

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: Mrs. Caroline Robinson

CLERK: Mrs. Jenny Hollington

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 7th November 2011 at Steep Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Caroline Robinson (in the Chair) Terry Cook
Charles Gibson Graham Banks
Suzi Openshaw Simon Bridger
Jim MacDonald Jenny Martin

In Attendance: County Cllr. Vaughan Clarke
Jenny Hollington (Clerk)

There were no members of the Public present.

11/119 APOLOGIES: - Cllr. Nick Hurst

11/120 TO AGREE MINUTES - The Minutes of the Parish Council Planning Meeting held on 31st October were agreed and signed as a correct record of the meetings.

11/121 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - The Chairman reminded Councillors that any interests should be recorded as necessary

11/122 PUBLIC COMMENT – There were no public comments.

11/123 COUNTY COUNCILLOR COMMENT –

Arrangements for the Olympics - the Olympic torch is due to pass through Petersfield on the morning of Monday, 16th July; torch bearers have been selected and will be notified on 8th December but the route will not be announced until much nearer the time. It is now very unlikely that there will be a Live Big Screen in Petersfield because of local decisions. One hundred Hampshire companies have won Olympic construction contracts worth £30 million. The largest contract has been to Hilliers for 4,000 semi-mature trees for the Olympic Park worth about £1.5 million.

Consolidation of Office Property – Hampshire County Council's 53 offices are to be reduced to 15, which will deliver over £2 million annual savings, plus £14 million in capital costs, which will be reinvested.

11/124 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR COMMENT – No report available

11/125 FINANCE –

- (a) The balance in the current account as at 5.10.11 is £8,395.83. Figures showing the November position against the budget had been circulated prior to the meeting and this was discussed.
- (b) The following cheques were agreed in accordance to the budget and signed appropriately – H.C.C. (Bridleway 16)- £801.60, HALC (Core Skills Training), £30.00, Audit Commission £162.00, SLCC (Charles Arnold Baker) £60.80, J. Hollington (Salary and expenses) £1,536.17.
- (c) A request from Steep P.C. for donations towards the Newsletter and Churchyard Maintenance was discussed and agreed - £550 towards the running costs for the Village Newsletter and £210 towards the Churchyard maintenance.

(d) The Clerk reported that the Audit is now complete and that there had been no queries from the Auditor. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for her work on this.

(e) It was agreed that the Clerk's hours should remain at 12 hours for the time being.

11/126 BUS/TAXI SHARE

The taxi-share has been running for 1 week and a few Steep residents have used it. Notices informing people about the scheme have been advertised in the Newsletter, on the Noticeboard, and on the website - there is also a helpline. The downside to the scheme is that it is necessary to book a place the day before travelling and residents need to register for the scheme in advance.

Currently the scheme runs on Wednesday and Friday but it was suggested that it would be beneficial if it also ran on a Monday. It was also pointed out that the Bedales' Stop is a request stop and, therefore, must be requested as an extra. Cllr. Openshaw will liaise with Lisa Cook, Community Bus Team, who is keen to know people's reactions so that any changes necessary can be made.

It was agreed that the Taxi Share Scheme should be trialled for 3 months and then the situation assessed.

Cllr. Openshaw said she would attend the Passenger Transport Forum Meeting in Alton on 23rd November. The Chairman thanked Cllr. Openshaw for all her hard work on this issue.

11/127 PRIORITISATION OF PROJECTS FOR FOUR AREAS COMMUNITY FORUM

Projects previously discussed have included – broadband, water and sewerage services, Footpath 14 and car parking at the Village Hall. Both broadband and water services had come up as issues in feedback from the Parish Plan Questionnaire. It was agreed that these four projects would be put forward to the Community Forum.

Cllr. Openshaw has been in touch with Lucy Soale at EHDC who has requested more information on service issues – Councillors suggested that a request in the Village Newsletter and on the Website would get a response and an idea of the size of the problem. The Clerk will also request a map showing local service provision from Alan Todd. The Clerk and Cllr. Openshaw will complete the application form for the Village Hall car park and return it to Lucy prior to the deadline date of 5th December. Footpath 14 will come under a different category and R.O.W. will review this separately.

