

STANDON PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Standon Parish Council held on Tuesday, 24 November 2009, at 7.30 pm in the Community Centre.

*Cllr M Acford	*Cllr A Lang
*Cllr Mrs R Arikans	Cllr C W Marks
Cllr G D Cowell	Cllr Ms E Painter
*Cllr Mrs J A Dearman	*Cllr R M Stacey (Chairman)
Cllr K Goodsell	*Cllr Mrs M Wilkinson

* denotes present.

In attendance: one member of the public
PCSO Stephen Whittaker

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Cowell, Goodsell, Marks and Ms Painter.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Acford	Community Centre (wife is Chairman of the Management Committee)	Personal
	Consideration of donation to Christmas tree	Personal
Cllr Stacey	Litter Agency	Personal & prejudicial

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. 3 Villages Eco Group

Presentation would now take place at the January meeting.

2. Transport and Policy Unit Meeting – 25 November 2009

Chairman to attend.

3. Hertfordshire Local Access Forum

Meeting to be held on 3 December 2009 details of which had been circulated to all members.

PARISHIONERS' COMMENTS

None.

PCSO'S REPORT

1. Recently set up Neighbourhood Watch scheme in Standon and refreshed the existing one on the Stortford Road.
2. Business Watch also being set up in Standon and Puckeridge and signs would be erected shortly.
3. A number of burglaries had occurred in Standon.
4. Lots of problems being encountered with off-road vehicles, especially motor bikes, using public rights of way and accessing local farms.
5. A120 had now become a priority with regard to speeding vehicles and regular speed checks were in force, along with the use of the hand held speed guns. Last Tuesday over a half hour period 190 vehicles were recorded as exceeding the speed limit – only 8 were recorded as travelling in excess of 40 mph.
6. Hare coursing was generally a problem in the area, although it was more prevalent north of the Parish. Information on the activities was regularly fed through the RIGS Paging system.
7. Mobile police vehicles would be visiting the Parish on 20 December 2009.
8. Incidents of indiscriminate parking outside the video shop. Would speak to drivers.

In conclusion, the Chairman thanked PCSO Stephen Whittaker for his report.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 27 OCTOBER 2009

Presentation of alternative refuse collection

Delete 'T Walcock' and insert 'T Watkins'

Adoption of Local Red Telephone Kiosks

RESOLVED item Pco Colliers End – insert 'This structure to be considered for utilisation as a notice board'.

Having given effect to the above amendments, the Minutes were confirmed as a correct record of the proceedings and were signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

1. Alternative Refuse Collection

Members requested that a letter be forwarded to Mr Watkins expressing their gratitude for a very informative presentation.

2. Adoption of Local Red Telephone Kiosks

Cllr Acford expressed his concern that so much time was being spent on discussing this matter and should not all boxes just be removed. Members were reminded of the Council's previous position on this matter and of the possibility of using redundant boxes as notice boards.

Note: Cllr Lang joined the meeting at this juncture.

3. East Herts Parish/Town Council Emergency Planning Workshop

Cllr Cowell had e-mailed the Chairman informing him that he had attended the above workshop. He was concerned that it appeared that he had not been registered on the course.

A template for a Parish Council Major Incident Plan for submission to East Herts Council would be presented to the next meeting of the Parish Council for consideration. (Agenda item).

4. Hertfordshire Constabulary – Rural Parish Courses

Reference was made to the offer made by Inspector Kennedy to provide children's 'high-viz' jackets for Roger de Clare for use with the proposed walking bus.

PLANNING MATTERS

1. Current Applications

No applications had been received since the Planning Committee meeting held on 10 November 2009.

2. Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 10 November 2009

RESOLVED that the Minutes be received.

3. Planning Appeal

To note that the following appeal had been dismissed:

3/09/0551/FP New garage to front of garden property with double access door and single side door at 12 Park Lane, Puckeridge.

HIGHWAYS MATTERS

1. Minutes of meeting held on 13 November 2009

Members' attention was drawn to the following items:

Item 23 – Town Farm Crescent Land

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Mr Marshall stated that the occupier of 7 Town Farm Crescent had arranged the repair of the damaged drain and the matter had been resolved.

REINSTATEMENT OF STANDING ORDERS

Members felt that, as the County Council had been maintaining the land since 1964, the Parish Council would be ill-advised to take over the maintenance of the land and they RESOLVED that the County Council be asked to continue to maintain the land.

Item 24 – Double white lines along the A120 through Standon

Cllr Lang stated that in discussions which had taken place on this matter, Mr Yucelt had stated that in his opinion the road markings complied fully with current traffic regulations. However, he agreed to seek confirmation.

Other matters – South Road/A120 Junction

Cllr Acford questioned the rationale behind the remedial work undertaken to the footway west of the junction. To be raised at the next highways meeting.

