

Staveley and Copgrove Parish Council

Website: <https://staveleyandcopgrovepc.org.uk>

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 8th November 2022 at 7pm in Staveley and Copgrove Village Hall

Present: Cllr Peter Edwards (Chair), Cllr J. Thornton, Cllr D. Greenwood. 6 Members of the public attended.

Sarah Whitworth, Gary Curnow.

Clerk: Liz Leatherbarrow

The meeting started at 7.02pm.

1. Introduction from the Chairman and a reminder of the Council's Policy for the audio or visual recording of the meeting

A reminder was shared.

2. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies from Cllr G. Bowland.

3. To receive any declarations of interest not already declared under the Council's Code of Conduct or members Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None.

1.

To confirm the Minutes of the last meeting held on August 9th 2022 as a true and accurate record

Proposal: To accept the minutes from 9th August 2022 PC meeting. All in Favour.

2.

To receive updates from the Ward Councillors

The Ward councillor was not present.

6. To welcome newly co-opted Parish Councillors

Two residents have been co-opted onto the PC: Sarah Whitworth and Gary Curnow The two new members were welcomed onto the Parish Council as Councillors.

7. Clerks report on action taken on the resolutions of the last meeting

Proposal: To accept the Clerk Report with actions taken since the last meeting in August. All in Favour.

8. To receive an update from the local Police Liaison Officer No Police representative was present.

The Chair noted that this may be due to the recommendation at the last Safer Neighbourhood Group (SNG) meeting that Police attendance at PC meetings is limited by their stretched resources. In response to this, representatives from local PC's were advised to attend the SNG meetings to have access to local Police reports.

9. To receive the current Financial statement and bank reconciliation

Cllr Thornton gave a verbal Financial report to support the documents shared. Key messages from the accounts are:

The Accounts show a small deficit due to (i) an error in calculating the Clerk's salary payments, and (ii) the purchase of Speedwatch resources from reserves. Both payments were authorised by the PC. The predicted balance at the end of the Financial year is favourable.

Proposal: To accept the latest Financial statement and the Bank resolution as prepared at 25.10.2022. All in Favour. 10. To approve any Finance Committee recommendations

Cllr Thornton detailed the following recommendations from the Finance Committee:

(i) The Committee propose that the Precept is increased by 5% in 2023-2024. The reasons for the increase are: the spiralling cost of living, with the rate of inflation increasing to 10% currently, which will impact on contractors fees and other usual planned expenses incurred by the PC; the Precept has not been increased by the PC for the past 4 years, last increase was in 2018; the PC has worked prudently in past recent years using reserves to offset deficits. Recognising that all residents face financial pressure from the economic situation in the same way as the PC budgets, it was hoped an increase of 5%, as half of the current rate of inflation, reflected the PC's awareness of difficulties a Precept increase may cause to residents; the PC will continue to fund any budget deficits from reserves.

The matter was discussed amongst the Councillors and comments were invited from the assembled public present. Following the discussion agreement was reached.

Proposal: to increase the Precept by 5% in 2023-2024. All in Favour.

(ii) Reserves have been accrued in the PC budget, primarily from donations made by benefactors. The Finance Committee are aware that changes made because of devolution across North Yorkshire

in 2023, may impact on funding streams and scrutiny of PC budgets when local government organisation is reviewed. It is anticipated if PC reserves are left unjustified in the PC account, funding from local Government systems may be refused/limited. To ensure the reserves are spent on improvements and projects rather than maintenance, it is proposed the PC should have agreed spending plans for the reserves in place.

Suggestions for the use of the reserves included: a) repairs to the crack in the Pinfold, b) the resurfacing of the driveway at the rear of the pub, which does not fall in the remit of the Local Authority, c) purchase of a flagpole in commemoration of Queen Elizabeth II.

Discussion was shared amongst the Council and the public present about the suggestions for use of the reserved funds. There was support agreed to the possibility of using funds for the resurfacing of the driveway near the pub and similarly, to repair the Pinfold. Opposition was made from representatives of the public present towards the erection of a flagpole on the village green. Three statements were made in opposition from residents, with reasons expressed why the flagpole idea was unsuitable.

Proposal: Finance Committee to ensure a proportion of the budget reserves are justified, including by possibly ring fencing them for projects such as resurfacing of the driveway at the rear of the pub and repairing the crack in the Pinfold. All in Favour.

(iii) Cllr Thornton explained the Finance Committee had been temporarily suspended and a working group formed, as there were insufficient numbers of PC members to keep meetings quorate from May 2022. However, now that 2 new PC members have been co-opted, it was suggested it was important to reconvene the Finance Committee. Gary Curnow volunteered to join the Finance Committee to facilitate this.

Proposal: To reconvene the Finance Committee with 3 Councillors and the Clerk (RFO) as members. All in Favour.

