

**STOKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
HELD ON 18TH JULY 2019 IN THE  
STOKENHAM PARISH HALL**

**PRESENT:****COUNCILLORS:****P. SPENCE (Chairman)****J. ANSELL****J. CHURTON****MRS P. DOUST****J. GARDNER****C. ROGERS****MRS. S. ROWLAND****J. BRAZIL (District and County Councillor)****L. COWLEY****R. PAIN****T. LYNN****MISS G. ADDISON****A. GOODMAN****Also in attendance:****Clerk – Mrs G. Claydon****APOLOGIES:****COUNCILLORS: None as all present****1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors were invited to declare any disclosable interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they had in any items to be considered at this meeting. They were also reminded to consider whether in the light of recent activities any items within their Register of Interests should be updated. It was advised that any unforeseen request for a Dispensation would be considered by the Clerk at this point only if there was no way a councillor would have been aware of such before the meeting. None Received.

**2. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the:

- (a) full council meeting dated 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019 were approved by all present and duly signed as a true and correct record.
- (b) Planning Committee meeting none held July 2019.

**3. OPEN FORUM**

Greg and Michelle were present to speak about Youth Genesis and the Chillington Youth Club. Michelle provided Youth Genesis Annual Report and some explanatory literature to councillors. Youth Genesis is a charity that is run all over Devon having started in Torbay. The group work on an asset based community development model utilising what the community had such as buildings, equipment etc. They had been approached by Chillington Methodist Church and in turn had trained volunteers from the Church and community association and then last September opened a club at Chillington Community Hall and currently had between 20 – 25 young people attending. Michelle went on to highlight issues affecting young people nationally and referred to issues affecting young people locally. The group had carried out some positive work with young people in Chillington about staying safe and seeing risks, bullying and other important issues. Greg outlined the activities provided such as the pool table, air hockey and outdoor activities to include cricket, volleyball and badminton and they had very positive feedback on some games that young people had never heard of such as French cricket. The young people loved the outdoor space at the hall which worked well and created a safe space for them to do their own thing. Greg hoped that they group could continue their work. It was asked how many nights a week this club

ran and presently it was just Thursday evenings. They would like to expand but the dilemma was getting volunteers to run the club, although they had a fairly healthy group of volunteers currently. The youngsters were coming from all over as some attended when family visited grandparents, two or three walked down from Stokenham, a few came in from some other villages but the problem there was they mainly needed lifts from adults. They were hoping to try and expand further afield for greater attendance. It was mainly youngsters from the parish but anyone from Kingsbridge and around could attend but being localised it was a nice atmosphere. Greg was hoping to get to Stokenham School and speak to Year 6 in September and ensure another wave of attendees. Catching them young was a positive connection for communication later. It was a Christian based ethos but nothing was preached at all. The club filled a gap for some young groups as they could not afford other forms of clubs attended. Youth Genesis provided training, safe guarding and support and were only in Chillington as the nearest other such club was Dartmouth. They had been asked to consider Chillington by the Methodist Church and they in turn approached Chillington Community Association. Each week was a three hour session for volunteers with set up and a one hour debrief. It cost £5000 p.a. to run without any additional trips or residential activities so they were present to ask for support funding towards this. It was questioned what other sources of funding they had. There was some funding from local businesses and individual donations plus a small amount from the Methodist Church, a contribution from Cllr Brazil and input from Chillington Community Association. In other areas Michelle advised that a Service Level Agreement was put place from the precept and Torbay Council had different funding streams. The age was group predominantly 11 – 18 years during term time only. All volunteers were from Chillington apart from one lady from Kingsbridge. Youth Genesis aimed to train local people so a group was more sustainable. One youngster who had been attending had asked about being trained up and becoming a leader. Those who attended paid 50 pence but if they could not afford this they would never be excluded.

***Cllr Brazil arrived halfway through this presentation and gave his report after the agenda item to consider funding had been brought forward and agreed as below.***

#### **DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Cllr Brazil noted various District Council planning matters and that the Green Park Way application had been deferred because members felt, as the Chairman articulated within the Development Management meeting, drainage not sorted and therefore it was unacceptable. This would also enable the applicant the opportunity to do more towards landscaping. Having said this if Devon County did sign off the drainage issues and said they would work and planning received landscaping there was no turning back on approval with 'ifs and buts'.

