

## STREAT PARISH MEETING

### Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Streat Parish Meeting held at Stonehealed Farm Barn on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 8.00pm.

<b>Present:</b>	Anthony Gedge	Chairman
	Brian Clifford	Vice Chairman
	Tim Gaynor	Committee member
	Liz Bennett	Clerk and RFO

**Villagers on electoral roll:** Jane Cowley, George Swaine, Debbie Swaine, Richard Keys, Ray Wharlow, Carol Owen, Sue Hancock, Margaret Brown, Fiona Smith, Lance Smith, Nic Perkins, Wolfgang Allisat, Michael Sandercock, Ulie Sandercock, Charlie Yeldham, Mike Sewell

**Attendees not on the electoral roll:** Colin Juniper, Rev. David Wallis, Rev. Nicol Kinrade.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the new Clerk.

#### 1. Rectory Barn Update.

The Chairman introduced Reverend David Wallis and Nicol Kinrade who had kindly agreed to attend the meeting to provide an update on the Streat Barn Mission Fund. The Chairman summarised the events that have led to the position today.

- The Barn and Memorial Garden had been part of the Glebe of Streat Parish until The Old Rectory, which included the Memorial Garden, was sold in the early 1960s. By a parliamentary Measure in the 1970s, the freehold of all glebe property in Streat at that time, vested in the Diocese of Chichester which granted a lease of Rectory Barn back to Streat and Westmeston PCC on a 50 year full repairing basis at a peppercorn rent.
- In 1998, a Streat Barn Fund was created, contributed to by both the church and the villagers of both parishes to help pay for repairs to the Barn and expenses of running it.
- In 2004 the two parishes were invited to buy the freehold of the Barn and the Streat Barn Fund was instrumental in raising a substantial proportion of the purchase price of £20 000.
- The Memorial Garden was part of the sale of The Old Rectory in the 1960s but after the freehold of the barn was purchased by the PCC, the late Mrs Colt donated the land for the creation of a garden, which was intended as a gift to the village and not just for the benefit of the church.
- In 2007 the two parishes merged with Ditchling to become The Beacon Parish of Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston, and the assets of all three parishes, including the Barn and Garden, vested in it.
- In 2014 the PCC decided to sell the Barn due to rising costs. We were advised that, under the terms of the original purchase from the Diocese, on a sale, 50% of the net

profit had to be paid to the Diocese, and after this was done, £154 000 remained and that sum was now being held in the Streat Barn Mission Fund.

- At the last meeting the village expressed the clear view that, as over the years the village as a whole, not just churchgoers, had given time and money for the maintenance of the Barn, as a substantial proportion of the purchase price of £20 000 had been raised from the villagers in order to secure the future of the Barn as a village asset and as the gift of the garden had been intended to be for the benefit of the village, the whole of the Streat Barn Mission Fund should be held for the long term benefit of Streat Church and its Churchyard. In addition, no guidance was available as to the terms of reference of the "Mission" referred to, and the Chairman had been instructed to write to the PCC on these points. The Rev. Wallis and Rev. Kinrade had kindly offered to attend the meeting to clarify the position of the PCC on these items.

Rev. Wallis provided all present with a pamphlet setting out the terms of reference of the "Mission, and explained that the Streat Barn Mission Fund was a designated fund, meaning that it would not have one restricted use, but it would be used for the three purposes set out in the terms of reference of the Mission Fund, namely:

- Mission using the Church building for worship and community activities.
- Mission that takes place in the parish i.e. events and activities beyond the church walls.
- Mission at a Diocesan, National and Global level.

Three specific projects have been identified which were the installation of toilets and kitchens in Streat and Westmeston churches, and the possible setting up of a Streat Church Support Group. He advised that the west wall of Streat Church was in urgent need of repair, but that separate funds were available for this. An architect was being appointed to advise on and oversee the building projects but at that time the exact costs of these projects was not known.

The floor was then opened for questions and Rev Wallis responded to the following points:

**Q1.** The Barn has a long history as a village centre not just for the church. The implication of the three aims is that whilst some of the money will be spent for the benefit of the parish, some of it will be spent overseas. Shouldn't the church be using some of the money already retained by the Diocese for such work?

**Response.** The church raises significant funds from elsewhere, but at the moment cannot say what proportion of the Streat Barn Mission funds will be spent on each of the three aims. The building improvements will make the church multi-functional and not just a place for worship. An example of an overseas project might be sponsoring a student from overseas to come and experience life in the parish.

**Q2.** Is there an amount of money that is guaranteed for Streat?

**Response.** Not a specific amount because the costs are not yet known, but the first project of the kitchen and toilet will cost at least £30 000. The plans and costs will be confirmed once the architect is appointed.

