

Meeting:	Stevington Parish Council – Parish Council Meeting 24 th January 2024 at 7.30pm
Council Members in attendance:	Cllr. Janet Day (JD), Chair Cllr. Richard Taylor (RT) Cllr. Mouritz Botha (MB) - left the meeting at 20:05hrs Cllr. John Strutt (JS) Cllr. Gareth King (GK) Cllr. James Surtees (JSu)
Apologies received:	Inspector Russell Goldsmith
Non-attendance:	
Borough Council Member:	Cllr Robert Rigby Cllr Dylan Simmons
Clerk to the Council:	Rosemary Plum (RP)
Public Attendance	

MINUTES OF MEETING

1. Welcome

2. Apologies for Absence

None to report.

3. Declarations of Interest

None to report.

4. Open Forum (15 mins)

a) EWR Update - Cllr. Phillipa Simms, Chair of Clapham Parish Council

- Considerable impact and environmental damage anticipated if the North route goes ahead. Clapham will bear the brunt of the development however North Beds villages will be affected by heavy disruption to traffic routes.
- Major planning implications in North Bedfordshire to accommodate more houses.
- There would be positives for business but at a major cost to local parishes.
- Consider possibility of joint EWR meetings with Turvey/Bromham.
- EWR is a draw to Universal Studio owners who have recently

purchased land in Kempston Hardwick. High percentage of houses in England are within 2hrs from Bedford and airport access is very good.

- Action group BeFare and other liaison groups are increasing their activity. Stevington support would be welcomed.
- On going discussion and support with NE Bedfordshire MP, Richard Fuller.

b) Introduction to North Rural Community Team, Riseley Police Station – Insp. Russell Goldsmith

Inspector Goldsmith was unable to attend the meeting.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

PROPOSED: Cllr. John Strutt

SECONDED: Cllr. Richard Taylor

6. Matters Arising from Minutes of previous meeting (*for information only*)

Nothing to report.

7. Clerk's Report (*for information only*)

- I. Our Ward Councillors have addressed local rumours about the demise of the No.25 bus service. The Team Leader for Public and Mainstream School Transport has advised this is not something the team are aware of. The No.25 service forms part of Rural Transport contract that is still in operation and there are no planned changes at the current time. Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Environment, Highways & Transport, Cllr Jim Weir, isn't aware of any changes.
- II. Litter bin outside Red Lion: Cllr Rigby is trying to find out what has happen to the planned Borough installation.
- III. Cllr Rigby is looking into provision of the gate and dragons teeth at the entrances to the village. This work cannot be carried out until the new speed limits come into force. The Park Road Traffic Order has been published so changes should be imminent.
- IV. A number of training courses available for Local Government Clerks including GDPR, Social Media with updated Local Government policies, Parish Communications, Reclaiming VAT. Stevington Parish Council agreed to a three-way cost sharing with Pavenham and Clapham Parish Council for any courses attended by the Stevington Clerk.
- V. Residents' photographs relating to traffic incidents with vehicles ignoring weight restrictions over the past 12 months have been collated into a single document. This has been circulated to Parish Council members and sent to the Rural Police Inspector for consideration.
- VI. The Parish Council website has been reviewed and updated. Suggestions for more content of particular local interest were called for.

8. Finance

a) Precept - Discuss & ratify

PROPOSAL: To ratify annual precept 2024-25 as discussed and agreed with a 10% increase in funding from the Borough Council when compared to 2023-24 of which £1,600 to be allocated as a grant to St Mary's Church to cover the cost of grass cutting.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Richard Taylor

SECONDED: Cllr. Gareth King

b) Financial Report & payment of accounts

Accounts to be ratified were circulated to members prior to the meeting.

PROPOSED: Cllr. Richard Taylor

SECONDED: Cllr. Gareth King

9. Borough Council Report

a) Cllrs. Robert Rigby and Dylan Simmons - Update

- 4.99% Borough Council increase in Council Tax for 2024-25 plus additional costs for fire and police services.
- Bus survey – it was recommended the Parish Council complete the Borough Bus Survey.
- No truth in the rumour that no.25 bus is going to be cancelled. It is included in core part of the Borough bus service contract.
- See Reports attached.