Porosity tests had been undertaken this week at Green Park Way and Cllr Rogers noted a swing shovel digger came in to do such. This was fine but he noted that the tests had been carried out in the height of summer during a drought! Cllr Brazil agreed but noted that the expert stated at Development Management that there was a level, 15 feet, at which the water was present to test. He did not that the application was advised 10 weeks ago that Devon County would not sign anything off until the percolation test was carried out and yet this was done only 2 days before. It was felt that this would give a false indication due to time of year. The residents of Green Park Way had their own expert test and Cllr Brazil's advice had been that they send this information to County so they were aware. If County then signed off and something happened in the future the people would have redress. Cllr Pain asked if a bond was attached if the area did flood. There was no bond but Cllr Brazil advised that residents had written to Devon County and stated if County did approve this application and the decision was found to be wrong they would sue which was why he wanted the drainage decision to be in public. The problem stemmed from this being an allocated site so any argument for traffic, congestion and lack of infrastructure was lost.

The tree tent application was not supported by parish council but Cllr Brazil wished to support local businesses and on a site visit it was clear that when the tents would be up the tree foliage would hide them and they would be taken down in the winter so the application was passed. There would only be 3 tents and there were conditions relating to external lighting, height of pods together with wildlife mitigation. The Chairman noted he had written and requested the objection conditions he offered be included. Parish Council was unsure on this application but in order to preserve a position on other breaches of planning in the undeveloped coast they had to hold their position on principle.

At District Executive meeting some of the District schemes including a supermarket in Ivybridge, Hotel in Kingsbridge and Health Centre in Dartmouth had all moved along another step. The beach huts in Beesands had not appeared. The Crabpot Appeal was dismissed and it was interesting that the Inspector was very clear that they could not build in the flood zone so Cllr Brazil felt this could have scuppered the District beach huts. Cllr Cowley noted that the Environment Agency map had now removed this area from the flood zone. The Crabpot application was decided on whether the building was replacement or a new property. Cllr Brazil continued that Development Management had also passed three applications in Salcombe and most controversially an office and new shower block on Whitestrand, which he noted Salcombe Town Council disagreed with. Chairing the meeting he felt that a planning meeting was not the time to have an argument but the proposal needed a further discussion at a later stage.

The District medium term financial position was a shortfall of £400,000 but rumour was that this might disappear as they might find some more money. All this was dependent upon political changes as they did not know what monies were to be forthcoming.

At County the main issue was the Slapton Line drop in meetings that were held in Slapton and Stokenham Halls. He felt that County was between a rock and hard place as the Slapton Line partnership needed to consider a Plan B for when, the road went. However those attending felt that the group were giving up on the A379 road. It was not the case but if a catastrophic storm did hit there were many considerations. Government might have the money for a repair but the Field Centre had indicated there was no more land on which to build a diversion so land could be an issue. Government at the time a storm hit might divert funds to somewhere in more need so the Slapton Line Partnership did need to look at what would happen if the road went. It was important for them to have considered alternative options rather than be hit with 'why did you not think of this'. They had considered massive increase in car parking at Stretgate and Stokeley Farm shop. Perhaps the whole area becoming a place for bicycle and walking trips to support tourism along with other ideas. What they could not say was "if you live in Torcross and work in Dartmouth we will sort it".

Forward thinking needed to take into account people should not send their children to Stokenham School and expect to be able to get to Kingsbridge during their whole education, just be aware of the problem. There would be no alternative roads through the lanes but people needed to see positive things like the area becoming a main tourist attraction to enjoy the area water sports, walking etc. The Partnership felt the key message was to start behaving right now as if the Line was no longer there – if you live in Strete register for a doctor in Dartmouth, if you live in Chillington register here, start planning your life. Rather than looking at what you lose, look at what you gain.

