

Stretton Parish Council
Meeting on Tuesday 27th March 2018
8.00 pm at The Jackson Stops

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Richard Foster (Chairman), John Leefe (Vice Chairman) Greg Harker, Molly Hayns, Paul Finlay (new Cllr joined after item 8 on the agenda) Nick Begy, (Ward Councillor) Sally Skyrme (Clerk)

Members of the public Present: 13 members of the public were present

1. Chairman's welcome

Cllr Foster introduced the meeting and gave a statement as the Chairman:

In welcoming you to this meeting, I wish to make a statement to clarify two matters which arose at the last meeting on 8 March:

First, over the time that have chaired Stretton Parish Council, I have always endeavoured to adopt a flexible, friendly and tolerant approach to all my duties, and most particularly towards my dealings with members of the public during meetings. However, at the meeting held on 8 March, I witnessed, as did others, hostility, pedantry, negativity and interruptions outside public time, which upset some of those attending and disrupted the smooth running of the meeting, all of which caused me to review the conduct of future meetings.

In future, within the Public Session, members of the public will be invited to ask questions or comment on issues within the remit of the Council. These will be noted for possible action as decided later by councillors or, exceptionally, answered if a simple response is to hand. Public time is not, and will not be treated as, an open forum. Similarly, members of the public who exhibit disruptive behaviour shall be challenged and, if it persists despite several warnings, a motion that they be excluded or that the meeting be terminated will be considered.

Secondly, on 8 March, the impression was gained by some that a list of vulnerable people is held and it is clear that John McCarthy, the Neighbourhood Watch and Emergency Response Group Co-ordinator, misunderstood what he was being asked when he said on the telephone that the Parish Clerk had a list of people. What he meant was that the Clerk holds a copy of the Electoral Roll.

To be absolutely clear, there is no list of vulnerable people and there never has been. It follows that there was no data which required protection and, that being the case, claims made on emails that there was a breach of the Data Protection Act are entirely spurious.

What happened during the snowy weather was voluntary action by good neighbours who endeavoured to check that all residents who live alone were safe and well-provisioned when the snow may have prevented access to the shops. One such lady was mentioned accidentally, by name, by me at the last meeting. I have, of course, apologised to her for any breach of confidentiality that may have caused her embarrassment.

However, what also became clear last week was that, despite publicity, some people were still unaware of the nature of the Emergency Response Plan. The responsibility for our safety in adversity rests normally with the emergency services. The purpose of the Emergency Response Plan is to enable the villagers to help themselves in the event that the emergency services are unable to reach us.

I have therefore spoken to John McCarthy, who has written an article in the recently published edition of the Village Newsletter explaining exactly how it will work when the village becomes inaccessible to the emergency services and the Emergency Response Plan is activated.

2. Public Session

A member of public spoke about his concern regarding the development of the Ram Jam site. He made some points:

- There will be no benefit to local residents as most of the vacancies created will be filled by outsiders
- Nothing is in place for the clean-up of litter generated by the 'drive through' packaging of food.
- Godwins could use their assets to preserve the Ram Jam site
- The demolition of the Rutland Stone should not be allowed because it spoils the heritage
- Why is the building not listed? And would the Parish council be prepared to take this on?
- It will cause traffic problems and increased pollution in the area
- Greetham Inn had been compulsory purchased – could this be an option for Ram Jam?

Cllrs said they had submitted an opinion to the consultation and will be working with Rutland County Council to try to get the best outcome for local people.

A member of the public said she had met with Rachael Thomas from Rutland County council (RCC) about placing bollards on the grass verges to prevent damage to them by the rubbish lorry.

A member of the public suggested that all bollards in the village should be the same if they are installed. Another member added that if bollards were to be introduced they should be of the same type throughout the village.

A member of the public asked if finances could be listed separately from the minutes.

Action: *Sally to contact Cottesmore to find out the costs of their wooden bollards and then contact Rachael from RCC*

Action: *Sally to forward finances to Cllr Hayns separately*

A member of the public who is the website host said that she has added a privacy policy and cookies to the website with responsibilities added to it.

A member of the public asked why the agenda was not signed and also whether a health and safety assessment had been done for the Clerk. Cllr Foster said that this would be dealt with in the correspondence section of the meeting because we had already had correspondence about this.

A member of the public thanked the Parish Council for the work it had done in the village – in particular the installation of the defibrillator. He commented on the extra funding required to investigate spurious allegations of wrongdoing by the Council.

Cllr Foster read a statement from ex Cllr Gideon Visser:

A most disturbing story has come to my attention, and I would like this statement to be read out at the next meeting and included in the minutes so that there can be no mistake about it.

I have heard that there is a rumour doing the rounds of the village that I was asked to resign as a Councillor as a result of something that I said or did that was inappropriate.

I refute this in the strongest terms. I have made or done nothing that can be considered as even vaguely incorrect, and so obviously nobody ever spoke to me about resigning.