2. Traffic Regulation Orders

(i) To note the following road closure between 7 December 2009 and 24 December 2009 for a period of 3 days (item 1) one day (item 2)

Item 1 A120 southbound slip road leading onto the southbound carriageway of the A10 Puckeridge, from its junctions with A120 Standon Hill south-westwards to its junction with the southbound carriageway of the A120, a distance of approximately 130 metres.

Item 2 Length of Dowsetts Lane, Colliers End, from a point 20 metres east of a point in line with the eastern boundary of 14 Wellington Cottages eastwards to its junction with the access road leading to Dowsetts Farm, a distance of approximately 370 metres.

- (ii) To note that the Herts County Council was proposing to make an amendment to an existing 'no stopping and waiting' School Keep Clear marking restriction at Cambridge Road, Puckeridge, outside the Church, St Thomas of Canterbury. The Chairman stated that the signage must be clear to avoid any confusion and requested that Herts County Council be notified accordingly.

COMMUNITY CENTRE

1. Minutes of the Community Centre Management Committee meeting held on 21 October 2009

RESOLVED that the Minutes be noted. (See Appendix A)

2. Minutes of the Community Centre Management Committee meeting held on 18 November 2009

It was noted that the Minutes had been received on the date of the Parish Council meeting and, as such, had not been circulated to members.

However, the Chairman referred to the following matters which had been raised at the meeting:

Trade Waste Bins

Since the introduction of the new refuse collection, the bins at the Community Centre were overflowing. It was suspected that parishioners were using the bins for depositing household rubbish.

Quiz Night

The quiz night held on 21 November had been a great success with over 90 people attending.

Cllr Lang raised the following:

Utilities

Rates A proposed revaluation of the premises had been carried out increasing the rateable value from £6,500 to £17,000. The matter would be taken up with the Valuation Office.

Electricity Looking to change suppliers when the current contract with E-on expired in January 2010.

3. 5-year Business Plan

Whilst it was noted that no plan had been prepared, nevertheless, the work to repair/replace the outside doors and provide a disabled access compliant with DDA regulations had been identified. Members felt that there was a priority to address the matter of the disabled access and the inclusion of expenditure should be considered in the 2010/2011 Precept. However, the doors were not a priority at this stage.

Reference was made to the previous discussions on the potential hazard regarding the cages to the northern end of the building. The Chairman stated that Mr Tony Hall and Cllr Andrews were in discussion on this matter with East Herts Council (Planning).

The Chairman referred to the guttering on the north wall, which would appear to be leaking and he requested that the Clerk arrange for this to be cleaned.

4. Tarmac footpath from car park to play area

Members considered the merits of the above and, whilst accepting that the surface was not wholly satisfactory, nevertheless, felt that the matter was not of sufficient high priority to justify any expenditure at the present time.

PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP

Cllr Mrs Wilkinson made available the Minutes of the last meeting. (See Appendix B)

FUTURE OF STREET LIGHTING IN HERTFORDSHIRE

Members had been circulated with a copy of a letter received from Hertfordshire Highways setting out the proposed changes to the way street lighting in the County was funded and managed. Hertfordshire Highways was looking into applying for private finance initiative credits to help fund an improved service.

RESOLVED that the contents of the letter be noted.

ALLOTMENTS

Cllr Mrs Wilkinson reported on the meeting held with Mr Brian Durrant (Allotment Representative) and Mr John Harris (Standon Charities) and she was pleased to inform members that both Mr Andrew Pearce and Mr Martin Sallows had agreed to relinquish land to facilitate the provision of additional allotments. Arrangements would be made to delineate the boundaries of the land and for the Council's Solicitor to draw up the necessary agreements. The issue of seeking planning permission for the change of use would need to be addressed.

PARISH PLAN

Cllr Lang had e-mailed the Clerk and the Chairman with the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Plan Working Group held on 17 November 2009. (See Appendix C)

With regard to the public meeting which had been scheduled for Tuesday, 19 January, it was noted that the date had now been revised to 2 February 2010.

Reference was made to the request that the Parish Council make the sum of £1,000 available to the Working Group to enable work to proceed. This would be repaid should sufficient grants be forthcoming. Cllr Lang stated that there was every intention that no expenditure would fall on the Parish Council as funding was being sought.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council make available a sum up to £1,000 to enable work to proceed on the production of the Parish Plan should such sum be required.

LITTER AGENCY

Cllr Mrs Wilkinson had drawn attention to the litter picking of Standon High Street which was being carried out by Mr Bird on a voluntary basis and she had suggested that a gardening voucher of say £50 could be forwarded to Mr Bird.

Cllr Mrs Dearman was unhappy to show appreciation to one volunteer when there was no financial recognition afforded to the other volunteers undertaking litter picking for the Parish Council. There were also other persons undertaking litter picking which the Parish Council as a body was unaware.

In recognition of the work undertaken it was agreed that a letter of gratitude be forwarded to all the volunteers and that a note of appreciation be included in PS.

