

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Caroline Robinson

CLERK: Mrs. Jenny Hollington

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 12th January 2015 at Steep Village Hall

Present:

Cllrs. Caroline Robinson (in the Chair)	Terry Cook
Simon Bridger	Jenny Martin
Charles Gibson	Peter Cruttenden
Peter Thackrey	Jim MacDonald

In Attendance:

County Councillor, Vaughan Clarke
District Councillor, Nick Drew
Clerk, Jenny Hollington

There was 1 member of the public in attendance throughout the meeting.

15/01 **APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Nick Hurst

15/02 **MINUTES** – The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 3rd November 2014 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed.

15/03 **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES** – Lighting at Nine Acres, Steep Marsh – the Chairman confirmed that the letter regarding intrusive lighting outside the flats in Steep Marsh should be sent to Radian not Drum Housing. The Clerk was asked to re-send the letter.

15/04 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare any interest in any matter on the Agenda.

15/05 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Steep Marsh ditches – It was pointed out that there is already a deep sludge build up in the ditch at Downgate Corner – Cllr. Gibson confirmed that HCC are aware of this and he will monitor the situation. It was pointed out that HCC resources are currently stretched and the implications of undertaking this type of work ourselves needs to be understood. The County Councillor will liaise with Highways to ensure they would have no objection.
- Sleepers – HCC representatives have visited the site and will take this forward – the P.C. will chase a response.

15/06 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** - The County Councillor reported on the high cost of last winter's flooding and the lessons to be learnt, new legislation on fly-tipping and superfast broadband (for up-to-date info on connection go to www.hampshiresuperfastbroadband.com). The County Councillor's full report is appended to these Minutes.

15/07 **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** – The District Councillor reported on the following items:

- Rural Broadband – Cllr. Drew is currently engaged in driving rural broadband – Steep are included in the BT roll out.
- SDNPA – there has been no feedback so far on the SHLAA sites from SDNPA – all communities need to keep a close eye out for this information which is due out imminently.
- Grant Funding – Grants continue to be made available. The latest funding pot is for £250 towards youth projects.

15/08 **FINANCE**

(a) Bank Reconciliation – the bank reconciliation to end of December and copy of the November/December bank statement were circulated and approved.

(b) The following cheques were approved:

Chq No. 100026	Chris Budd (Footpath 20)	£2544.00
Chq No. 100027	Jenny Hollington (salary Nov/Dec)	£1008.80
Chq No. 100028	HMRC (tax)	£ 31.20

(c) Correspondence from EHDC indicates that the Parish will receive no Council Tax Support Grant for the 2015/16 financial year. The Clerk was asked to check this with EHDC as last year the sum of £143.84 was received and it is understood that no cuts are being made.

15/09 SHEET CROSSING – The Public Exhibition may now be held at the end of February/beginning of March. As soon as a date is confirmed, posters will be displayed around the parish and on the website.

Petersfield Town Council objected to the closure of the crossing following a presentation by Network Rail at the November Town Council Meeting. The District Councillor is requesting that East Hampshire District Council now take an official stand.

The Chairman said she had spoken to Stuart Jarvis, Director of Economy, Transport and the Environment at HCC and invited him to visit the parish – however, he remains non-committal at this stage.

15/10 ROADS AND TRAFFIC

A3 re-surfacing – HCC have confirmed that resurfacing work will be carried out from Butser Hill to the Ham Barn roundabout in the 15/16 financial year. Although not the whisper surfacing, noise will be reduced by 70%.

Working Party Up-date –

Culverts - work has been carried out to partially clear the culvert at Mill Lane and this seems to be working adequately. The culvert from Church Road appears to be blocked as the road has flooded recently (although it did clear quickly). The culvert at Downgate Corner hasn't been cleared – Mike Pillans is aware and will take a look at this issue.

Church Road – consultation on proposed 20 mph advisory signs will take place during 15/16 with installation of the signs in 16/17 – although it is hoped that this can be bought forward.

School drop off area – a meeting between HCC, the Parish Council, and the Head Teacher, and Chairman of the School Governors has taken place. The School are keen to follow up a plan to create a drop off point in front of Steep Common – this would entail the hedge boundary of the Common being moved back. If the P.C. were to agree, the School would pursue funding. Ian Janes from HCC will arrange for plans to be drawn up for P.C. consideration. The yellow zig zag lines are effective in enabling the children to be seen better, but children are still unsure whether cars are flashing to let them cross or to indicate to other cars.

