

STEEPLE MORDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held remotely on
Monday 11th January 2021 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: J Clayton (Chairman), N Badger, K Austin,
 C Upchurch, S Wheatley, S Traverse-Healy, M Bird, A Drew
 District Cllr Williams, County Cllr Kindersley (part)
 In attendance: Mrs S Walmesley (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Apologies were received from Cllr Belson. There were no interests declared.

2 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORTS

2.1 District Council

Cllr Williams reported that South Cambridgeshire District Council was attending to business as best they could during the current lockdown.

The Planning Committee would be looking at the recently published Planning Authority Report at their next meeting. Cllr Williams stated that it would be interesting to hear views as she felt that there was obvious room for improvement. She would circulate a written report following that meeting.

There had been a lot of activity relating to the proposal for 25,000 new dwellings. This would receive no special treatment so would be required to go through the normal Local Development Plan process.

Cllr Williams was aware that there had been some issues with bin collections and asked people to get in touch if there was a problem.

Cllr Traverse-Healy referred to the Planning Authority Report and the relationship between the Parish and District Councils when views on planning applications sometimes differ between material considerations. He added that if there was a substantial difference in opinion then the application should go before the Planning committee. Cllr Williams agreed to raise this at committee. A discussion then took place on the scheme of Delegation and the planning application for 8 Station Road where parishioners, who had made representations against the proposal, felt that their comments had not been taken into consideration. Cllr Williams would also raise this with the Planners.

-HW

2.2 County Council

Cllr Kindersley had circulated a report. He reminded the meeting of the latest business grants for those businesses suffering from the lockdown. Cllr Williams confirmed that she had been in contact with the local businesses.

Before Christmas the County Council planning department had been in contact regarding the approval of the planning application for Plantation Quarry. As requested by the Parish Council an ecological management plan had been submitted. As this addressed Councillor concerns the application would be given approval.

Residents aged over 80 were receiving phone calls and letters asking them to book their Covid vaccinations at the Stevenage hub. Cllr Kindersley added that if this was not possible the vaccinations would be carried out, arranged by the GP practices, on a more local basis.

The East West rail issue continued. A series of local protest groups around the new proposed route had been set up. Cllr Kindersley added that the best route continued to be the route proposed by CamBed Railroad.

There was now a local campaign group up and running relating to the Thakeham proposal for 25,000 new homes locally. There had been a remote meeting with the developer the previous week with a lot of direct questions. They did say that they intended to make a submission under the LDP Call for Sites at Easter.

Cllr Kindersley then made people aware that County Council officers were being deployed on Covid related jobs so the response time to queries could be delayed.

A discussion then took place on the intentions of the developers. It was presumed that the application would be assessed in the same way as the other sites put forward.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Williams and Cllr Kindersley for their reports.

3 COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS FROM PARISHIONERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

3.1 County Broadband

The lack of support for the County Broadband project in the village was a concern for a resident who was anxious not to lose the opportunity to have the superfast supply. He asked if there was anything that the Parish Council could do to support the proposal and encourage residents to sign up. Cllr Bird, who had been following the progress of the project, agreed that County Broadband would be another option to British Telecom. He was aware that the company had not got the support that they needed to progress to the next stage. The meeting was reminded that Councillors had discussed the proposal at the September Parish Council meeting following a presentation which the Chairman and Cllr Bird attended. They both acknowledged at that meeting that the Parish Council was unable to endorse the product, and it was up to the individuals if they wanted to sign up, and agreed that the village should be updated in the newsletter which they were.

A further discussion took place with the resident where it was recognised that the service would be beneficial to the village. It was reiterated that the Parish Council could not be seen to support a private company but agreed that a further communication could be put on the village Facebook page. Cllr Bird and Cllr Badger would prepare a draft for the approval of the Chairman before uploading. **-MB &NB**

3.2 Other

There were no other issues raised.

4 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF

4.1 The Parish Council Meeting held on 14th December 2020

On a proposition by Cllr Upchurch, seconded by Cllr Austin, the minutes as circulated were taken as read and then approved as a true record and would be signed by the Chairman.

5 MATTERS ARISING AND CARRIED FORWARD

5.1 Update on new website

Cllr Drew advised that she was still awaiting photos. The website had been set up but there were some issues with the transferring of the data base. She would forward details to Cllr Bird and the Clerk to see if they could help. **-AD**

5.2 Covid Volunteer Group Update

Regular updates were being forwarded by South Cambridgeshire District Council. Cllr Belson had asked if a new volunteer group should be set up as the Covid case position was increasing. It was noted that there were already volunteers in the village who the Chairman was aware was helping residents.