**Q3.** It is called the “Streat Barn Mission Fund” and yet the aims are for the Beacon Parish and beyond and not specifically for Streat. The windfall arose directly from an investment of £20k, a lot of which was raised in Streat and a proportion of which was raised by non-churchgoers.

**Response.** The people of Westmeston also did a lot of fundraising, the money did not all come from Streat.

**Q4.** Can you confirm that the money will only be spent on the three projects and nothing else?

**Response.** These are the three initial projects and others will be identified. It is no longer just a parish of Streat and Westmeston, but it now includes Ditchling too. Some money could, for example, be spent at Ditchling School.

**Q5.** It’s important to understand what the people contributed to the initial £20 000 thought they were contributing to. Morally, the Streat Barn Mission Fund should be restricted to Streat and Westmeston.

**Response.** The PCC cannot commit to just spending the money in Streat and Westmeston. The Barn was sold partly because it was not being used.

**Q6.** As there are no substantial endowment or designated funds of which Streat Church is the sole beneficiary, can you confirm what funds will be available in the future for keeping the church open and maintaining the building and the churchyard? Residents would like some assurance that the church in Streat has a long term future.

**Response.** There are no plans to close the church and it will be maintained in the long term. The PCC meeting will be asked for a clear idea of what funds will be made available for this and this will be reported back to Streat Parish Meeting.

The Chairman thanked Rev. Wallis and Rev. Nicol for listening to the concerns of residents and looked forward to an ongoing dialogue on this matter.

## **2. Apologies for absence.**

Apologies were accepted from William Morrison, Deborah Grubb and Sue Sewell.

## **3. Minutes of the last Ordinary Meeting 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016.**

A copy of the proposed minutes of the last meeting having been given to all present, and it having been proposed by     and seconded by     , the minutes were unanimously accepted as a true and fair record of the meeting.

## **4. Statement of Accounts.**

The statement of accounts as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 having been given to all present, and it having been proposed by     and seconded by     , the statement was unanimously approved by the meeting. It was also agreed that the Clerk should be added as a signatory to the bank

account to enable her to access bank statements and balances when required. The chairman confirmed the bank mandate would still require two signatures on all cheques etc.

#### **5. Budget 2017/2018.**

The forecast against budget for this financial year and the proposed budget for the next financial year was circulated. There would be an overspend this year due to the costs of recruiting the new Clerk and a handover period. The Chairman explained that last year there had been a surplus on current account, £300 of which had been used to reduce the precept below the budget for this year. However, next year there not be a surplus but a small deficit, and additional money would be needed to restore the reserve account to £2500 and to provide a working surplus in the current account. The suggested precept for next year would therefore be £3301 which was an increase of £586. It having been proposed by and seconded by , the budget was unanimously approved by the meeting.

#### **6. Appointment of representative to Sussex Association of Local Councils.**

It was agreed that Tony Gedge should continue as the representative.

#### **7. Neighbourhood Plan Update.**

The Chairman explained that during the pre-submission consultation in April, the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNP) had raised many objections and in particular objected to two of the sites proposed in the plan for housing. The Neighbourhood Plan group are working hard to identify alternative sites which they hope to do by the New Year. A further consultation will be necessary, focusing on the housing sites and also the allocation of green spaces. In Streat specific areas to be referred to in the plan are:

- The grounds of Streat Place and
- the common land along Streat Lane which will be designated green space
- The area between Wales Farm and Streat Lane to be a protected view. SDNP has advised that this area cannot be protected as a green space, but if a protected view, it should ensure that there is no development of Wales Farm towards Streat Lane.

#### **8. Planning Update.**

The planning update was circulated. It is hoped that the refusal of planning permission at The Old Rectory will be reversed because the proposed conversion would have provided for much needed accommodation for a disabled person. The Middleton Laine application was still under consideration and the comments made by villagers against the application were noted.

#### **9. Monday Group Update.**

The Clerk provided a brief report of the work that the Monday Group had done in and around Streat in the last year.

#### **10. Neighbourhood Watch.**

Mike Sewell reported that the PCSOs were no longer assigned to individual areas but now work in teams allocated to areas of most need. They could be called on for support if needed.

The Burgess Hill recycling centre had reduced opening hours and had introduced charges for certain types of waste which could mean that fly tipping would become an issue.

**11. Committee Membership.**

It having been proposed by     and seconded by     , the meeting unanimously agreed that the committee membership should be increased from three to four.

**12. Date of Next Meeting.**

The next meeting would be held on 11<sup>th</sup> April at 8pm in Stonehealed Farm barn.

DRAFT MINUTES SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION.