

DRAFT

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Jim MacDonald

CLERK: Jenny Hollington

Minutes of an on-line Parish Council Teams Meeting held on Monday, 12th April 2021 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Jim MacDonald (in the Chair)
Kate Ashfield Terry Cook Peter Cruttenden
Jeff Graham Freddie Holmes Nick Hurst
Jenny Martin Jonathan Turk

In Attendance: Nick Drew, District Councillor
Russell Oppenheimer, County Councillor
Clare Moriarty, Chair of Open Space Working Group
Jenny Hollington, Clerk

There was 1 member of the public present at the meeting.

Minute	Item	Action
21/61	<u>APOLOGIES</u> – None received	
21/62	<u>MINUTES</u> – The Minutes of the on-line Teams Meeting held on Monday, 1 st March 2021 were approved – the Minutes will be signed by the Chairman after the meeting due to Covid-19 restrictions.	
21/63	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> – The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary interest in any matter on the Agenda. The Parish Council is also Sole Managing Trustee of the Village Hall and the Chairman noted the possible conflict of interest between the two roles.	
21/64	<u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u> – <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There have been several planning applications for properties with historical significance, but which are not necessarily listed, and queried whether there is a list of Steep’s valued properties? The Chairman referred to the Steep Buildings and Monuments booklet which was produced as part of the Parish Plan. It was suggested that Steep History Group could be asked to review the booklet to see if a draft list of historically significant buildings could be developed.• The noise from motorbikes on Stoner Hill had been particularly bad over the Bank Holiday weekend and this is not appropriate for a small village within the South Downs National Park. The recent planning application to extend facilities at Loomies Moto Café on the A272 may also play a part in exacerbating the noise problem and should be discouraged. The Chairman noted that Speedwatch will be re-starting in the coming weeks which may help to deter motorcyclists from the area. Cllr. Drew confirmed that another “Noise” meeting will be organised after the County Council elections and suggested that in the meantime residents should write to the CEO of the National Park and Hampshire County Council. The Chairman confirmed that Steep P.C. will continue to engage fully on this issue and said he would write to both SDNPA and HCC to highlight the problem.	
21/65	<u>LAND AT CHURCH ROAD</u> – Following correspondence with the Charity Commission, Village Hall Trustees are preparing to consult with residents about various options for the land – it is hoped	

that a leaflet will be delivered to every household by the end of the month.

21/66 OPEN SPACE WORKING GROUP – Clare Moriarty, Chair of OSWG, confirmed that a briefing meeting would be organised to up-date the group on options for the Village Hall land.

21/67 FINANCE -

- Grant Application – Citizen’s Advice East Hampshire – Following discussion, a grant of £200 was approved in appreciation of their support to Steep residents through recent difficult times.
- Bank Reconciliation – The bank reconciliation to 10th March had been circulated prior to the meeting and was approved.
- Cheques – Cheques for April payment were approved as follows:

Chq No.		Payee	Service
100382	£474.00	Woodberry	Dual Litter bin - approved at March mtg
100383	£378.78	HALC	Affiliation fees - 21-22
100384	£500.00	Bill Robinson	Lengthsman - March
100386	£738.33	Jenny Hollington	Clerk
100387	£200.00	Citizen's Advice	Grant
100388	£56.89	J. Graham	Refund - materials for installation of new bin
	£2,348.00		

21/68 LUTCOMBE POND – Because of recent pressures of work on the Parish Council, the project to repair and enhance the pond has not moved forward. Cllr. Turk said he would be willing to take the lead on this and will follow up with the small working group already involved. Cllr. Holmes said she would also be willing to help. JT

21/69 LENGTHSMAN– The Clerk confirmed that there had been a good response to the advert for a new Lengthsman and that interviews will take place on 21st April.

21/70 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – Cllr. Oppenheimer’s written report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following items were highlighted:

- Byways Open to All Traffic/Motorcycle Noise – Cllr. Oppenheimer said that he felt reasonably confident that his campaign for BOATs to be reclassified as restricted byways to prevent damage by dirt-bikes would be successful. However, in respect of motorbike noise, the likelihood of acoustic cameras being made available in Hampshire is low despite the trial of acoustic cameras in 2019.
- Project Gigabit – Hampshire has been included in Phase 1b of this project to subsidise broadband delivery in hardest to reach places.
- Community Champions Programme – This is a new initiative to tackle health inequality by using volunteers to support someone to lead a healthier lifestyle (e.g. giving up smoking).
- South Downs Enterprise Partnership – This is a new initiative to create a business community to help strengthen the rural economy.

Cllr. Oppenheimer’s full report is appended to the Minutes and will be made available via the Parish Council website.

21/71 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT – Cllr. Drew highlighted the following items:

- Planning/Enforcement - EHDC is currently experiencing a high number of planning

- applications and enforcement queries which is causing pressure on officers.
- Litter – The increase in roadside litter is a continuing problem and is especially unsightly on the A3 roundabout where there is always a large amount of discarded packaging from the MacDonalds restaurant. The Chairman queried whether EHDC work with the Probation Service as they may be able to provide labour to help deal with the problem? Cllr. Drew said he would investigate this suggestion.

21/72 STEEP COMMON –

Annual Play Inspection Report – There are still some minor issues outstanding, which will be discussed at the May P.C. Meeting. It has been noted that Steep School have a new Groundsman who appears to be using weedkiller on the Common – Cllr. Graham will e-mail the School to ask that this is discontinued.

JG

New Dual-Purpose Bin – The new bin has been installed and will be monitored re timing of emptying in view of increased visitors and use of the Common for picnics. Cllr. Graham was thanked for organising and installing the bin - it looks very smart!