6 FINANCES

6.1 To receive the financial statement and to approve the payment of bills

Agreed Proposed Cllr Wheatley Seconded Cllr Traverse-Healy

E-ON

Reading Room electricity January 2021 DD £ 39.00

HAVEN POWER

Street light electricity December 2020 DD (inc £46.08VAT) £286.35

THE PRINTWORKS (ROYSTON) LTD

Newsletters January 2021 £ 50.00

IN AND OUT

Disabled toilet clean December 2020 £ 7.82

LITLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Contribution towards stationery £14.29

Contribution towards SLCC Membership £50,00 £ 64.29

GILBROS

Pressure washing play area (inc £80.00VAT) £ 480.00

MR N BADGER

Reimburse for play area expenses £ 51.99

MRS S WALMESLEY

Clerks salary and expenses Oct-December 2020	£1904.52
HMRC	
PAYE October -December 2020	Nil
TOTAL	£2883.97

6.2 agreement of Budget/Precept 2021/22
A draft budget had been prepared and distributed to Councillors. A discussion took place on the cost of removal of the Leylandii trees by the play area the cost of which could be taken from the Section 106 money or reserves. The Chairman and Clerk had answered some questions raised by Cllr Bird earlier in the day. Councillors recognised that the County or District Councils could put more of their responsibilities onto the Parish Council so a healthy reserve needed to be held to cover all eventualities. On a proposal by Cllr Bird, seconded by Cllr Traverse-Healy, it was agreed to keep the precept amount at £31,500.00 for 2021/22. All Councillors in agreement. The Clerk to make the demand from South Cambridgeshire District Council. **-Clerk**

7 RECREATION GROUND/CONSERVATION AREA

7.1 Village Tree Planting Update

The project co-ordinator had circulated an updated plan taking into account the current Covid restrictions. Rather than to delay the tree planting and risk trees not establishing it was proposed to ask volunteers to work within their own household group staggered so that there were no group gatherings. This would count as a daily exercise outdoor session. Councillors agreed with the proposal.

7.2 Play Area Upgrade

Cllr Badger advised that the jet washing of the play area had taken place and there had been a lot of positive comments. He added that this was a really good job carried out by a local company. Cllr Badger was thanked for arranging this.

7.2.1 Purchase of Picnic Tables

As discussed at the last meeting it had been agreed to purchase two recycled plastic picnic benches. The cost would either come from the Section 106 money or reserves. It was noted that these would need to be bolted to the ground.

7.2.2 Quotation for Leylandii work

As discussed under item 6.2 quotations were being sought for the removal of the Leylandii trees and the grinding out of the stumps. This was likely to cost in the region of £10,000. It had been suggested by a contractor that the tree had a TPO on them but this was contradicted by Cllr Drew who had documentation to confirm that the trees with a TPO stopped where the Leylandii started. **-NB**

7.3 Reopening of Reading Room/Pavilion

Due to the current Covid restrictions the Reading Room and Pavilion were closed.

7.4 Recreation Ground Checks

7.4.1 Closing of Disabled Toilet

Cllr Drew reported that there had been an incident where youths had gathered in and around the toilet. The key to the toilet was also missing. As leaving the toilet open may encourage youngsters to gather, and not to social distance, it was agreed that the toilet would be closed for the time being during restrictions. Cllr Badger agreed to arrange for a replacement lock to be installed. The Clerk to advise the cleaning company of the closure. **-NB & Clerk**

7.4.2 Grasscutting

It was advised that the conservation area had still not be cut. It was noted that the area was very wet but the grass would need to be cut by the end of February so that the spring flowers would not be affected. Clerk to again remind the contractor. **-Clerk**

8 MAINTENANCE

8.1 Footpaths/Footways

8.1.1 Craft Way Footway

No action had been taken on cutting back the trees.

8.1.2 Cobbs Lane Footpath

There was no update on the reason for the surfacing.

8.1.3 Tween Town Woods Footpath Surface

Councillors had looked at the footpath and agreed that it was extremely boggy and slippery. This would eventually dry up. They agreed not to take any action as if

sensible footwear was worn the path could be used. The Clerk to advise the resident who had brought this to the Parish Councils attention. **-Clerk**

8.1.3.1 Section 106 Monies

The Clerk had circulated a breakdown of the outstanding Section 106 money, and when it would need to be used by, to Councillors.

