

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Cllr. Jim MacDonald

CLERK: Mrs. Jenny Hollington

Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 7th September 2015 at Steep Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Cllrs. Jim MacDonald (in the Chair)	Terry Cook
Nick Hurst	Jenny Martin
Graeme Fairley	Luke Spurdle
Simon Bridger	

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.

15/140 **APOLOGIES** - Apologies had been received from Cllrs. Peter Cruttenden and Peter Thackrey

15/141 **MINUTES** – The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 6th July and the Extraordinary Meeting held on 16th July were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and duly signed.

15/142 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – The Chairman reminded Councillors of their responsibility to declare any interest in any matter on the Agenda – none were declared.

15/143 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- A member of the public requested current information on Network Rail's proposals for Sheet Level Crossing and asked who the Parish Council were in communication with in this respect. The Chairman replied that following on from the July meeting, an up-dated statement setting out the Parish Council's stance had been sent to SDNPA, Hampshire Highways, Sheet and Stroud Parish Councils, EHDC (District Councillor) and HCC (County Councillor). In addition, the statement will now be displayed on the website.

15/144 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE JULY P.C. MEETING**

- Dark Skies – A paper explaining ways in which members of the public can help in reducing light pollution was circulated to the meeting. It was agreed that, following a couple of small amendments, this article should be advertised on the P.C. website and sent to the Newsletter Team. The Chairman also confirmed that he had signed the on-line pledge to support the Dark Skies Campaign on behalf of Steep Parish Council.
- War Memorial – It was agreed that a small token of appreciation should be sent to Rosemary Lilley to say thank you for her work in tending the War Memorial.

15/145 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** – The County Councillor's monthly report for September is appended to the Minutes. In addition, Cllr. Clarke confirmed that the roadworks in Church Road have been delayed by a week and will now start on 12th September. Cllr. Clarke also undertook to contact S.E. Water with regard to two on-going water leaks (Cricketer's crossroads and Pratts Lane, Steep Marsh).

15/146 **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT** – The District Councillor reported on the following items:

- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Devolution Process – this is a long term project and at this stage there is no guarantee that it will go forward. However, if it does go ahead, it could provide more

opportunity for the area in retaining business rates and access to European grants, addressing skills shortages and the lack of affordable housing and improving local services.

- Remembrance Day – An EHDC representative will attend the Remembrance Day Service at Steep Church. The Clerk was asked to liaise with Philip Mileham regarding provision of a wreath for the War Memorial.
- Sheet Level Crossing – Cllr. Drew is in receipt of the up-dated statement from Steep Parish Council and is in full support.
- Grant Funding – Cllr. Drew has money available for community projects – please e-mail him direct for details. The launch of the Rural Leader funding has been delayed – this provides up to £35,000 for new businesses towards the cost of equipment.
- Apprenticeships – funding and help and advice continues to be available for helping young adults find placements/work experience.
- Compliance – there has been a certain loss of faith in this process which has not delivered as much as usual in chasing down situations. Cllr. Drew requested that the Parish Council contact him if they have any concerns.

15/147 FINANCE

(a) The following cheques were approved and signed:

Chq No.	Amount	Payee	Service
100049	£120.00	BDO	Audit
100050	£60.00	Mythic Beasts	Website
100051	£35.00	ICO	Information Commissioner
100052	£672.00	McVeigh Parker	Kissing Gates - F/path 12
100053	£520.00	J. Hollington	August Salary
Total :	£1,407.00		

- (b) The Clerk confirmed that the Audit is now complete and there were no matters for the attention of the Council. The notice of conclusion of Audit has been advertised appropriately.
- (c) Transparency – in accordance with the new Transparency Code, the 2014-15 accounts are available via the website as well as details of Steep Parish Councillors’ register of interests.

15/148 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT WORKING PARTY

- (a) **Feedback from the Extraordinary Meeting to discuss the proposal for the site in Ridge Common Lane** – the Chairman reported that the meeting had been well attended. Comments from members of the public on the evening indicated that it had been well received and that the Parish Council had acted in a transparent and fair manner.
- (b) **Terms of Reference for Site Assessment Working Party** – At the Extraordinary Meeting it had been agreed to set up a working party to work with the Parish Council and key stakeholders in carrying out a search for an appropriate site for affordable housing within the parish. Cllr. Fairley volunteered to Chair the Working Party and this was unanimously agreed. Draft Terms of Reference had been circulated prior to the meeting setting out the objectives, proposed membership (3 members of the P.C. and 3 members of the public taken from a spread of volunteers across the parish following the advert in the newsletter and website) and timeframe for completion of the outline plan by June 2016 at the latest. Following discussion, it was agreed that the words “or more” should be inserted into the Objective – to read “To recommend to the Parish Council one or more suitable sites for the development on a modest number of affordable housing units in the Parish of Steep by June 2016 at the latest”. The proposed membership of Cllrs. Graeme Fairley, Peter Cruttenden and Luke Spurdle, and members of the public Jody Ashfield, Steve Cook and Tony Struthers was approved, as well as the timeframe for completion of the

project. The approved Terms of Reference of the Working Party are to be advertised on the P.C. website.

Cllr. Drew pointed out that EHDC is due to be sending out a letter to landowners in a call for further sites and that he would put Cllr. Fairley in touch with the relevant EHDC officer. He would also investigate the possibility of obtaining a map of the parish for each member of the group.

It was agreed that notes should be taken of Working Party meetings as a record and that progress (but not specifics) should be reported at future P.C. meetings.

15/149 SHEET CROSSING – This item had already been covered under public comment.

