

Stinsford Parish Council

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 8 February 2016 at 7.00pm in The Old Library, Kingston Maurward College

Present: Dr Andy Stillman (Chairman), Mr George Armstrong, Mr Michael Clarke, Mr Chris Hext, Mr Will Molland and Mr Kim Payne

Also in attendance: Miss Kirsty Riglar (Clerk) and 1 member of the public (Mr Hugh Grenville-Jones).

16. Apologies for Absence

16.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr Richard Wheal, Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes (Dorset County Council) and Cllr Patrick Cooke (West Dorset District Councillor).

17. Declarations of Interest

17.1 There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

17.2 Mr Armstrong and Mr Molland declared personal interests in planning application WD/D/15/002971 by reason of being near neighbours of Gardener's Cottage.

18. Affordable Housing and Affordable Housing Needs Surveys

18.1 The Parish Council received a presentation by Mr Paul Derrien, Housing Enabling Team Leader, Dorset Councils Partnership about the provision of affordable housing. He informed the Parish Council that:

(i) The term 'affordable housing' now incorporated accommodation previously known by the generic term 'social housing'.

(ii) The definition of 'affordable' was constantly changing but was currently understood to be rent which was 80% of the market value.

(iii) For large housing developments the Local Planning Authority requested that 35% of the units be affordable; of these 70% should be available for rental and 30% made available to first-time buyers.

(iv) At the present time, there were 1,055 households on the Housing Register for West Dorset; 3 of these had a connection with Stinsford.

(v) He had been able to identify only 8 'affordable' housing units within the parish, including Knapwater.

(vi) No housing needs survey had been carried out for Stinsford parish; these tended to be triggered by an approach from parish councils. These surveys were designed to capture a lot of information from people living in the parish about their housing needs. However, due to a trend in falling response rates, a more light-touch approach had been designed. If a survey was conducted in the parish, the results would be discussed with the Parish Council and schemes for development in the area to meet the needs would be investigated in partnership with the various local housing associations.

(vii) The current Government's drive to increase levels of home ownership, including the new 'right to buy', was changing the horizon with regard to the provision of

affordable housing units for rent and there was some uncertainty about how schemes would be progressed in the future. However, it was hoped that exceptions would be made for rural areas where there was a trend of high property prices and low wages. It was anticipated that more clarity about this would be received during the spring and summer. He suggested that, should the Parish Council wish to pursue a survey, the process not commence until later in the year.

18.2 The Parish Council noted Mr Derrien's comments about the changing landscape in relation to the provision of affordable housing as a result of the Government's drive towards home ownership. It was therefore **resolved** to revisit at the August meeting the question as to whether to request that a housing needs survey be conducted in the parish and how to promote and support this process.

18.3 On behalf of the Parish Council, the Chairman thanked Mr Derrien for his presentation.

19. West Dorset District Council Matters

19.1 In the absence of Cllr Patrick Cooke, the Chairman moved to the next agenda item.

20. Public Participation Time

20.1 Mr Grenville-Jones suggested that the Parish Council might wish to consider requesting that a representative of Dorset County Council of West Dorset District Council be invited to a future meeting to provide more information about the possible structure of local government in Dorset. The Clerk advised that the viability assessment of various options was currently being undertaken by Local Partnerships, an arm of the Local Government Association, and the outcome of this was due to be reported by the end of March. It was therefore sensible to wait until this information was available before requesting a presentation.

Action: Clerk to liaise with Cllr Mrs Haynes and Cllr Cooke about requesting a presentation.

21. Minutes

21.1 It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2016 be taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

21.2 Further to minute 5.4, Mr Molland reported that he had spoken with the relevant landowner and raised the issues regarding the gravel deposited on the road near Bockhampton Cross by agricultural contractors and this had been cleared. The landowner had also trimmed the hedges without affecting the daffodils, as suggested at the previous meeting.