10. Planning Update

- Farley Way – extension has been permitted by Borough Planning
- Land opposite Foxbrook – Grand Union Housing willing to come and talk to the Parish Council. Not all the area is a designated open space in the NDP.

11. Highways & Traffic Management Update

a) Update from Cllr Taylor

See attached report.

b) The Cross proposal – discuss

- Invitation to be extended to Borough Highways for onsite meeting to explore possible solutions to the trip hazard for the posts in the pavement. Posts originally placed to prevent parking. RP

c) Traffic enforcement review – discuss

See attached report from Cllr. Taylor.

12. Environment & Footpaths

a) Report & Update – Cllr Strutt

See attached report.

PROPOSAL: The cost of use of the Church Room for SEG meeting of £24 be covered by the Parish Council.

PROPOSED: Cllr. John Strutt

SECONDED: Cllr. Richard Taylor

b) Flood group storage – update

- Storage solution has been delivered and assembled. Thanks given to all those who helped in this operation.
- Flood Group equipment has also been delivered.
- Unusual flooding event at West End due to recent rain. Appears to be a ditch not marked in any Environment Authority Plan and that doesn't normally flood. Overflowed on this occasion and started to encroach on the houses.
- JS will ensure Riparian Owners are adhering to responsibilities.
- Flood plan will be updated to include new ditch.
- Thanks given to JS for his sterling work on the recent water report.

13. Police Matters

a) Crime Report & Update from Cllr Botha

- No crimes reported for December.
- 2 incidents of license plates being stolen.
- Police Officer Mark Hancock will be invited to next coffee & croissants.
- Vehicle cloning is increasing nationally. Security screws and other measures are readily available commercially as preventative measure.

14. Community Matters

a) Report from Cllr Day

See attached report.

b) Playing Field fence – update

- Work by Helliwell Fencing will commence 2nd February.

c) Play equipment – update

- Equipment regularly reviewed and maintained.
- Split in witches hat to be repaired by HAG.

RP

d) Playing field hedge/tree maintenance – update

- Hedge has been flailed along the boundary of the Playing Field with the road. Debris still to be cleared.

15. Portfolio Holders

a) Barringer Trust update

- JD has agreed to be the Parish Council Representative on the Barringer Trust. RP will write to Trust and confirm. RP

16. Communications

- a) BATPC Breakthrough Training Programme RP
As outlined in Clerks Report above.
- b) Media policy await training
As outlined in Clerks Report above. RP

17. Village Hall

- a) Update – Cllr Surtees
 - I. Village Hall Committee will step down in its entirety at the next AGM.
 - II. JSu and JD will attend open day and evaluate situation.
 - III. Parish Council insurance policy to be reviewed for Village Hall cover. RP
RP to send Policy to JSu.
 - IV. Potential request for additional litter bin at West End entrance. RP to find out if Borough would empty it. RP
 - V. See attached report.

18. Correspondence

Nothing to report.

19. Forward planning

- I. RP took on the role of Clerk in February 2023 as a temporary post to support the Parish Council until the May 2023 Local Elections. RP has confirmed she is prepared to continue in the role of Clerk until further notice.
- II. JS and RT will be point of contact for Parish Councillors during the absence of the Chair for annual leave.
- III. RP will be taking time off in June/July for medical reasons.

20. Any other Business *(for information only)*

- a) Councillor training opportunities
 - I. RP has reserved places for JSu and JD to attend Councillor and Chair training respectively, when available. RP
 - II. JSu will draft a response on behalf of Parish Council Bus Survey. JSu
 - III. Stevington Parish Council to follow Stevington Group Cllr. Dylan Simmons Facebook pages. RP

21. Date of Next Meeting

20th March 2024 in Stevington Village Hall

The meeting was closed by the Chair at 9.38 pm



Signed as a true reflection of the meeting:

Signed	
Dated	20 th March 2024

Chair