When the Line went the last time 100s of 1000s of people came to look at the area. Cllr Rogers felt that ultimately the Line was going to go and people would come down and that Five Mile lane should be looked at with a feasibility study covering from Stanborough Camp down to the coast to provide 5 miles of decent road. Cllr Brazil said he would raise this at the next partnership meeting

but there was another person who attended the drop in who wanted a barrier reef. There came a time when the Partnership must say we looked and now we must concentrate on something else, otherwise they would lose focus. Cllr Rogers reasserted that Devon County always looked at routes from east to west so perhaps they should look at Stanborough Camp down as it cut the A379 out, which was already overloaded. This was just a normal rural road which could relieve congestion and assist tourism accessing the area. The Chairman agreed the suggestion had merit and felt the Partnership should consider this as the proposal was outside the AONB, SSSI and Whitley Trust land and did not contravene any of the 'no go' areas. There was a worry that the sums of money needed would be beyond the scope of availability for what could be directed this way on perceived need. Cllr Ms Addison advised that the Slapton Ley Centre relied on the road from Stanborough camp and the people who paid to come. This project could be a decent sized A road and take pressure off the coastal roads. Funds for a feasibility study would be short term idea to look at this suggestion. Cllr Brazil was worried not to raise hopes but the Chairman suggested this consideration would put matters to rest on any false hopes. Cllr Mrs Doust, as a final point, asked that alternative bus timetables that were ready to go the day after an event needed to be in place. She had been shocked at the recent debacle relating to works proposed at Frogmore that never took place and hosted poor planning and lack of information and how this had affected those, more vulnerable in the parish, in accessing needed facilities. Information needed to be ready to be put in place to deal with changes to public services in the event of any closures or redirection.

Cllr Brazil sympathised and advised that the works at Frogmore were now proposed for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> September or 21<sup>st</sup> October but it was not this was half term. Cllr Rogers wished to know when the surface on the Torcross A379 bend was to be resurfaced as signs went up but it never was. Why this was as it now posed a serious problem with the holiday season and nothing done.

Cllr Mrs Addison asked what had happened with the seaweed farm proposed. Cllr Brazil had heard nothing further but noted that the sea fishermen were against it and he as Chairman of Salcombe Harbour Board had written to express this concern.

*Cllr Brazil left the meeting.*

#### **4. CO OPTION**

The Chairman welcomed the two applicants and thanked them for attending noting that the Open Forum and District/County Councillor report had given them a full introduction as to what happened at parish council. He then invited both to give a brief resume which they provided.

It was AGREED to co-opt Ash Ghadiali and his Declaration of Acceptance of Office was received before he joined the meeting. The form for completion of the Register of Interests would be sent electronically.

Simon Garner was thanked and asked if he would consider standing again if another opening came up. He agreed and was advised that parish council would make contact in future to advise him of any openings.

#### **5. PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS**

The applications below were considered at this meeting and the following observations submitted to District:

- 3193/18/ARM READVERTISEMENT (Further Revised Plans Received) Reserved Matters application for the development of 64no. dwellings (including market, affordable and retirement housing), landscaping and associated works following grant of Outline consent 0771/16/OPA Land to the rear of Green Park Way, Chillington – Response was due 16<sup>th</sup> July so the following was circulated and RATIFIED as this meeting.

OBJECTION sent from Stokenham Parish Council. It was noted the latest amendments to the scheme, which would reduce, but not eliminate, the issue of overlooking and overbearing design for some residents of Green Park Way. Elsewhere, careful attention to landscaping might yet bring some mitigation, and it was regrettable that this aspect has not been afforded more detail at this stage in the planning process. Instead, the majority of landscaping decisions had been deferred. With so many crucial details still to be submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, it was hard to see why Officers were recommending that Landscaping be approved as part of this Reserved Matters Application. Some examples of overlooking were so egregious that no amount of landscaping could make up for the loss of amenity. In almost every case this was because of underbuild, the effect of which was to raise the new houses several metres above existing ground level, leaving them towering over their neighbours to the south and breaking the link with the surrounding topography that was promised at OPA stage to assuage the concerns of the AONB.