15/150 STEEP COMMON –

- (a) Bonfire & Firework Night – The Chairman and Cllr. Spurdle met with Paul Garstin, Chairman of the Bonfire Committee, to discuss the suggestion of a closure of Church Road to traffic to improve safety for this year's event. Paul Garstin felt that complete closure was perhaps not necessary and suggested a middle ground of placing cones along the road from Bedales to the bend on the hill to prevent people from parking and blocking access to the Common for the duration of the event. Parking will be provided at Bedales and the Village Hall and all publicity material will make this clear to visitors. It was agreed that, if this measure doesn't work, full road closure will be considered for 2016. The suggestion of having a children's area near to the school where there would be a good view, but at the furthest point from the bonfire so that the ashes cannot blow back onto them was also discussed and will be trialled this year.

With these changes to the arrangements, the P.C. were unanimously agreed that the event should go ahead for 2015.

- (b) Draft Policy for use of the Common – Members of the Parish Council responsible for the Common will meet to draw up a draft policy to be approved at the November meeting.

15/151 FOOTPATHS

- (a) Kissing Gates – Footpath 12 – The landowner has agreed to install two kissing gates to improve access to this popular route through to the Hangers from Stoner Hill. Small grant funding of 50% of the cost of the project has been received from HCC. The steps from the footpath through the Hanger are also in poor condition and very slippery at this time of year - it was agreed that Chris Budd should be asked to quote for work to improve this part of the route. As the route falls within the SSI, Jim Hobson will also be approached to see if volunteers could be used to carry out the work, with materials being covered by SGS funding.
- (b) New path at Steep Common – Cllr. Martin and the Clerk met with Elliott Rowe to discuss options for a new path to join footpath 26 (avoiding adjacent landowner's land). The favoured option, for a permissive path across about 6 meters of the adjacent land, but which would avoid the road, was rejected by the landowner. The options therefore available to the Parish Council are to do nothing, or to revert to the original plan which will take pedestrians out to the road and then back to footpath 26 via a gate. It was agreed to stick with the original plan and ask Neil Bower to create a new footpath across the edge of the Common to the road at a cost of £420 plus cost of signage. The Clerk was asked to complete the appropriate forms for an EHDC environment grant.
- (c) Condition of stiles on footpaths 10, 11 and 2 – the condition of the stiles on the land around Collyers and Stonerwood Park was discussed. The tenant farmer at Collyers is willing to install kissing gates where appropriate if funding can be obtained – the Clerk was asked to action this in the next round of SGS funding. The Chairman agreed to approach the owner of Stonerwood to discuss the condition of the stile on Footpath 10.
- (d) Hangers Way - £400 has been received from the County Councillor towards the cost of the work, plus £300 from the District Councillor – this leaves approx. £300 to find. Cllr. Drew suggested that the

Clerk write to both himself and the County Councillor asking for an extra £100 from each of them. It was agreed that Cllr. Martin should ask Chris Budd to start the work as per his quote before the on-set of bad weather.

- (e) Condition of steps at Shoulder of Mutton – no response has been received from Jim Hobson. The Chairman undertook to find out who has taken over his role at the Countryside Services Meeting in October.

15/152 USE OF DEVELOPER’S CONTRIBUTIONS

It was agreed that Developer’s Contributions should be used where necessary to top up improvement work to footpaths.

15/153 ROADS AND TRAFFIC

- (a) Enforcement issues
- Kerbing in Steep Marsh – It has been recognised that the sleepers should not have been installed on the corner of Pratts Lane and an enforcement notice should have been sent to the landowner. The Clerk was asked to forward Chris White’s e-mail address to Cllr. Spurdle so that he can continue to chase this.
 - Cllr. Martin undertook to follow up on the removal of the yew tree hedge on the corner of Mill Lane/Church Road following an enforcement notice to the previous owner.
 - Cllr. Hurst has requested that the overgrown vegetation on Burnt Ash Road (just before the by-pass bridge) is cut back. However, there seems to be some confusion over who owns the land and whether this could in fact belong to Highways. The Clerk was asked to look into this.
- (b) Signage for Church Road – it was agreed that Cllrs. MacDonald, Martin and Spurdle should meet to discuss proposals for signage in Church Road, and gateways in Steep Marsh, and feedback to Ian Janes.
- (c) Stoner Hill - No response has been received from Mike Pillans regarding improvements to the Bridleway to prevent run-off to Stoner Hill in heavy rain.
- (d) Overgrown hedges on Stoner Hill – the cost to cut back the hedges on Stoner Hill by the farmer who undertook the work last year is £37 per hour. The Clerk was asked to obtain a price for the whole job. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the homeowner who complained last year and advise her to get her hedges cut back beforehand if she didn’t want the work carried out by the farmer.
- (e) Mill Lane Waterfall – the tunnel is still blocked but divers are to be sent in to clear it.

15/154 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

- SDNPA Workshop – Wednesday, 9th September – the Chairman will attend
- EHAP&TC – Wednesday, 16th September – the Chairman will attend
- HALC AGM – Saturday, 10th October – Cllrs. to notify the Clerk if they are able to attend.

15/155 CORRESPONDENCE

- SDNPA Consultation on Local Plan – unfortunately the deadline for this consultation is prior to the next meeting of Steep Parish Council. The Chairman will circulate information on any issues that are highlighted at the meeting on Wednesday, 9th as it will be important for Steep PC to respond to the consultation.
- EHDC Transport Study – the Chairman will contact Mr. Blake and seek an extension to the survey to enable an informed response.
- Greater Hampshire Devolution Prospectus – the Clerk was asked to re-send the information. Cllr. Drew pointed out that parish councils are not currently included within the plan and it might be worth querying this.

15/156 DATE OF NEXT MEETING – **Monday, 2nd November at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall**

The meeting closed at 9.47 p.m.