Members were reminded that East Herts Council had approved an increase of £420 per annum in recognition of the fact that the Litter Agency now encompassed the emptying of 26 bins. Members were reminded that under the current arrangements the following amounts were approximate payments in the financial year:

Mrs D Sallows	£1,740
Mr M Stacey	£420
Mrs S Goodsell	£50
Mr T Walden	£120
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	£2,330
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In view of the declaration of interest registered at the commencement of the meeting, Cllr Stacey vacated the meeting. Cllr Mrs Wilkinson took the chair.

RESOLVED that the £420 be apportioned as follows:

Mrs D Sallows	£160
Mr J Stacey	£80
Mrs S Goodsell	£40
Mr T Walden	£40

STANDON VILLAGE HALL

1. Constitution

Members were informed that discussion on the revision of the constitution did not take place at the last meeting of the Village Hall Managers as there was reluctance on the part of members to amend the document save for recognising the alteration concerning the amendment of the Parish Council's representatives.

The Chairman felt that there was a need for consistency and that the Village Hall constitution should be similar in content to the agreement between the Parish Council and Standon and Puckeridge Community Centre. It was requested that the Village Hall representatives progress this matter.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2009

RESOLVED that the Minutes be received. (See Appendix D)

3. Insurance related matters

Cllr Mrs Dearman gave details of a claim submitted by the Village Hall Managers for the loss of 5 tables which had been stolen on or about 30 September 2008. The total claim had amounted to £575 with an excess of £100 on the policy. The constitution stated that the Parish Council was responsible for insuring the building and the contents, although it was noted that there had never been an inventory of the contents supplied to the Parish Council. Cllr Mrs Dearman also stated that having discussed the matter of insurance with Ms Wendy Smith (Secretary of the Management Committee) it would seem that there was a duplication of insurance cover and that there were items such as public liability which were being insured by both the Village Hall Managers and the Parish Council. Therefore, it was being suggested that the Clerk arrange to discuss the insurance issues with Ms Wendy Smith in order to rationalise the matter and for the claim to be addressed by the Parish Council.

RESOLVED that the Parish Council settle the claim.

BUS SHELTER – COLLIERS END

The Clerk had circulated to all members a copy of the attached report. (See Appendix E)

Members were concerned that they were being asked for a contribution when it had been resolved at the previous meeting that the proposals as outlined by the County Council be accepted subject to confirmation that the proposed site was within the Standon Parish boundary.

RESOLVED that the Clerk's report be noted and no contribution be made.

STANDON HIGH STREET – DONATION TOWARDS CHRISTMAS TREE

Cllr Acford informed members that up until last year the Standon Church PCC had arranged for the provision of the Christmas tree which had been supplied free of charge. The Church had advised that, as of this year, there would be a cost for providing the tree which initially was £450, but had out-turned at £250. The Standon May Day Committee had agreed to fund 50% of the cost with the suggestion that the Parish Council fund the remaining 50%. The Chairman stated that he had been approached by the Reverend David Payne who had expressed a reluctance for the Parish Council to incur any expenditure and that the church would fund the 50%.

Members noted the financial arrangement for this year and RESOLVED to underwrite any shortfall. With regard to the cost of providing a tree in the future, this would be referred to the Finance Committee to be held on 3 December with a view to considering that costs be met from future Precepts.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR GRANTS TO HELP LOCAL COMMUNITY

The Chairman informed members that every County Councillor had for the current financial year been allocated a sum of £10,000 to be utilised in support of their local ward community. The Chairman was unsure as to whether Cllr Andrews had fully committed his allocation and he felt that the provision of Parish notice boards could be something which he could consider supporting.

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

1. Payment of Accounts

RESOLVED that the accounts as set out on the attached statement be duly authorised for payment. (See Appendix F)

Cllr Mrs Arikans advised that she had not signed a bank mandate.

2. Financial Statement

RESOLVED that the contents of the attached statement be received. (See Appendix G)

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

- (i) Parish Travel Plan – Car Sharing – Presentation.
- (ii) Precept 2010/2011.
- (iii) Orchard Presentation – 3 Village Eco Group – Deferment of the November presentation requested by the Group.
- (iv) Renewal of notice boards – To receive report from the Chairman.
- (v) Parish Council Major Incident Plan.
- (vi) Parish Plan.

CLERK'S APPRAISAL/STAFF WORKING PARTY

RESOLVED that a Working Party be constituted comprising the following members:

Cllr Mrs Arikans, Cllr Cowell, Cllr Goodsell and Cllr Stacey.

CONFIRMATION OF DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- (i) Finance Committee – 3 December 2009.
- (ii) Planning Committee – 8 December 2009.
- (iii) Parish Plan Working Party – 16 December 2009.
- (iv) Planning Committee – 12 January 2010.
- (v) Highways Meeting – Thursday, 14 January 2010 – 4.45 pm at the Community Centre.
- (vi) Parish Council meeting – Tuesday, 26 January 2010

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2010

Members confirmed that Parish Council meetings would continue to be held on the fourth Tuesday of every month, excluding August and December. Planning meetings would take place on the second Tuesday of each month.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.05 pm.