams railway station planning approval. Aiming for completion in 2024/25 with access to London. IV. Bedford Borough starting food waste collections in 2024/25, Still waiting to hear about glass collection. V. Rural skip will be running again this year.	

VI. Bedford Borough looking for sites in rural areas including village hall for Electric Vehicle infrastructure. Harrold, Sharnbrook, Gt Denham, and Bromham have signed up. VII. Bedford Borough working hard on potholes with new maintenance equipment now available. Extreme weather temperatures are a challenge. Same drivers for potholes and gritters. VIII. Bedford Borough aware of issues with drainage across the Borough. Issue for getting spares post Brexit. Stevington is behind schedule and AWA has apologized on their website. IX. Now in election period and anything political has stopped. Cllr Abbot thanked the Parish Council and residents of Stevington for their support for the last 4 years, saying he is personally disappointed he doesn't have the opportunity to support Stevington moving forward. He is confident his replacement will be as good. PF gave thanks to Jon on behalf of the Parish Council for "being so brilliant" during his tenure with Stevington.	
b) <u>Report from Cllr Peter Fisher, Acting Chair</u> I. PF stated his surprise at being the Parish Council Acting Chair and wastaken aback by the resignation of former Cllr Andy Lockwood. II. PF said he would say more later on the Agenda.	
c) <u>Report from Cllr John Strutt, Environment</u> I. Proposition about 1st resolution from environmental manifesto was made at the last meeting. Some concerns about use of word 'enforce'. Following discussion, committee agreed alternative phrasing: '<i>endorse and actively promote</i>'. PROPOSED: Cllr John Strutt SECONDED: Cllr Peter Fisher II. The Environment Group will wait for the new Parish Council to bring further resolutions for adoption. III. Website being developed for information storage. Produced environmental guidance for residents and advice for environment protection. IV. Flood group continues with work and risk assessment along Church Road. Borough Council have also been on-site to review the situation. No grill inside the culvert but there is a sharp bend which is prone to blockage and needs to be kept clear. V. Properties at bottom of Farley Way are an area of slight concern. May require an extra ditch along the back of the houses to ease situation and protect properties. Written to landowners and waiting for a response. VI. Flood planning and storage of equipment. Considerable quantity of items to be stored including acqua sacs which create volume. A storage	

area of 1 cubic metre is ideally required. There may be an option at the Village Hall compound. VII. Need a costed proposal and negotiate with the Social Centre. JS to approach Linda Penny or Steve Cole. PROPOSAL TO ALLOCATE A BUDGET OF £750 maximum for storage. VOTE: Unanimously agreed. VIII. RP check ward fund availability for this purpose when new Councillor in place. IX. Call for investigation into the ditch on LHS of pavement which could fill up and flood. Borough looks at it every 2 weeks and need to check whether Riparian ownership. Hedge needs trimming. Come back to this item later on the Agenda.	JS RP
d) <u>Report from Cllr Janet Day, Community Affairs</u> I. Village Hall trustees will be end of term next year. Parish Council may need to do some work to support a new Board of Trustees. II. Kick boards around the playing replaced. The fence around the site is in poor repair. RP to start getting quotes. III. Court Lane Landscape to remove branch on Cherry Tree. Whole tree is diseased needs to be watched for further deterioration. Tree officer reviewed the tree a few years ago but it is hollowing out in the middle. IV. Hedges and trees around the field cut not cut for 2nd year. We have ongoing plan for trees but not hedges. The hedge onto the roadside needs cutting back. Need to consider diversity and wildlife. JD to ask Damien about flailing hedge. V. Agreed to ask Magnus to back brambles where the marquee goes up. VI. We should set up a group in liaison with the Social Centre to decide the best use of the fields RT asked if the Parish has considered having a tennis court? Used to be an active cricket club. MB suggested petanque pits would be a nice addition. Used to be at the Red Lion. We should take forward with them.	RP JD JD JD/MB
e) <u>Report from Cllr Richard Taylor, Highways</u> See Item 9	
f) <u>Report from Cllr Mauritz Botha, Crime</u> I. Emailed police to request presence at a coffee and croissant morning. II. Residents reporting incidents on FB. These need to be reported to police. III. Should a neighborhood watch scheme be revived? We could consider it if incident numbers are increasing. Residents should be encouraged to embrace technology more, especially security cameras. IV. If coffee with a cop doesn't work on 1st April, we could do it on 8th April as date works for the police. Advertise on public boards and FB. Should it be held at the Village Hall or at the Community Hub or reschedule to 15th April? MB will update.	MB

