

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Caroline Robinson

CLERK: Mrs. Jenny Hollington

Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 4th November 2013 at Steep Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

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

In Attendance:

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

There were no members of the public present.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. Peter Cruttenden

13/133 **MINUTES** – The Minutes of Parish Council Meetings held on 2nd August, 2nd September and 7th October 2013 were approved as correct records of the meetings and duly signed.

13/134 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest in any matter on the Agenda.

13/135 **PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

13/136 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR COMMENT** – County Councillor, Vaughan Clarke, reported on the following:

The Government has reduced its grant to the County Council once more and, in order to ensure there is no rise in Council Tax in April a further £19m of savings has to be made. The fact that there is an increased demand for adult social care means that any savings have to be made in other parts of the budget. At the moment Adult Social Care costs £1m a day in Hampshire, with a further capital spend of £45m this current financial year.

The number of people using the buses in Hampshire is at a 20 year high. Of the 310 bus routes in Hampshire, the County Council supports 200, often for only part of a day. Of the 5 million passenger trips a year, 1 in 6 are subsidised by the County Council.

The latest position on unemployed claimants in the Parish remains very low (1.5% aged 16-24 and 0.4% aged 25+).

13/137 **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT** – District Councillor, Nick Drew, reported on the following:

The consultation period for the Joint Core Strategy is now closed and the document is back in front of the Inspector - it is hoped that this will be in place by early 2014.

A new board of business experts is being formed to advise EHDC on strategy and policy matters – local, successful CEOs and entrepreneurs are encouraged to contact East Hampshire if they are willing to be involved.

A pot of money (£3,000) has been allocated to all District Councillors for community projects – details can be obtained direct from District Councillors.

Steep has been successful in being included within the Rural Fast Broadband Programme for 2015 and proposed rollout dates will be reported as soon as details are received.

13/138 FINANCE

(a) The following cheques were approved:

100267	ICO	£35.00	(data protection)
100268	Mythic Beasts	£60.00	(website)
100269	Chris Budd	£240.00	(retainer BOAT 31)
100270	J. Street	£60.00	(website)
100271	Steep V. Hall	£2617.29	(VAT refund – refurbishment)
100272	Stephen Lamont	£780.50	(3 rd instalment of noticeboard)
100273	J. Hollington	£1040.00	(2 months' Clerk's salary)
100274	Chris Budd	£1860.00	(Footpath 18)
100275	Parish On-line	£24.00	(Get mapping)

The following two cheques were approved following discussion as below – items (c) and (d):

100276	Steep P.C.C.	£605.00	(Newsletter donation)
100277	Steep P.C.C.	£250.00	(Churchyard maintenance)

(b) Figures showing the November position and anticipated end of year figures had been circulated prior to the meeting and were noted.

(c) Correspondence received from the Editor of the Village Newsletter (circulated prior to the meeting) was discussed. A donation of £605 was approved for the current financial year (as budgeted) and it was agreed that the request for an increase in 2014/15 would be considered under items (e) and (f) budget and precept .

(d) The P.C.C. request for a contribution towards maintenance of the Churchyard for 2013 was discussed and a £250 donation approved.

(e) The 2014/15 budget proposals were discussed – these show a suggested ring-fenced contingency fund of £500 towards the cost of the next election and £250 for possible repair/replacement of office equipment (e.g. laptop). Allowing for these figures there is a deficit of approximately £1,500 if the precept remains at the 2013/14 level (£10,500). Concern was expressed that there would be no money available for projects such as repairs to footpaths, etc.

It was agreed that a Finance Sub-Committee should be formed to discuss the budget and precept in greater detail and to present options to be agreed at the January P.C. Meeting. Cllrs. Caroline Robinson, Jim MacDonald, Terry Cook volunteered to be on the Sub-Committee and Cllr. Peter Cruttenden will also be asked.

(f) Precept – A decision will be required by EHDC in early January.

13/139 TO AGREE THE PRIORITIES OF THE RECREATION GROUP WORKING PARTIES

The Working Party Report had been circulated at the September Meeting. The short term priorities were discussed and agreed as follows:

Short Term Projects:

- Footpath 18 – the work has now been completed and funded from Developers Contributions.
- Footpath 20 – the path seems to be in a better condition at the moment - an eye will be kept on it and drainage considered if it gets worse again.