21.3 Further to minute 13.2, Mr Armstrong reported that he had contacted Magna Housing who had agreed to look at replacing the salt in the grit bin at Knapwater.

22. Finance

Expenditure

22.1 The Clerk reported that there were no items of expenditure to consider.

Reserves Policy

22.2 The Parish Council considered its Reserves Policy. The Clerk reported that currently the Parish Council held the following amounts in reserves:-

General	£300
Play Area	£2079.60
IT Equipment	£1000
Neighbourhood Plan	£1000
Community Hall project	£2600
Winter Maintenance	£1000
Playground Inspection	£200

The reserve for IT equipment had been established in 2008 and the ring-fenced sums for Neighbourhood Plan, Winter Maintenance and Community Hall project had been added in 2012.

- 22.3 It was noted that the Community Hall project was no longer being progressed and there was, therefore, no need for the Parish Council to maintain a ring-fenced sum of money for this. It was considered that this funding could most appropriately be designated for the improvement or maintenance of cycling or transport provision within the parish.
- 22.4 It was also discussed whether there was a need to further increase the sums currently held in reserves.
- 22.5 It was **resolved** that:
- (a) the current reserve for the Community Hall project be re-designated as a reserve for Cycling/Transport improvements and maintenance; and
 - (b) no additions be made to the reserves during 2016/17.

23. Planning Matters

- 23.1 WD/D/15/002857 – 4 Stinsford House, Church Lane, Stinsford – Replacement of two sash windows (Listed Building Consent)

It was **resolved** to SUPPORT to this application.

- 23.2 WD/D/15/002971 – Gardener's Cottage, Bockhampton Lane, Lower Bockhampton – erect detached oak frame garage with cinema room, hobbies room and home office space above (Full)
Mr Armstrong and Mr Molland declared personal interests in this application by reason of being near neighbours of Gardener's Cottage and abstained from voting.

It was **resolved** to OBJECT to this application on the following grounds:-

- (i) the scale of the proposed development is excessive for domestic use;
- (ii) the loss of the perimeter hedge will result in a loss of an existing habitat;
- (iii) the design and materials of the proposed building and perimeter wall will be out of keeping with the village; and
- (iv) the proposed development will be within the existing Conservation Area and will negatively impact upon this.

It was also **resolved** that the District Council be made aware that the Parish Council questioned the accuracy of the site plan included as part of the application; the site of the proposed development appearing larger on the plan than it was in reality.

23.3 Slyer's Lane Wind Farm

The Parish Council noted the refusal of the application for the Slyer's Lane Wind Farm by the District Council's Development Control Committee. Mr Clarke had addressed the Committee on behalf of the Parish Council, as Mr Wheal had had to leave the meeting before he was able to speak. It was noted that Mr Clarke had made the point that the Parish Council supported the need for renewable energy sources and had supported another scheme within the parish which had been refused.

23.4 The Parish Council reiterated the previously agreed stance that the need for the development of renewable energy sources was acknowledged but there was a preference for smaller scale installations.

24. **Bad Weather Plan**

24.1 In relation to the Bad Weather Plan, Mr Armstrong raised the impact of flooding on the parish. Whilst flooding at Lower Bockhampton was in itself a concern, the impact of the traffic seeking to traverse along Bockhampton Lane when unable to continue on the West Stafford bypass due to its closure as a result of flooding was also significant. An HGV had recently damaged one of the bridges, knocking off a significant amount of capping stone. He considered that there was a need to co-operate with the neighbouring parish to try and mitigate the impact on Lower Bockhampton of this displacement of traffic, particularly when there was flooding there too.

24.2 The Clerk reported receipt of an email from Mrs Pat Cosgrove which detailed a message that she had sent to Dorset County Council about the unsympathetic repair of the Swimming Hole Bridge. This was echoed by Mr Armstrong and it was resolved to raise this with Cllr Mrs Jill Haynes and request that this be revisited.

Action: Clerk.