8. Planning Update a) <u>Dane Hill update</u> I. Planning inspector decision issued day after our last meeting. JD spoken to some residents on site and walked the boundary. There are planning conditions attached although the planning department is reactionary and not proactive. There is still the Issue of water supply to the site. Nothing further heard in recent weeks. b) <u>Recent planning applications</u> I. Confirm procedure with Bedford Borough Planning Department.	RP
9. Traffic Management Update a) <u>Review of EPM 8th February 2023</u> I. Minutes have been distributed. II. Andrew Prigmore (Bedford Borough Highways Dept) made constructive comments. Central white lines discussed and it was noted they are being considered by the Borough. MINUTES PROPOSED BY: Cllr Richard Taylor SECONDED BY: Cllr Peter Fisher III. Parish Council was pleased to see such good attendance at the meeting. However, it's important to be aware that the views of some are not necessarily the views of the majority. It's very important the conflation of actual and perceived risk is not considered to be the opinion of all. Not everyone has the same view. IV. JA reminded everyone of the potential for some things to be done at the cost of urbanizing the environment. V. Most urgent issues that arose were about the damage to property on the corners of Silver Street. Further discussion with Highways and Bedford Borough required to try and do more to protect those properties. Consider vehicle length as well as weight. VI. There are things we cannot resolve and people have to be aware it's not realistic to have a 5yr plan. The Parish Council can only achieve within its remit and there are considerable budget constraints for Bedford Borough Council. VII. Traffic safety needs to be considered across the entire village and not just speed issues in specific areas. VIII. We can refer to wanting a 'safer' village but we cannot say our village is 'unsafe'. Stevington is as safe as the worst driver on its roads. IX. Anecdotal information shows a 75% reduction in lorries coming down Silver Street X. The Parish could consider putting forward an further ideas for a road safety audit. If the Borough were amenable to the idea, how this be taken forward? XI. We need to consider bollards on street corners will force vulnerable people onto the carriageway. JA has discussed further and they're	

required to be set back from the kerb by 18ins to allow for vehicle overhang. Bollards are 6ins wide so would be position in the middle of a narrow path, blocking access to pedestrians. Walking in the road is not possible on the side where the cars park. XII. Both corner houses have been struck. Preserving property is important but keeping pedestrians safe is also important. The junction is quite blind which is an added risk. The narrowness of the footway is a major issue. How would residents feel about a severely restricted access? XIII. Any road diversions or detours could add up to 5miles to a journey. The original community was here before vehicles making the traffic issues in Stevington a legacy problem. Possibly only solution is restriction on length so minimize overhang. XIV. Width or length restriction will deter drivers more, but a length restriction may make drivers think twice before getting stuck. XV. Narrowing the junction to slow down traffic will make the centre of the junction a turning area. Need to remember the rural nature of Stevington with tractors and trailers and we cannot restrict access for emergency services. XVI. Need to follow up with Bedford Borough Highways and continue discussions. Current portfolio holder will continue to be sympathetic but these are conversations that need to be followed up after the May elections.	
b) <u>Mobile speed indicator device – Update</u> I. SID has been on Court Lane for eight weeks near bottle bank and battery is still going strong. We will keep it running where it is and see when battery dies after which it will be moved to the pole on Park Road at entrance to the village. Expected to be moved in the next 2-3 weeks. We cannot underestimate challenges of a live roadside, uneven ground and traffic coming through. Should have additional 1-2 people in hi-vis jackets while 2 people do the work. II. Old speed signs near the Chapel and the one at the top of West End are calibrated differently and don't seem to be maintained. There was talk of moving the one from the chapel and leaving the pole for a mobile device. Old parts are no longer available. III. Worth considering removing both but even if it flashes, that's no bad thing. The one outside the Chapel is completely out of service and should be taken down. JA – to follow up on removal. IV. PC Hancock quite keen to come to Stevington with a police car and set up speeding awareness. Borough also has its own speed indicator van that could be asked to park up on the roadside. V. Andrew Prigmore (Borough Highways) and RT did village walkround last September to identify suitable sites for mounting speed camera. Options are very limited. VI. RT looking into ways of downloading and analysing the speeding data.	JA