- Footpath 13 – the surface is very slippery and this well used path may need re-surfacing – however nothing can be done at the moment as the landowner is unwell.
- Bridleway 21 – The track alongside Jack’s Meadow is in very poor condition - Cllr. Jenny Martin will negotiate with Jim Hobson for improvements.

Longer Term Projects

- Footpath 13 – a suggestion that a path might be created alongside the C18 for safer access will be followed up if grant funding can be obtained.
- Footpath 4 – the land is hard to maintain because of the lie of the land – a possible solution would be to re-route the path to the other side of the road – the Clerk was asked to write to landowners regarding feasibility.

13/140 ROADS AND TRAFFIC

- (a) Concern was expressed that no report has been received from the Working Party. It was agreed that Cllrs. Caroline Robinson, Simon Bridger and Peter Thackrey should meet with Susie Openshaw to re-engage with the Group – the Clerk was asked to organise a meeting a.s.a.p.

- (b) Correspondence regarding speed of traffic on the A272 Midhurst Road and on Stoner Hill was discussed:

A272 - It was agreed that the Chairman should send a letter to HCC in support of a reduced speed limit;

Stoner Hill – it was agreed that the Chairman should write to Mr. Knight offering support – this matter will be pursued through the Roads & Traffic Working Party and HCC.

- (c) Sheet Level Crossing – It appears that Network Rail is again considering options for the Sheet Railway crossing although, as yet nothing has been decided. Concern was expressed at the impact a closure would have on small local businesses and roads and traffic and the Clerk was asked to write to Network Rail and Sheet Parish Council to this effect.

13/141 CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) E-mail correspondence from Chris Patterson, SDNPA regarding Local List consultation was discussed. It was agreed that the current list is appropriate and no reduction is required.
- (b) The list of local area issues and improvements as perceived by the children from Steep Primary School was discussed. Of interest was the item on litter which on occasions has been appalling on Steep Common. The Clerk was asked to write to the School to explain that the Parish Council will be giving consideration to the children’s concerns.
- (c) E-mail correspondence from the owner of the Cricketers pub was discussed. All agreed that the changes at the Cricketers are a vast and welcome improvement. It was felt that perhaps advertising via the Village Newsletter may improve local and mid-week numbers.
- (d) An e-mail from the Community Liaison Officer at RAF Odiham was discussed - in response to concerned phone calls about low flying helicopters from Steep residents, the Community Liaison Officer has offered to give a presentation. It was agreed that the Clerk should ascertain interest via the Newsletter before arranging, as the Parish Council is not aware of any current particular concerns.

13/142 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

The meeting with Chris Patterson to discuss possible future action with regard to Neighbourhood Planning had been useful and informative. The consensus from the discussion is that no action is required at this stage – Steep P.C. will continue to engage with the SDNPA process and feed into their broader plans.

13/143 WW1 COMMEMORATIONS

Ten thousand poppy seeds have been purchased from the British Legion and these will be sown around the Parish to flower next year. It was agreed that Cllr. Terry Cook would spray off the agreed sites at Mill Lane, Steep Marsh and Ridge Common Lane and scatter the seeds. Cllr. Jenny Martin will ask Jim Hobson whether the poppies could also be scattered in Jack's Meadow.

13/144 ON-GOING ITEMS FROM SEPTEMBER MEETING

- (a) Noticeboards – the Church Road noticeboard is now installed and is a much welcomed improvement at the Village Hall. The installation of the Ridge Common Lane noticeboard will be organised a.s.a.p.
- (b) Hedges – response has been fairly positive to the letters sent out to residents whose hedges are causing site line problems. Cllr. Simon Bridger was asked to cut back the hedge at the War Memorial prior to the Remembrance Day service.
- (c) Seating on Steep Common – An estimate of approximately £1,000 has been received, 2 further estimates will be obtained before a decision is made.

13/145 COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROLS

This event is being held on Monday, 16th December at 6.00 p.m. at the Village Hall. Bedales have once again kindly promised to donate a Christmas tree and the intention is to follow the same format as last year with carols, bell ringing, mulled wine, sticky sausages, and mince pies. Volunteers will be needed to help on the night and contribute food and drink. It was agreed that a Sub-Committee consisting of Cllrs. Jenny Martin, Caroline Robinson and Peter Thackrey will meet to finalise arrangements.

13/146 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- EHAPTC – Wednesday, 27th November 2013 at 7.30 p.m.

13/147 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Monday, 6th January 2014 at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall

The meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.