11/128 TO AGREE ACTIONS RESULTING FROM FEEDBACK FOR THE PARISH PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

The responses to the Parish Plan Questionnaire have now been consolidated and the information fed back to the Parish Council at an earlier meeting between the Parish Council and the Parish Plan Steering Group. Some issues, such as improved and increased numbers of noticeboards, seating on the Common etc. will need to be considered by the Parish Council in due course. It was agreed that a 5-year plan should be produced – the Chairman agreed to make a start on this and circulate a draft to Councillors in due course.

One clear area of concern is communication between the Parish Council and Village residents - this was discussed. One suggestion, for someone from the village with P.R. experience to be invited to Parish Council Meetings to give a "chatty and informal" view of the meeting via the website and newsletter in order to make the information more accessible, was thought worth following up – Councillors to put names forward for the role at the next meeting.

11/129 SITE VISIT TO STEEP COMMON

The Chairman congratulated Cllr. Cook on the annual bonfire and firework display. She said she thought it had been the “best ever” and asked for the Parish Council’s thanks to everyone on the bonfire committee.

Cllr. Cook said that, following communication from EHDC and the Tree Warden about burning damage to protected trees, it is clear that something must be done to clear a larger area on the Common if the annual bonfire event is to continue (out of 4 acres there is only 1 acre of open space). It was agreed that a site visit should take place with the Tree Warden on Wednesday, 30th November at 1.00 p.m. to discuss this issue.

11/130 DOG WASTE BINS FOR COMMON

This issue has been raised again by the children of Steep Primary School – Cllr. MacDonald reported that there has been a substantial increase in people bagging up dog waste but then throwing the bags into the bushes. E-mail correspondence with EHDC regarding the cost of the bin and contractor was discussed. Cllr. MacDonald said that if a bin was provided, he would be prepared to empty it for a set period of time, to assess the situation. It was agreed that the Clerk should research the cost of dog waste bins further on the internet. It was suggested that the Small Grant Scheme may be a possibility for funding of the bin.

11/131 FEEDBACK ON TRAINING ATTENDED

The Chairman said that she and Cllr. Openshaw had attended the Planning Training session. An e-mail from Chris Murray outlining EHDC’s most used policies has been circulated to all Councillors who should ensure they have read it.

Cllr. Openshaw said that she had attended Core Skills for Councillors and that she thoroughly recommended that all Councillors should try to attend one of these very informative sessions.

11/132 REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

Common and Hangers: Cllr. MacDonald attended the Hangers Meeting at Queen Elizabeth Country Park where plans were outlined for work for the year ahead. Small signs are to be installed in the Hangers to highlight that it is a nature reserve. Specific issues such as Shoulder of Mutton were also discussed. Work is due to start on Old Litten Lane imminently.

Cllr. Cook said that the Bonfire Committee were very appreciative of the Parish Council’s support for the annual bonfire and firework event – especially in respect of insurance and risk assessment.

Footpaths – Cllr. Martin said she has arranged to meet with the landowner, contractor and Simon Marriott on Lythe Hanger to discuss reinstating the deeply rutted BOAT 31. Once she has an idea of cost, she will complete an application to the Small Grant Scheme and SDNP.

Roads and Traffic – The possibility of setting up a traffic management group with representatives from all parts of the parish, to tackle road issues was discussed. The Chairman agreed that this should be included within the 5-year plan.

The condition of the pavement from the Village Hall to Bedales entrance in Church Road was discussed. It is thought that this is potentially as a result of the building work opposite and it was agreed that Cllr. Openshaw should speak to the local Contractor, despite the time lapse.

The bank at Ashford Lane has now been repaired – Cllr. Banks agreed to speak to Norman Beaumont to arrange for the fingerpost to be replaced.

The bollards opposite Steep School are yet to be replaced – Cllr. Banks to action.

Village Hall – The wreath will be laid at the War Memorial on Friday, 11th November – as many Parish Councillors as possible are asked to be present. The Chairman will liaise with Rosemary Lilley to ensure that the War Memorial is looking its best and also monitor the issue of flooding.

I.T. – No report available

Parish Plan – This subject covered earlier on the Agenda

11/133 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING – A Planning Meeting will be held on Monday, 12th December

The Meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.