c) <u>Resident Speed Awareness Group – Update</u> I. Geoff Lawday recently attended Harlington Speedwatch group and observed their issues and training. II. Roadside training on 3rd April with members of STAG. Roadside training locations need to be absolutely safe and police will identify these. III. If speed awareness group is started, Stevington will lose the Council van. IV. Incident tracking- recent additions updated by RP.	
10. Highways & Footpaths a) <u>Highways Report</u> I. New sign in lay-by towards West End looks good.	
11. Police Matters a) Crime Report – covered at Item 7f) above.	
12. East West Rail a) <u>Update on latest developments</u> I. Still awaiting news from Government – expected in May.	
13. Communication a) <u>Website & Social Media</u> PROPOSAL FOR NEW WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT BY PARISH CLERK WITH MAXIMUM BUDGET OF £300 PROPOSED BY: Cllr Mouritz Botha SECONDED BY Cllr Janet Day	
b) <u>Weekly newsletters not being sent out from the website.</u> I. This will be addressed with the new website. II. Still need a way of communicating with residents who are not IT-savvy. c) <u>Storage of old planning archive</u> I. Already agreed by RP with former Chair before his resignation. Will be stored in the Parish Office at Clapham Parish Council. PROPOSED: Cllr Peter Fisher SECONDED: Cllr John Strutt	
14. Finance a) <u>Payment of Accounts</u> The accounts listed below were approved. 20/03/2023THE TREE EXPERT BEDFORD LTD£900.00 20/03/2023MR D J BISHOP£1,660.00 20/03/2023MRS R A PLUM£638.40	

22/03/2023	METROSIGNS 2000	£ 2,508.00	
21/1/23	Court Lane Landscapes	£ 379.99	
2/3/23	Court Lane Landscapes	£ 379.99	
30/3/23	Court Lane Landscapes	£ 475.99	
30/3/23	Churchyard Grant	£1,500	
b) <u>Grant Application – Good Neighbour Scheme</u> PROPOSAL FOR GRANT OF £150 FROM 2023-24 PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET \$106 TO FRIENDS OF SANT MARY'S PROPOSED: Cllr Peter Fisher SECONDED: Cllr Janet Day c) <u>Agree fee for use of Clapham office.</u> Not discussed. Carry forward to next meeting.			
15. Correspondence II. Resident emailed advising of a distressed resident contacted by a person seeking permission to shoot in Stevington. The caller left a business card. I. Council determined that if the person intending to shoot has permission from landowners and the necessary licenses from police they may be entitled to shoot. However, the ground has to be cleared by police unless there are specific conditions. JD to phone resident.			JD
16. Statement from the Chair Cllr Peter Fisher has served on Stevington Parish Council since 2014 and was Secretary of Stevington Social Committee prior to that. He will not be standing again in May as he wants to see new faces on the Council and read the attached statement those present at the Parish Council meeting this evening. JS gave appreciation on behalf of the Parish Council and formally thanked PF saying he hoped we could continue to use PF as mentor and adviser in future. RT added his thanks for all the support from PF on Highways matters.			
II. Any other Business <i>(for information only)</i>			
III. Date of Next Meeting First meeting of new Parish Council set for 11th May 2023, to start immediately after the Annual Parish Meeting which starts at 7.30pm.			

STEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



The Meeting was closed by the Chair at 9:42pm.

Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	
Dated	<i>Chair</i>

I have been a Parish Councillor since 2014, prior to that I was the Secretary of the Stevington Social Centre Committee from 2012 where I was instrumental in reviewing the Charity Constitution.

During my time on the Council we have achieved a number of improvements and initiatives within the village for example:

- The Stevington Neighbourhood Plan.
- The reinstatement of the footpath in front of the bus stop and Red Lion and some protection for the Cross.
- The acquisition of three defibrillators for the village, more than most other, larger villages in the county and awareness sessions for villagers.
- Repairs to the Windmill and setting up of the Friends of Stevington Windmill Group.
- A welcome to Stevington information board in the Park Road layby which has just undergone a review and re-styling.
- Setting up a neighbourhood group to support and assist villagers during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown and beyond.
- Regular checks and maintenance of the children's play area and playing field.
- Organising well attended litter picks.
- Providing support for the Village Fun Day in September 2019.
- Providing support to setting up the Stevington Environmental Group.
- Ongoing work to improve traffic management on village roads with the introduction of two Traffic Restriction Orders and the purchase of a speed indicating sign.
- Reviewing and commenting on numerous planning applications.