Hedges – overgrown hedges are an on-going problem in the parish and it was queried whether the P.C. needed to be more proactive in addressing the issue. It was pointed out that only HCC has the legal power to enforce hedge cutting where it impacts on road users so, although it is a lengthy process, cases will need to be reported to them.

Ditches – these are also an on-going problem and need to be monitored. In Steep Marsh the ditches haven't been finished at the Oasts – however, there is a possibility of a run off over the adjoining fields and Cllr. Gibson will look into this further.

Litter – A letter of thanks will be written (and sent via CPRE) to the volunteer who clears the parish lanes.

HCC Operation Resilience Event – This event had been attended by the Chairman and Clerk and was aimed at encouraging Parishes to consider preparing an emergency plan – this item will be discussed further at the March Meeting

15/11 FOOTPATHS

Footpath 20 – Work has been carried out to improve drainage on the path from Steep Common to the fields at the bottom of Mill Lane and will provide a long term benefit in helping to prevent erosion. The project has been funded by Developers Contributions (EHDC).

Footpath 22a – Kissing gates are to be installed on this footpath to improve access from Steep to Steep Marsh. This project has been funded by HCC Small Grants and will be match funded by Developer's Contributions (EHDC)

15/12 STEEP COMMON –

Installation of new bench – the District Councillor and County Councillor were thanked for their generous donations towards the installation of the new bench at Steep Common

Bonfire & Firework event – this year's event had been exceptionally well attended – the Common had been full to capacity and the event seems to be growing in popularity year by year. Concerns with regard to safety were expressed and will need to be addressed by the bonfire committee for next year's event and risk assessment. Consideration should be given to building a smaller bonfire (allowing more room for people), closing the road, and better marshalling. It was agreed that this item should be discussed again in July, allowing plenty of time for action. The Clerk was asked to investigate the cost of road closure.

15/13 STEEP VILLAGE HALL

Solar Generation – It was noted that the solar panels have generated an income of £850 from SSE in the period November 13-November 14.

Feedback on Community Christmas Carol event – The donated tree had been rather on the small side, this year, so a Christmas tree had been bought from Wylds Farm in Liss at a very reasonable price. In addition, Cllr Martin had been promised an even better deal next year, if a letter is sent in good time.

Sadly attendance was poor on the night and it was queried whether the event should be biannual. It was pointed out that the carol service at Stroud Church had been held the night before and possibly the two events were too close. In addition, the W.I. will be carol singing in Steep in 2015, so this would need to be taken into account when considering whether to hold the event this year.

Outside Play Area – work to improve the play facilities will take place during the Easter Holidays. Cllr. MacDonald has made initial enquiries regarding the possible use of Developer's Contributions and this will be followed up. Volunteers will also be required to make this more of a community project.

15/14 FOOTBRIDGE OVER THE A3 – The request to name the footbridge over the A3 “The Lady Joan Bridge” by the family of the lady who campaigned for its installation was considered. A previous Chairman remembered Lady Joan well and Bedales were also supportive of the suggestion - the request was therefore approved.

15/15 FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS – There will be a minimum of 3 (and possibly 4) vacancies for Steep Parish Councillors at the May elections and nominations need to be handed in at EHDC by Thursday, 2nd April. It was agreed that another article should be written for the February newsletter advertising the vacancies to appear alongside a more personal account of what is involved on a day-to-day basis – Cllr. Cruttenden and the Chairman agreed to write the articles.

15/16 CORRESPONDENCE

- The response from Damien Hinds regarding exemption for National Parks on the threshold proposal for affordable housing was noted.

15/17 TO APPROVE DATES OF MEETINGS 2015

The list of meeting dates circulated prior to the meeting was discussed. It was agreed to invite a representative of SDNPA to talk on the subject of “Dark Skies” at the Annual Parish Assembly on Thursday, 14th May – Cllr. MacDonald to action.

In view of the fact that there is now only one more Parish Council Meeting before the elections, an additional meeting will be held on Monday, 30th March, to which potential candidates will be encouraged to attend.

The regular Parish Council Meeting in Steep Marsh will be held on Monday, 1st June

15/18 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, 2nd March 2015 at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 9.19 p.m.