**STOWEY SUTTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at**

7.30pm on Wednesday 4th January 2017, The Link, Bishop Sutton

[www.stoweysuttonpc.org](http://www.stoweysuttonpc.org)

PRESENT: Councillors K Betton (Chairman), H Clewett (Vice Chair), E Balmforth, R Brent, R Brewer, C Brookes, E Daly, P Gleave, J Knibbs, and District Councillor V Pritchard

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE J Howell (Clerk) and three members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor B Braidley and accepted.

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting dated 7th December 2016 were approved.

1. MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

1. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

1. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

The Chairman reminded Councillors that a temporary closure of the Recreation Field is due to start. Work is expected to take three weeks, weather permitting and during this time there will be no access to the Recreation Field. The Chairman also reported the announcement that Council Tax referendum principles will not be extended to Town and Parish Councils at this stage however Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) have urged restraint when setting the precept requirement. The Chairman enquired whether there was interest amongst the Parish Council to investigate training available and in principle, Councillors supported the idea.

RESOLVED:
That the Clerk will investigate Training opportunities for the Parish Council and report back at the next meeting.

1. INTRODUCTION OF NEW CLERK – JENNY HOWELL

The new Clerk Jenny Howell was welcomed to the meeting and gave a short introduction.

1. A. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There were none.

 B. RESULTS OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS

There was one planning decision to report - Ellen’s Farm, Hinton Blewett Road, Stowey. The planning application for the erection of an extension to a temporary agricultural workers dwelling was refused.

1. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

The District Councillor V Pritchard provided a report to the Parish Council.  Budget proposals have now been published and will ensure the Council lives within its means both now and in the future – moving to a position where the Council is financially self-sufficient and not so reliant upon government grant for income. The District Councillor was asked where the £49 million savings that need to be made over the life of the present administration will come from. He said that whilst the scale of the challenge means we cannot avoid difficult decisions, sound financial management together with working on income generating projects will put us in a better position than many Councils to protect priority front-line services and reform the way local services are delivered.

1. TO CONSIDER THE CO-OPTION OF LIZ KINGSTON

Liz Kingston was invited to speak to the Parish Council about her application for co-option and gave an introduction about her skills and experience to bring to the Parish Council.

RESOLVED:

* That Liz Kingston would be appointed as Councillor to Stowey Sutton Parish Council effective from the next meeting date of 1st February 2017.
* That the Clerk will prepare the appointment paperwork.

1. LIBRARY PROVISIONS BY B&NES

Vice Chair H Clewett outlined possible changed to library provisions as presented at the Chew Valley Forum held during September 2016 and described the opportunity for libraries to become part of the community provision citing local examples at Chew Stoke and Paulton. Both have created multipurpose library hubs which incorporate a place to meet, read books and use online resources. Consideration was given to possible locations including the Baptist Church and St Nicholas Church.

Discussion took place on how a community library provision could be staffed by volunteers and whether there was any interest in the Parish Council supporting such a service. District Councillor V Pritchard indicated his support adding that Chew Stoke Hub has now started running a ‘memory social club’ to reduce men from social isolation and that many similar opportunities existed. It was raised that the mobile library is expected to end with the scheme already having been extended and expensive to run. Furthermore, the vehicle is coming to the end of its lifespan.

The Parish Council were asked whether this idea was something to research further and in principle all were in support. Further research should include how the Chew Stoke Hub is run financially and whether any funding comes directly from the Parish Council or other sources.

RESOLVED

* That the Parish Council will investigate the opportunity to create a community library provision further.
* That the Clerk write to Councillor Martin Veal (Cabinet Member for Community Services) to communicate that Stowey Sutton Parish Council wish to remain involved in consultation around community library provision.
1. HEDGROWS, ROADS, PAVEMENTS AND DITCHES / DRAINS

An update was provided regarding the dilapidated sign at the Community Farm, Denny Lane. A complaint had previously been raised that the sign was dilapidated. The sign was deemed to be an unauthorised advertisement by B&NES Council and has since been removed.

A concern was raised about the gritting and quality of salt and was noted.

A pothole was reported at Stowey at Cross Road junction with Chelwood.

Lastly it was reported that a resident is regularly parking a truck on the pavement at the entrance to the Cappard’s Road estate and directly opposite the children's play park close to the junction with the main road on evenings and weekends. This is causing an obstruction to the pavement and causing difficulties to road users entering and leaving the estate.

RESOLVED:
That the Clerk will report the pothole to B&NES highways. The Clerk will also contact B&NES highways about the parking and raise with the Neighbourhood Beat Team for further advice.

1. FOOTPATHS

The District Councillor Vic Pritchard raised an overgrown footpath at Little Hayes which links from Stowey to the A368 making it impassable. There then followed a discussion on the possibility of diverting this footpath to join the A368 at the Stowey crossroads thereby avoiding walking along a busy main road and providing a safer walking route.

RESOLVED:

* That the Clerk will raise the overgrown footpath with the B&NES Rights of Way Officer.
* That Councillor V Prichard would follow up the possibility of diverting the footpath.
1. FINANCES

Draft 2017-18 budget and precept request

The 2017-18 budget and precept requirement was reviewed having previously been circulated. The Chairman asked why despite repeated request band D data had not been provided to the Parish Council.

Financial Report and cheques for signature

Details of the current financial situation were reported:

Current Account: £1,077.47

Reserve Account: £66,133.05

The following cheques were approved and signed:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Payee | Item | Amount |
| Clerk | Salary  | £377.30 |
| Clerk | Expenses  | £5.15 |
| Cleaner | Salary  | £124.80 |
| Filer's Coaches | Surgery bus for November | £75.00 |
| New Leaf Tree & Garden Services | Millennium Garden & Village Hall | £125.00 |
| HMRC | Tax | £27.00 |
| TOTAL |  | £734.25 |

RESOLVED:

* That the precept requirement would be set to £19,190 and the draft budget for 2017-18 be approved.
* That the District Councillor V Pritchard would raise the lack of reporting analysis supplied by B&NES to support the precept requirement.
* That £1,000 would be transferred from the Reserve Account to the Current Account.
1. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

The next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council is on **Wednesday 1st February 2017 at 7.30pm at The Link, Bishop Sutton.**

The meeting was concluded at 8.45pm**.**

Signed: ............................................................... Date: ...........................................