21/73 ROADS AND TRAFFIC –

Teams Meeting with Local Engineers – The meeting had been disappointing - it appears that Highways are currently inundated with work and don't have the time or budget to deal with local concerns.

Blocked Drains – Since the meeting above, there has been some progress with the blocked drains in Mill Lane which have now been jetted twice(!). The blocked ditch outside Cobblers has also been addressed but this has resulted in damage to the brickwork, leaving a dangerous cavity. Concerns were expressed about the lack of programming – no-one had been advised of the two road closures - the number of contractors involved due to health and safety, and shoddy repairs. Cllr. Oppenheimer said it was disappointing to hear bad reviews – however, Highways are operating with reduced staff and are currently focussed on priority work – rural parishes do tend to miss out. He undertook to feedback Steep Parish Council's comments and continue to fight for improved highways budgets.

Parking and Turning Problems in Church Road – Steep School has sought the Parish Council's support in addressing the problems being experienced at School drop-off and pick-up times. Some years ago, following a minor accident, the Parish Council had tried to find a more permanent solution to the problem via Hampshire Highways (Ian Janes) – however, apart from very expensive options, the only useful recommendation had been to keep Steep Common hedges well-trimmed to improve sightlines. Cllr. Drew confirmed that parking is an issue experienced at many schools across the district caused by far more cars being on the road. Various suggestions to help keep traffic flowing were discussed, including phased drop-offs and pick-up times, use of Village Hall car park with crocodile walking to School (it was noted that the footpath is too narrow to consider this option), one-way traffic (no turning). Cllr. Holmes suggested that parents should be discouraged from walking their children from the car to the school, utilising a team of volunteers instead to reduce the time each car was parked. Cllr. Martin will feedback all the suggestions to the School.

JM

Community Funded Initiative – Phase 2 Traffic Management – Stoner and Bell Hill – Joe Folland, HCC Project Engineer has confirmed that the Police are willing to support the proposed changes to the speed restrictions on Stoner Hill – the official consultation process will be initiated once the elections on 6th May are over. The project has been put forward again for central SDNPA S.106 funding and the outcome of the application should be known in June/July. If successful, detailed plans will be drawn up for consideration and consultation. In the meantime, Joe has

suggested that if the Parish Council wish to push forward, they could consider purchasing speed indicator devices - HCC will advise on installation points.

Traffic Noise – This item had already been covered earlier in the meeting.

21/74 FOOTPATHS – The detailed results of the survey of the 31 footpaths in Steep, carried out by the Recreation Group, had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Chairman expressed the Parish Council’s appreciation for the hard work and enthusiasm shown and said he would be writing to thank everyone involved. Several priorities have been identified via the report and the Chairman suggested that Cllr. Martin should seek quotes for the priority work for further discussion at the next meeting. In the meantime, the Clerk will look at P.C. budgets as well as funding opportunities available via HCC and SDNPA to help fund the work required. Chair
JM
Clerk

21/75 COMMUNITY PROJECT – PLAY EQUIPMENT AT HAYES COTTAGES - Cllr Graham is still waiting to hear if there are any covenants on the land from EHDC. Cllr. Drew offered his assistance if required. JG

21/76 FLOODING AT THE WAR MEMORIAL –The Clerk said she has not heard back from the Heritage Officer at EHDC about whether permission is required to lift and re-lay the stones around the War Memorial to prevent the flooding. She will continue to chase. Clerk

It was pointed out that for the past 21 years Cllr. Cruttenden has been keeping the area around the Millennium bench, on the opposite side of the road to the War Memorial, tidy – it was agreed that it is time to look for another volunteer to take this on, or perhaps make it a regular job for the Lengthsman. Cllr. Cruttenden was thanked for undertaking the work under the radar for so long!

21/77 EHDC CODE OF CONDUCT – EHDC has recently reviewed and revised its code of conduct and has written to invite Town and Parish Councils to formally adopt the Code as their own to simplify the process when EHDC need to consider standards issues. The Clerk was asked to re-circulate the information to enable the new Code to be considered for formal adoption at the next meeting. Clerk

21/78 CORRESPONDENCE

SDNPA Parish Webinar – Dark Night Skies – 21st April - Cllr. Holmes will attend the meeting on behalf of Steep P.C. FH

Allotments – There have been another couple of requests for an allotment from Steep residents and the Clerk confirmed that she is keeping details on file. The Chairman pointed out that the last time there had been an allotment in the parish had been in Church Road in 1986, after which the land had fallen into disuse. Clerk

Query from Damian Hinds’ Office – A query about the land held in Trust now held by Steep in Need had been received from Damian Hinds’ Office. Steep P.C. are working with SIN to provide a detailed response. Clerk

Correspondence relating to the Settlement Boundary – Resident queries about the Parish Council’s input to the proposed change to the settlement boundary will be responded to as soon as possible. Chair

Freedom of Information Request – The FoI request in respect of the designation of the land in Church Road and changes to the settlement boundary will be considered in line with ICO guidelines. Chair

Resident’s letter to Steep P.C. as Trustee of SWMVC – The content of the correspondence has been noted.

21/79 ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY – In view of current legislation which only covers electronic meetings until 7th May and social gathering restrictions not being fully lifted until 21st June, it was agreed to hold the Annual Parish Assembly via Teams on Tuesday, 4th May at 7.00 p.m.

21/80 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – The Annual Meeting of the Council will follow immediately after the Annual Parish Assembly on Tuesday, 4th May.

The meeting closed at 9.55 p.m.