ACTION: Clerk to ensure finance group meetings are reinstated as Finance Committee meetings with Cllr G. Bowman, Cllr J Thornton and Cllr G Curnow.

(iv) A written request has been received from an allotment holder to erect a shed. This request was discussed.

Proposal: To allow the shed to be erected, following the terms of the tenancy agreement particulars agreed. All in Favour.

1.

(v) The Finance group have been concerned about the Playground inspection reports not being received monthly. Similarly, problems have arisen regarding the expected hedge cutting and grass cutting programme with the same contractor. To resolve concerns raised the Clerk has arranged a meeting with the contractor. Cllr Thornton and Cllr Edwards offered to attend the meeting on 15th November at 9am with the Clerk to confirm the contractor's programme and to

discuss the Playground maintenance.

2.

(vi) It was confirmed the hedge near to the playground has now been cut.

3.

(vii) It was confirmed the playground inspection reports have been received for September and October.

11. To consider Commuted Sums monies

Commuted Sums monies had been discussed at the Finance group.

Proposal: To accept the Finance Group recommendation not to pursue Commuted Sums actions currently. All in Favour.

12. To receive an update on the Community Speedwatch initiative, including installation of temporary VAS road signs

Cllr Thornton gave an update on progress made by the village Speedwatch Group:

Ten villagers have volunteered to be part of the Speedwatch group. 12 sessions have taken place in different locations around the village. The speed of 807 vehicles has been recorded. 46/807 were caught speeding over 30mph. 46mph was the highest speed recorded from the 46 caught over the speed limit. The cars caught speeding will receive a notification warning letter from the Police.

Positive feedback about the project from some of the residents in Staveley has been received by the Speedwatch members.

Cllr Thornton recapped on progress made regarding the VAS signs. At the PC meeting in August District County Councillor (DCCllr) Robert Windass offered a grant to support the Staveley Speedwatch group to purchase the VAS signs. However, no correspondence has been returned from the DCCllr with regards the grant, in spite of repeated contact made by Cllr Thornton.

It was agreed to consider if funding might be allocated from the PC reserves to pay for the VAS signs, but only if the grant monies were definitely not available.

Proposal: Cllr Thornton to try again to secure grant monies from DCCllr Windass to fund the VAS signs. All in Favour. ACTION: Clerk to keep the VAS Signs item on the next PC meeting agenda.

13. To consider the Neighbourhood plan and receive a progress report

Cllr Bowland had attempted to get support from residents to start a working group to consider the Neighbourhood Plan. Only 1 volunteer had come forward, Mr Derek Kennington.

Cllr Sarah Whitworth also volunteered to support the project with Cllr Bowland and Derek Kennington (present at this meeting).

Proposal: Cllr Bowland to contact the volunteers after the meeting to plan future actions. All in Favour. 14. 1 To discuss the suggestion of erecting a flagpole on village Green from last minutes:

The suggestion was raised in Agenda point 10 (ii) above.

Residents present at the meeting gave their detailed opposition to the suggestion. The matter was discussed by the PC, considering the views expressed by residents and including the financial, Health and Safety implications also.

Proposal: To reject the suggestion of erecting a flagpole on the village green. All in Favour. 14.2 To discuss the Oak Tree on the Village Green

Cllr Greenwood reported he had received no response to his e-mails to Harrogate Borough Council (HBC) about the tree. It was suggested telephoning a named officer at HBC. Cllr Sarah Whitworth has the officer's contact details to supply to Cllr Greenwood. Cllr Greenwood will continue to pursue the matter with HBC, including via telephone with the named officer.

14.3 The hedge on Arkendale Road

Concerns about the height of the overgrown hedge were raised previously. A contractor has since cut the hedge.

It was suggested that HBC has a policy about the permitted heights of hedges, which the Chair will obtain copies of for future reference.

15. To consider any new correspondence received and decide any actions necessary: (i) Staveley Nature Reserve Report

A copy of the report was circulated to all Cllrs before the meeting. The Chair gave his thanks for the report, and it was noted by all.

(ii) SNG Minutes and Documents. (To discuss future representation from PC?)

The Chair offered to represent the PC at the next SNG meeting in December, especially as representation by Police at the PC meetings is unpredictable and inconsistent.

ACTION: Clerk to share the meeting details with the Chair.

16. To receive a report updating on the status of planning applications in the Parish

Applications were included in the clerk's report. The details of applications were noted. 17. To notify the Clerk of matters for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting

To consider the suggestions for ring fencing the reserved funds, including the resurfacing of the driveway at the pub and the maintenance of the Playground.

18. To confirm the date and time of the next meeting: Tuesday 7th February 2023 at 7pm. The meeting ended at 7.55pm.