There will always be those who think the Parish Council should be doing more, however, I would like to thank all of you, and Councillors I have worked with in the past, for your efforts and support to make Stevington a friendly, vibrant and safe place to live. All Councillors work on a purely voluntary basis and spend much of their own time making phone calls, attending meetings, answering emails etc. a fact that unfortunately I believe many people don't appreciate.

The time now feels right for me to step aside and open up the Council for another new face, with new ideas and drive, therefore I will not be standing for re-election in May. Whilst we need Councillors with good knowledge of past village life and development, personally, I would like to see some new faces to the village step forward and take on this very important and privileged role.

I have enjoyed my time, well most of it, on the Parish Council and hope that I have added some positive influence to changes that have happened while I have served as a Parish Councillor.

Report for Parish Council meeting: Tuesday 28th March 2023

Village Hall

The Village Hall AGM was held on 16th February 2023. At the meeting I resigned formally as the PC trustee. The four executive committee members said they intended to resign next year 2 years into their 3 year tenure. They all have a number of other commitments and are finding the tasks they undertake to maintain the hall challenging and they would like to involve new people in the committee.

Playground

I have continued to undertake the weekly checks since the last PC meeting as agreed. I am happy to continue to undertake the weekly checks and will request cover if I am going to be away. A new volunteer to undertake the checks still needs to be identified. The wooden edgings around the multi frame play area have now been replaced at a cost of £1600. The carpenter who undertook the work has advised the new wood should be treated after it has settled and is really dry during the Summer months.

The fence around the enclosed area is in poor repair in places. That and the need to repaint some of the metal work is likely to be raised during the annual ROSPA inspection.

Proposal

Repairs to the play area to be taken forward to the next Parish Council.

Grounds contract

The second option proposed by Court Lane Landscapes has been formally accepted. ML will send details of his insurance after it has been renewed.

Option 2
An increase of 15% commencing April 2023 £4370.00. This figure will stand for the 3 years.

I asked ML to trim back some low twigs on the first tree as you enter the car park. This has been done.

ML advised me there is a rotten diseased branch overhanging the road on the cherry tree in the play area. He will get it removed at a cost of £80. I asked him to undertake this ASAP given the risk.

Proposal: agree additional expenditure of £80.

Management of trees and hedges surrounding the playing field.

KP asked me to join him when he arranged for a second tree surgeon to view the trees at the back of the Village Hall. The quote from the Tree Expert was accepted and I went to see MRS P at 45 Court Lane with her daughter to see if they would be willing to contribute to the cost of the work. Mrs P agreed to contribute £300 towards the cost of the work which covers the cost of trimming back the conifers which in fact she had planted not the PC. She really

wanted to have the largest lime tree cut down completely but I advised this was not possible at this stage. We agreed the work should go ahead and we would review the situation. The conifers were reduced to 8 feet at her request. The work has now been completed on budget.

Proposal

Management of the trees and hedgerows around the playing field to be taken forward to the next Parish Council.

It should be noted ML (Court Lane Landscapes) has advised it should not be left much longer and we have had one request to reduce the height of some trees from a resident in a house on the opposite side of the road.

Dane Hill Farm: follow up to Planning Inspectorate decision

Following AL's resignation I have had some contact with residents in that part of the village and requested feedback from the Planning Officer and BBC reps regarding the monitoring of the planning conditions attached to the site. The approach appears to be a reactive not proactive one. If planning infringements are reported they will be followed up.

Good Neighbour Scheme supported by the Bedford Rural Communities Charity.

There have been many volunteers for the scheme and currently DBS checks are being undertaken. Some of the volunteers are willing to be part of the committee so I have resigned as chair. I will act as a link between the scheme and the PC. Once the scheme is up and running I will close the Covid 19 what's app volunteer group.

Welcome Packs

Still outstanding: to be considered by the next Parish Council

Janet Day

20th March 2023

JS Parish Council Environment Report for meeting on 28-03-2023

Environmental Manifesto Resolutions

At the January Parish Council meeting it was proposed that SPC adopt resolution 1 of the environmental manifesto. This was agreed subject to a change to the wording of part (c) to avoid the word *enforce* which was not considered to be within the power of SPC. The working group have therefore modified the wording of part c) and replaced the word “enforce” by “endorse and actively promote”. We now request council to agree the updated proposition.