24.3 It was **resolved** that the next iteration of the Bad Weather Plan should include a specific flood plan and the need to liaise with Knightsford Parish Council on this and that the Parish Council should revisit the possibility of nominating a Flood Warden for Stinsford.

Action: Clerk to contact Environment Agency about details of job description and training for Flood Warden.

25. **Superfast Broadband**

25.1 The Chairman drew to attention to the series of emails received from Oliver Letwin MP. This indicated that it was unlikely that any action could be taken to improve broadband speeds in Lower Bockhampton beyond the installation of a satellite option. However this was likely to cost in the region of £30 per calendar month and would not be a solution for those buildings which were Listed.

25.2 Mr Molland reported that he had spoken with Poundbury Systems about the likely cost should the community wish to fund its own installation of the infrastructure required to enable superfast broadband. To lay fibre to Lower Bockhampton would cost in the region of £20-30,000; a cost of around £1,000 per property.

25.3 It was suggested that a meeting could be arranged to enable local residents to hear direct about these issues from Dr Letwin, Duglad Lockhart of the Superfast Dorset team and a representative from BT. The Parish Council welcomed this suggestion as it would enable residents to raise their concerns direct as well as to ask questions on specifics.

Action: Chairman to contact Dr Letwin, Mr Lockhart and BT about the possibility of a meeting with residents. Mr Molland to update residents of Lower Bockhampton.

26. Hardy's Birthplace Visitor Centre

- 26.1 Mr Armstrong explained that there were possible alternative access issues associated with the Visitor Centre and suggested that there might be a need to refer this matter requesting that enforcement action be taken.

27. Traffic Management and Road Safety

- 27.1 The Chairman reported that the traffic management and road safety issues raised with Dorset County Council during 2015 had been escalated to the Director for Environment and the Economy, who had undertaken to ensure that a full response was sent to the Parish Council.

- 27.2 Further concerns were expressed about the need for speed restrictions on the road from Bockhampton Cross to the entrance of the College's campus and the increasing number of large concrete lorries accessing the property at the entrance to Birkin House. It was suggested that a possible course of action would be for the parish to register as a Speedwatch area.

Action: Clerk to contact PCSO Sarah Pilcher about Speedwatch scheme.

- 27.3 The Clerk confirmed that a request for the designation of the path along London Road between Grey's Bridge and the Stinsford Hill roundabout had been submitted to Dorset County Council but to date no response had been received. It was suggested that the case for this designation would be strengthened if Kingston Maurward College also submitted a similar request.

- 27.4 It was noted that the hedges from the junction of Bockhampton lane with the West Stafford bypass on the western side as far as Swimming Hole Bridge was becoming increasingly overgrown and reducing the visibility of drivers. As it was not known who the owner of this land currently was, it was **resolved** that this be reported to Dorset County Council.

Action: Clerk to submit request that this be addressed to improve visibility.

28. Kingston Maurward College

- 28.1 Mr Payne reported that an evacuation exercise would shortly be held by the College.

- 28.2 The issue of continued light pollution from the external lighting on the Studio School was raised. It was noted that Mr Payne had spoken with staff there previously and it was suggested that the Parish Council now contact the School direct to request that the situation was improved.

Action: Clerk to write to Studio School.

29. Clerk's items

- 29.1 The Clerk reported that it was necessary for all of the councillors to complete a new form to enable them to become/continue as signatories on the Parish Council's bank account.

- 29.2 Arising from a request from the Clerk, it was **resolved** that the date of the meeting in July be changed to Monday 4 July 2016.

30. Items for future Agenda

- 31.1 It was **resolved** that the following items be added to the agenda for future meetings:
March/April – presentation on neighbourhood planning from consultant
August – affordable housing needs survey

31. Date of next meeting

31.1 It was **noted** that the next full meeting would be held on Monday 14 March 2016.

The meeting concluded at 9:40pm.

Chairman..... **Date**.....