

**STEEP PARISH COUNCIL**

**CHAIRPERSON:** Mrs. Caroline Robinson

**CLERK:** Mrs. Jenny Hollington

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at Steep Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Caroline Robinson (in the Chair)  
Jim MacDonald  
Suzi Openshaw  
Simon Bridger

Terry Cook  
Graham Banks  
Nick Hurst

In Attendance: Clerk - Jenny Hollington

There were no members of the public present.

- 13/11 APOLOGIES: Clls. Jenny Martin, Charles Gibson, Vaughan Clarke (County Councillor) and Nick Drew (District Councillor)
- 13/12 MINUTES: - The Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed accordingly.
- 13/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - The Chairman reminded Councillors that any pecuniary interests should be recorded as necessary.
- 13/14 PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comment.
- 13/15 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT – The County Councillor report was read to the meeting and is attached to these Minutes.
- 13/16 FINANCE
- (a) **Payments** – There were no cheques to be approved
  - (b) **To discuss communication regarding remaining funds for the Parish Plan Steering Group** – a surplus of approximately £1,425 remains following the winding up of the Group and will be transferred back to the Parish Council. Councillors AGREED that this money should be ring-fenced in the Parish Council accounts to continue the work on the outcomes of the Plan. It was noted that there may be a cost implication for the Parish Council in taking over the Parish Plan website and AGREED that some of the money should be utilised for this.
  - (c) **Responsibilities with respect to the Annual Return** – The Chairman said she would prepare a draft Financial Statement with the Vice Chair and circulate it prior to the March Meeting for approval.
  - (d) **To discuss a proposal for potential purchase of a small gritter for use within the Village** – this was discussed in detail. Currently Cllr. Cook and Cllr. Bridger are employed by Hampshire County Council to clear the snow from roads with a snowplough (to 1 inch so as not to damage the road surface) but there is then a need for grit to be spread to make the roads useable. Villagers had been unsure whose responsibility it was to use the grit from the bins supplied by Hampshire County Council during the recent snow and felt they had been given contrasting messages. Although it was felt that residents' safety was paramount, the Parish Council were aware of cost implications and high expectations of residents.

The Clerk was asked ensure that the appropriate information is made available to parishioners during bad weather via the website and newsletter. Grit from the grit bins is there to be used to clear the roads by residents but may not be used for private driveways. Everyone is asked to look after elderly and vulnerable neighbours during bad weather.

It was noted that Bedales had cleared the road and pavements in Church Road and that this had been very much appreciated by residents and those walking children to Steep School. The Clerk was asked to write to thank Bedales for providing this service.

Cllr. Bridger had provided grit and cleared the Village Hall car park to enable the Day Nursery staff and regular users to access the Hall safely – this is also much appreciated.

13/17 TO UP-DATE/AMEND THE RISK REGISTER

The Risk Register had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr. MacDonald confirmed he has been carrying out weekly visual checks on the play equipment and will ensure these are recorded. The Annual Play Area Inspection has been booked and Cllrs. Cook and MacDonald will re-turf the bare area around the play equipment prior to this.

No amendments to the Risk Register were considered necessary at this stage and the Risk Register was therefore APPROVED.

13/18 TO DISCUSS PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE – This item was deferred in Cllr. Hurst’s absence.

13/19 COMMUNITY BUS SCHEME

Cllr. Openshaw reported that there are currently 5 or 6 people using the Community Taxi Share Scheme - it appears to work fairly well even though it is a very limited service (currently still only running on a Wednesday and Friday). Residents using the scheme currently walk or get lifts from friends and neighbours if they need to get into town more frequently. Froxfield Parish Council hires an extra taxi for more flexibility and there may be scope for liaising with them further on this.

The correspondence from Community First regarding the “Good Neighbours Support Service” was also discussed and it was felt that this might be quite useful with regard to insurance for volunteers, etc. but that it was important that people don’t feel obliged to use a scheme.

It was AGREED that the Chairman should take this forward and look at whether there is a need for an extra taxi service on a Monday, or whether a volunteer driver scheme would be beneficial.

13/20 ROADS AND TRAFFIC WORKING PARTY – the planned meeting of the Group had to be cancelled because of the snow and will now be held on either the 22<sup>nd</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> February to agree aims and objectives and the first 3 phases of the project.

Cllr. Openshaw said she had been inundated with complaints about the condition of the roads and these have been passed to Hampshire County Council.

13/21 PARISH PLAN

There are approximately 100 copies of the Parish Plan left over and it was AGREED that these should be retained by the Parish Council and distributed to all new residents arriving in the Village – potentially through the Church’s welcome network? The Clerk to follow up.

Andrew Lee, Community Director of SDNPA is keen that all Parish Plans should be adopted by the South Downs National Park Authority. Cllrs. Robinson and MacDonald will attend the SDNPA Meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February and try to progress this.

13/22 STEEP MARSH VENUE FOR PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – Various options were discussed:

- Brickyards - The Chairman has enquired at the Brickyards - however it is thought that the units are too small to hold the meeting in;
- Haste - Cllr. Bridger will enquire at Haste, although this is slightly too far out from the centre;
- Barn space – The Chairman will make further enquiries to see if there is a possibility of utilising a barn.

13/23 NOTICEBOARDS –

A £500 grant has been awarded by the Community Forum – the agreement was signed by the Chairman. The Clerk has also submitted an application to SDNPA but not heard anything yet.

13/24 REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

#### **Common and Hangers**

- Cllr. Cook will purchase 10-15 turfs to lay around the edges of the play equipment by the wooden edges where the soil has given way;
- The problem of fly-tipping is getting worse. The Clerk was asked to ensure the phone number is available via the Village Newsletter so that residents can report incidents as soon as possible.

#### **Footpaths**

- The bad condition of the Hangers Way footpath at the Waterhouse was noted and needs to be addressed as soon as possible as it is currently impassable. Cllr. MacDonald said he would investigate funding for improvements to the path.

**Roads and Traffic** – nothing further to report at this stage.

#### **Village Hall and War Memorial**

- Cllr Bridger will cut back the hedge at the War Memorial.
- Cllrs. Cook and MacDonald met to look at the trees on the boundary of the Village Hall land – approximately 2-days work is required to clear the ditch and thin the trees. Cllr. Cook will follow this up.
- Scalpings – the Day Nursery have asked whether the muddy dips in the car park can be recovered with scalpings. It was agreed that Cllr. Cook should organise this.
- Handrails – the Chairman said that she had found a company called “In Touch” who will give advice on purchase/positioning of handrails for the entrance to the Village Hall for the Welcome Club – the Clerk was asked to follow up;
- Solar Panels – Trustees will meet again next week with a representative from Southern Solar. Consideration is being given to a 3-phase system as this is a better option for income return, although more expensive to install initially.

13/25 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS –

The next Parish Council Meeting will take place on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall.

Planning Meetings will take place on Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> and Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall.

The Meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.