Proposition: that SPC adopt resolution 1 of the environmental manifesto as modified below

- a) Acknowledge that climate change is already impacting upon the daily lives of our community and our local environment, and that this impact is likely to get significantly worse if we do nothing.
- b) Accept that although the scale of the problem is huge, there remain multiple ways in which the actions of individuals and groups in the Stevington community can make a difference and that this collective action can potentially both alter the global outcomes and mitigate the local impacts.
- c) Resolve that in future, SPC should take into account the likely impact on the local environment, whether negative or positive, for all decisions and actions they take and continue to endorse and actively promote existing and future environmental policies within the current and future SNDP in application decisions.

There are a further four resolutions proposed in the current version of the Environmental Manifesto. It is recommended that these are not brought forward for council agreement until after the May parish council elections.

Website for Storage of Environmental information

Following recommendations by SPC chairman at the January meeting, SEG have developed their own website using the free WIX service. Although this is now live, it is not sufficiently user friendly for typical village residents to access documents. SEG have therefore arranged for the Environmental Manifesto and the Environmental Guidance for Residents to be accessible directly from the Stevington Village website, <https://stevington.org.uk/> by clicking on the link to ‘SEG Stevington Environmental Group’.

Environmental Guidance for Residents

This guidance document has been updated into a more readable document and covers guidance related to energy considerations and to ecology considerations. This document can also be downloaded from <https://stevington.org.uk/> by clicking on the link to ‘SEG Stevington Environmental Group’.

Stevington Flood Group

The Flood group continues to access knowledge and understanding of the ditch network around the village and the associated flood risks. The flood plan, flood risks and flood mitigation measures are updated as new information emerges.

Stevington Parish Council
Councillor's Report: Policing Matters & Crime – February & March 2023

1. Crime

We have had two incidents the last two months. One was a theft on Church Road the other one as most would know was the distracting burglary last week. This is under investigation and police visited the victim on Saturday.

2. Scam Phone Calls

There has been an influx of scam phone calls reported in the village. The reason for this unknown and I'm sure there will be different opinions. The elderly in the village looks to have been targeted.

3. Police Relations

I met with PC Hancock on Saturday to introduce myself and build a relationship. We discussed several matters involving Stevington. You will remember we had the "Nottingham Knockers" round beginning of February. I contacted PC Hancock about it and as a result we had good police presence in the village over the next few days.

We also discussed having a "coffee with a cop" morning. My suggestion was that a Saturday morning would be best at the Church rooms. With quite a few collecting bread and using the shop in general I thought this way we would get the most out of it. He has confirmed that they can do the 8th of April over Easter weekend from 10-12am.

This will be a great opportunity for residents to raise any concerns. I feel we could also use this as an educational opportunity for anyone needing advice regarding scam phone calls.

We can advertise on facebook, PC Website, Cross and other notice boards if we agree.

Report Ends

Update to flood risks down Church Road

The risk of flooding down Church Road, is increased if there is any blockage to the flow of water through the culvert under the road leading to 19 Church road.

Further investigations have been made related to the wooden grille installed by the residents of 17 Church road to prevent debris from entering the culvert and to the culvert itself. As it was originally thought there may be an additional grille within the culvert, an inspection was undertaken by BBC engineer. This revealed that there is no grille inside the culvert. However, there is a sharp bend in the culvert that may increase the risk of blockage within the culvert. It is important therefore to ensure that the grille at 17 Church road is maintained and kept clear of debris. The property owner is responsible for this.

Land behind white gables

SFG are looking for a resolution to the flood risk to which the properties at the bottom of Farley Way are exposed. This is primarily caused by drainage from the land behind White Gable directly onto the properties due to the slope of the land. We believe the land owner is Mr Colin Hammond, a resident of Flitwick. We have sent an official request to Mr Hammond to discuss a specific flood risk solution. The proposed solution is construction of a new ditch down the slope immediately behind the houses on Farley way which would allow water to be drained from the field into the existing ditch and prevent water ingress into their properties. The Clerk has produced an excellent template for the official letters to be sent by the Stevington Flood group and this has been used to send an official letter to Mr Hammond.