8.2 Traffic

8.2.1 LHI 21/22 feasibility Report

The feasibility report had been circulated to Councillors who agreed with the proposal and the contribution, if the application was successful, of £2152.15. Details of the remote Panel meetings to support the application had been received. The slot for Steeple Morden was on the 17th February at 10.45am. As Cllr Austin had the most knowledge on the submitted scheme he would try to attend.

-KA

8.2.2 Traffic Speed –Request for Police Presence

Now that the Christmas break was over the Clerk would try and resume contact with the Police officers. **-Clerk**

9 **PLANNING/TREE WORK APPLICATIONS**

9.1 Planning Applications

9.1.1 Planning Ref 20/04915/HFUL

Cheyneys Lodge Cottage, 81 Station Road –Single storey rear extension

Recommendation -Support

9.1.2 Planning Ref 20/04358//FUL (Amendment)

Station Road –Change of use from a C3 (Dwelling House) to C2 (Care Home). Amended Site Plan

Councillors had noted that the concerns raised over the traffic and parking had been addressed. The gate to the property had also been removed. Cambridgeshire County Council had not objected and accepted the traffic assessment.

Cllr Traverse Healy expressed his ongoing concern regarding confirmation that the change of use would be very specific to a Care Home. That did not appear to have been featured in any of the comments. He had contacted the Planning Officer and was waiting for a call back.

The Clerk was asked to respond to the consultation stating that Councillors were extremely disappointed that the application was not going before the Planning Committee. Conditions had been agreed between the Developer and Parish Council at a Parish Council meeting in front of parishioners. These conditions appeared to have been totally disregarded and the Clerk would question why these cannot be part of the planning permission. **-Clerk**

9.1.3 Planning Ref 20/05083/TELNOT (For information only)

Land at 60 Station Road –Installation of 1 x 8m wooden pole (6.2m above ground)

9.1.4 Planning Ref 20/01907/CONDA (For information only)

22 North Brook End –Submission details required for condition 4 (materials) and 4 (rooflights, windows, doors, rainwater goods, eaves and verges detail) pursuant to listed building consent 20/01907/S73

9.2 SCDC Delegation Meeting re-8 Station Road

As discussed with District Councillor Williams, and under Item 9.1.2, Councillors were disappointed that the application would not be going before the Planning Committee.

The Planning Officer had been advised that the Parish Council was aware that there were significant numbers of objectors to the application who would feel that their voice was not being heard.

10 **TO CONSIDER CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED INCLUDING:**

10.1 Offer to replace Kestrel Box

The offer was for the box located by the brook beyond the tennis courts on the way to White Ponds Wood. Someone would need to fix the new box into place.

Councillors were supportive of the offer but concerned over the accessibility. It was advised that the Kestrels were still nesting in the box during 2020. It was agreed that it be suggested that a box could be located in another location. Clerk to reply.-**Clerk**

11 COUNCILLORS' ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND REQUIRING THE URGENT ATTENTION OF THE CLERK

11.1 Refurbishment of The Green telephone kiosk

Cllr Upchurch reported that she had been approached by residents wanting to refurbish the kiosk. It was noted that permission had been granted by the Parish Council previously for this but at that time the work never went ahead. Councillors agreed to reiterate the agreement. The Clerk was asked to write to the residents advising of this decision and to confirm that the Parish Council would pay for materials used. **-Clerk**

11.2 Steeple Morden Village Award

Cllr Upchurch reminded Councillors that the award had not been presented since 2018. The presentation used to be made at the Harvest Fair but since this had not been held the Parish Council had tried to tie in with the Annual Parish Meeting. Due to the Covid restrictions this meeting was not held in 2020.

Suggestions were made for recipients who had contributed to helping the village during the lockdown periods. The Chairman asked Councillors to forward their nomination to the Clerk so that a decision on who would receive the award could be made at the February Parish Council meeting. **-Cllrs**

11.3 Dog Fouling

Cllr Wheatley reported that there was an increase in dog fouling particularly on the recreation ground where more dogs than ever were being exercised. She asked for a reminder to owners, to pick up after their dogs, to be put in the newsletter and on the village Facebook page. Cllr Upchurch asked for an additional comment to remind walkers to keep their dogs on the footpaths and not allow them to run on the crops.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 8th February 2021 at 7pm

There was no further business and declared the meeting closed at 8.35 pm

Chairman

Date