I resigned for reasons which should be very well known to all Councillors, and have nothing to do with inappropriate behaviour by me. If there is any uncertainty or contrary opinion, I am quite happy to come to a future Council meeting to discuss the matter.

All the Cllrs were unanimous in their agreement that Mr Visser had behaved impeccably during his time as Cllr. He had not been asked to resign and any contrary rumour was completely inaccurate.

3. Report from Laurie Appleton, Leicestershire Police read out by John McCarthy, the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator.

The following crime has been reported for the village from 1st April 2017 to 28th February 2018: -

2 x Burglary Other than dwelling (Jan and Feb 2018)

1 x Attempt theft of motor vehicle – plant machinery (November 2017)

1 x Bilking – Ram Jam (December 2017)

The current priority is still rural crime and we are concentrating our attentions to both Burglary patrols and Hare Coursing issues which include damage to crops etc.

Mr McCarthy added that since then there have been three more break-ins and now the police are concentrating on burglary rather than hare coursing. He added that people should always keep an eye out for people behaving suspiciously and keep valuable items locked away. He said the police will be at the village fete on 1st of July doing a property marking exercise so people should bring any items along that they would like marking for security.

4. To receive declarations of unregistered disclosable pecuniary interests in agenda items and to receive and approve requests for dispensations from members on matters in which they have a registered Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

None declared

5. Apologies for absence

PC Laurie Appleton, Cllr Lester

6. Minutes of previous meetings

- Minutes from Parish Council meeting dated 10th January 2018 - **resolved** to approve and signed by the Chairman
- Minutes from Extraordinary Parish Council meeting dated 8th March 2018 – **resolved** to approve and signed by the Chairman.
 - The meeting discussed the comments from 2 members of the public, including the interruption after public time, regarding the minutes of this meeting. The suggestion that a vote was required to nominate a stand-in clerk was incorrect. With this, and in light of the Chairman’s statement at the start of this meeting, the meeting proposed that the minutes did not require amendment.
 - It was **resolved** to approve the minutes as written.

7. Matters Arising from the minutes

10th January 2018 minutes:

- Cllr Harker and Cllr Hayns to put together a risk assessment with regards to Parish Council finances
- Cllr Begy said that RCC would continue to do the grass cutting until April 2019 – after that it would become the responsibility of the Parish Council

8th March 2018 minutes:

- Clerk to inform the member of the public that no significant contemporaneous notes were taken at the time of the meeting and those taken were destroyed the following day when the minutes were written.
- With regards to concerns about breaking of confidentiality, this has been dealt with in the Chairman’s statement

8. Co-option of a new Councillor

Paul Finlay put himself forward as a candidate for Councillor. He said that since moving to Stretton over a year ago he has loved it and would like to be a useful member of the Parish Council. He said he is a fair and reasonable person who was prepared to help with the decision making in the council.

Cllrs voted unanimously to co-opt Mr Finlay as a new member and it was **resolved** to accept him as the latest Cllr for Stretton Parish Council

Cllr Finlay signed the acceptance of office declaration and came and sat at the table.

Action: *Sally to inform Rutland County Council (done)*

Action: *Cllr Finlay to complete the Register of Members Interests form and send it to Sally to forward to RCC*

9. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – to be compliant by May 2018

Cllr Begy said that he has spent a lot of time on this going through the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) checklist. Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils (LRALC) has a 12-step guide to being GDPR compliant which is being sent out the PCs two steps at a time. It was decided to hold off on action apart from doing a data audit until we have further guidance form LRALC.

Action: *Sally to conduct a data audit*

Action: Cllr Hayns to help with this

Action: Cllr Begy to pass on information needed

10. Review of Standing Orders

Cllrs to review the current standing orders and make recommendations to the Chairman and Clerk. It was felt, however, that this should be done to include amendments brought about by the change in GDPR regulations.

Action: Cllr Harker to review Standing Orders and make recommendations

11. WW1 Remembrance – Silent soldier – There but not There

Cllr Foster explained that the Silent Soldier Campaign was being run by the British Legion – it was an opportunity to buy black Perspex silhouettes of WW1 soldiers to place around the village. He said that seven people from Stretton had lost their lives in WW1 so maybe seven Silent Soldiers would be fitting. He said he would sit out of any decisions about this because of his links to the British Legion. Sally explained that the There but not There campaign was a see-through Perspex soldier that created a shadow and the money raised would go to various veteran charities. It was decided to hold off making any decisions on this for the time being but to keep it on the agenda for next time.

12. Training for Clerk – Planning nuts and bolts

Sally explained that this was a training session run by LRALC on 14th May 2018 – the cost would be £20 to Stretton Parish Council. It was **resolved** that the Clerk could go on this.

13. LRALC Briefing session for councillors

This is a briefing session for Cllrs tailored for the Parish, the cost is £90 plus mileage for the trainer. It was **resolved** to go ahead with this.