Track leading up to Evening House (Pell's Farm) at the bottom of Farley Way

There are remaining questions related to the ownership of the track which are emerging. Our original land registration check did not reveal the owner of the track. However, in the UK, the requirement for electronic registration only became compulsory as part of the Land Registration Rules 2018. The lack of an electronic register does not imply no-one owns it. The track could be still be owned by whoever Mr Pell originally bought the farm from, possibly Bedford Borough Council. This is being further investigated by Melanie Bright from BBC Flood Resilience Group.

Storage of Flood response Equipment

SFG would like to purchase a sturdy lock-up box storage for flood response equipment. The size required is estimated to be around 950mmx 1542mmx 1266 mm (5'x3'x4') to hold all of the equipment and aqua sacs. The current cost is £600. The supply and cost of this shed would not be covered by the Borough Council.



The shed will need to be stored in a secure location. This is currently being considered by SFG. One option is storage in the secure compound behind the village hall.

Proposition: that SPC cover the cost of 5' x 3' Asgard Securestore Metal Shed (1.5m x 0.95m) and allow storage in the secure compound behind the village hall

Stevington Parish Council

Councillor's Report: Highways – March 2023

1.1 **Extraordinary Parish Meeting – Highways:** took place 8th February 2023 and was very well attended with c.50+ residents present. Borough Highways represented by Cllr Charles Royden (portfolio holder), Andrew Prigmore (Traffic Ops Manager) and Stevington's Borough Councillor Jon Abbott. A range of issues including measures delivered as well as future ambitions were constructively discussed. ACTION: EPM minutes to be published on SPC website as a priority.

1.2 **7.5T Weight Limit (Silver Street):** This is now 7 months into the 12-month Borough Council's formal review period, ending August 2023. SPC traffic incident log will continue to provide a facility for residents to formally report individual instances including non-compliance.

1.3 **20mph Mandatory Speed Limit Scheme:** This is also now 7 months into the 12-month Borough Council's formal review period, ending August 2023. As previously reported there remains a widely held view current layout is having very limited effect, with the majority of vehicles travelling well above 20mph and at some locations (e.g. Court Lane 20mph/30mph changeover) a significant number are now travelling noticeably faster in the remaining 30mph section than before the 20mph section was introduced. It therefore remains quite possible the current 20mph scheme has made road safety worse than before it was introduced within the remaining part of the 30mph extent.

1.3 **Mobile Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs):** Morelock SID unit is now operational on a newly installed pole in Court Lane on the long straight section of carriageway near the bottle bank. A second pole is now available in Park Road (with a new 'Pedestrians in Road/No Footway' warning sign) and the SID will be moved to that site as part of rotational deployment.



1.4 Other Matters:

1.4.1 West End and Park Road – alteration of current speed limits: Borough Council confirmed at 8th Feb EPM the outward extension to the 30mph and 40mph mandatory speed limit extents at West End/Pavenham Road and Park Road. For the former, there are signage position location paint markings on the carriageway.

1.4.2 West End - Pavement Opportunity? During the 2022 SPC SID-location assessment, the possibility of having a pavement extension installed at the sharp bend near Meeting Farm at West

End was raised as a significant opportunity to enhance safety, subject to land availability and BBC support. The pavement in Court Lane currently ends a few metres prior to the bend. Photo shows location where extension of pavement would be highly beneficial. ACTION – ongoing, to continue progressing opportunity/viability with BBC.



1.4.3 Village Entrance Roads – Entry Gates (& ‘Pedestrians in Road’ Signage), Dragons Teeth Road Markings: BBC confirmed at 8th Feb EPC this needs to align with end-of-year timings ref intended lowering/moving of the mandatory speed limits at West End. ACTION – matter remains ongoing.

1.4.4 Community Speedwatch: A number of residents remain keen on this opportunity and the village’s Stevington Traffic Action Group (STAG) is now partnered with Bedfordshire Police in seeing this delivered through formal training sessions.

1.4.5 Borough Councillor: With the May 2023 alteration to ward boundaries, Stevington will no longer be represented by Jon Abbott as our Borough Councillor. Jon has been extremely positive, active and supportive of the village’s highways matters during the past four years for which he is sincerely thanked.

Report Ends

[NB: this is the final report prior to 4th May 2023 local elections which may see adjustments subject to election/nomination processes in SPC membership as well as a change to local ward boundaries].