Action: Sally to find out dates when the session can take place

Action: Cllr Hayns to send out a doodle poll once dates are known

14. Audit – exemption or limited assurance review, internal auditor needed

Sally explained that this is the first year where an external audit is not necessary because the Council's income and expenditure is less than £25,000 (and there are no unlawful items of account in previous years) – therefore the Transparency Code means that the Council can be exempt and an internal audit can be done which is transparent and available to the public. However, the Council can decide to have an external audit called a limited assurance review for the cost of £200. It was **resolved** to apply for an exemption.

Action: Sally to request an Exemption Certificate

Action: Sally to prepare account for an internal audit

Action: Sally to contact Cliff Bacon to see if he is prepared to be the internal auditor

15. Planning Applications – including any that come in after the agenda is published.

None.

16. Updates

- a) **Defibrillator Update. Cllr Harker** – Cllr Harker updated the meeting on the Stocken Hall Defibrillator. The Shires detachment at Stowe Court had originally said it would make their defibrillator available to Stocken residents by placing it in a cabinet on their outside wall. However, there had been a change of management at The Shires and now they have said that they are unable to do this. Cllr Harker had spoken to them to ask them to reconsider, and understood that they were doing this. He suggested that it might be appropriate for him and the chairman to approach The Shires and he would try and set up a meeting.

Meantime the Stretton Defibrillator was now well established. A few people had asked for extra training and Cllr Harker had approach Juliet Burgess-Ray at Cottesmore. Juliet said that she would notify us when there was training available at Cottesmore. Otherwise, Stretton would have to pay for further training and this would not be beneficial unless there was a strong demand and good attendance.

Action: *Cllr Harker to request a meeting with Stowe Court*

Action: *Cllr Harker to propose a way forward for a Stocken defibrillator*

- b) **Tree works update. Cllr Leefe** – The original plan has now been stopped because there is no permission from RCC to remove the original trees.

Action: *Cllr Begy to speak with Neil Tomlinson to clarify the current position.*

- c) **Update on noise pollution. Cllr Harker** - Cllr Harker updated the meeting on noise pollution. His efforts to get Stretton included in the ongoing A1 road surfacing work ending in January had not been successful, including writing to our MP. The village was, therefore, back to where it was 4 months ago. Cllr Harker had written to Highways England to confirm or otherwise whether we had been included on a future programme and, if not, to advise how we should set about achieving this. To date there had been no reply, and he advised that this would be a long term project. Nonetheless, he would keep the PC updated.

- D) **Grit bins. Cllr Lester and Cllr Hayns** – Cllr Hayns has checked all the bins and they are all full except for the one at the bottom of Manor Road which is empty because the wrong bins were filled up. Cllr Hayns has requested this one to be filled up giving the code that is written on the bin.

17. Correspondence

A letter regarding a speed radar sign was received – costing between £14,000 and £18,000.

A letter was received from the CAB requesting a donation. It was **resolved** not to give a donation in this financial year.

An email was received stating that agendas must be signed by the Clerk, however the law has changed since the advent of emailing so it is not necessary to sign agendas but as a matter of best practice the Clerk will sign and scan agendas from now on.

- Action:** Sally to speak to Cllr Begy about excess speed in the local area
Action: Sally to inform CAB of our decision
Action: Sally respond to email and sign agendas from now on.

A discussion was had regarding the logo competition (which was started last year to try to find a logo for the village to appear on PC letterheads and possibly village signs). It was resolved to resurrect the logo competition and present the winner at the village fete.

- Action:** Sally to send out scans of logos that have previously been entered to Cllrs.

18. Accounts:

Date	Bank A/C Name	Balance
29/12/2017	Community Account	£50.00
	Business Premium Account	£6,898.60
	Total	£6,948.60
	Less Unpresented cheques	
	Richard Crowden grass cutting	£120.00
	Black Ink Cartridge	£11.99
		£131.99
	Balance as at 27th March 2018	£6,816.61

19. Cheques and Expenditure

£243.00 – Rutland County Council Clerk’s wages and admin for the last quarter of 2017

£ 312.10 – Rutland County Council for Community Street Lighting Recharge

£34.25 – Sally Skyrme for colour ink cartridges, paper and a note book

20. Review of Clerk’s contract of employment

A former Cllr had queried the wages rise of the clerk so this item was put on the agenda again. A discussion was had and it was **resolved** to continue with the resolution made on 10th on January 2018. At this point Sally, the Clerk said that she was handing her notice in. She thanked everyone for the opportunity and experience they gave her and for sorting out her wage rise but said that she can no longer continue to do the job due to family issues that make it hard for her to make the time and to travel to Stretton. Sally said she would continue working to get the audit finished and the Annual meetings. So, it was agreed that she would leave at the end of June 2018. She said she would be willing to work alongside a new Clerk if need be.

21. Next meeting time and place

Annual Parish Council Meeting: 8pm Thursday 24th May 2018 Jackson Stops back room

Annual Parish Meeting: 7pm Tuesday 29th of May 2018 St Nicolas’ Church

The meeting closed at 9.55 pm