The justification given for these raised platforms – that they were required to produce an acceptable gradient for the road – was unconvincing. The real reason the ground had been raised was to make room for several very large infiltration chambers, or soakaways, which form the mainstay of the Applicant's latest attempt (the fourth since the scheme was first proposed) to come up with an effective surface water drainage scheme that would perform reliably for the lifetime of the development. It had been clear from the outset that the viability of this development would depend entirely on the effectiveness of the surface water management scheme. The topography was challenging, with a steep slope from north to south and lesser gradients to both east and west from the centre. An abundance of local knowledge, including photographic and video evidence, attested to what happened here in a wet spell. So the methodology and effectiveness of the drainage was not merely peripheral to the development – it was the central enabling element. The current scheme proposed a series of soakaways, some of which had the capacity to hold 160 tonnes of water, sited variously around the development. Some were located in made-up ground several metres higher than the houses to the south in Green Park Way. Others were close to the roads. Expert opinion commissioned by residents confirmed their fears that the risk of surface water re-emerging downslope to flood their homes and gardens could not be excluded.

Cllr Mrs Rowland thanked Piers for all his personal time and work put in and he said it was gratifying to see a small win.

#### **PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE**

- 3620/18/FUL Change of use to woodland to allow Tree Tents for the purpose of rural tourism Stokeley Barton Stokenham. District held a site meeting and following attendance Parish Council was keen to support local businesses and recognised the Applicant's commitment to preserving the natural ecology and habitats of the woodland copse. Regrettably they did not, on balance, feel that this outweighed the potential harm that may be done to the AONB and its setting along the Undeveloped Coast by a development of this sort, and the inevitable light and noise pollution that would ensue.

They asked that if the Planning Authority was minded to approve, parish council would be grateful for assurance that all matters of siting of tents and associated facilities; types and locations of artificial lighting, permissions for fires and barbecues; permissions to play recorded music; and times and seasonality of operation were subject to stringent conditions.

- 1193/19/HHO Householder application for removal of existing velux window and installation of balcony velux Sea Cottage, Torcross – Following the Parish Council request for deferral the officer had responded that the applicant had been requested to provide

further information and only now could the officer respond. The three rooflights were approved in 2015, along with various other alterations (application 53/1546/15/F). The Wildlife Trigger Table should have answered Yes instead of No to the roof works question. However, as the roof space was inhabited as part of the dwelling and works had taken place within it, Officers decided that an Ecological Survey was not required, as the likelihood of any protected species being affected by the proposal was low. However, if any were discovered at any time, the applicant or anyone carrying out the works would still be bound by separate wildlife protection legislation to ensure that wildlife was not harmed. The additional works shown on the plan were not part of the application, the officer believed that the plans from 2015 had been re-used and updated to show the proposed works. The only works that the officer was considering as part of the current application were the new velux balcony to replace the middle velux, and the additional window to the ground floor (although this part would not actually require planning permission on its own). RESPONSE? No objection.

## **6. DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

It was AGREED to approve delegated authority to the Clerk to respond to planning applications received during the August recess following input from councillors.

## **7. GRANT**

Following the presentation in open forum it was AGREED to grant £1000 towards the provision of Chillington Youth Club and requested that representatives return to parish council in a year to outline where monies had been spent and how the club were doing.

*Having brought forward this item to discuss following Open Forum both Michelle and Greg left the meeting at that point.*

## **8. PROPOSED DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE CHANGES**

Cllr Mrs Addison noted the consultation document was interesting and well put together. The six proposals built on each other so each option added another layer until arriving at option six. The real impact for the parish was if any option chosen related to Kingston or Dartmouth it would have a knock on effect to this parish. None of the local services were mentioned in the document but any change must have an impact. Bearing in mind the proposed house building increase at Green Park Way this could mean the parish call more on the fire service. Cllr Gardner felt that the main impact would be if there was a significant local event such as flooding or a gorse fire which pulled engines to one location.

The six proposals put forward by the Fire and Rescue Service were noted and it was AGREED that the clerk should respond asking that an assurance be provided that any changes would not deteriorate this rurally challenged service and question if the future loss of Slapton line had been built into attendance ability options if the road was to go removing Dartmouth accessibility route.

## **9. CHILLINGTON PLAYING FIELD**

Feedback from the site meeting to consider drainage, play equipment, area maintenance and night landing site was given. It was AGREED;

(a) Drainage – to go proceed with Mortisplay Option 2 and build a bund with the half excavated soil left on site. This in turn would be used as a platform for a new slide. Cllr Pain agreed to prepare a plan of the area for illustration. Edward Perraton had agreed that the other half excavated soil could be delivered to his farm for distribution. It would be checked whether an Environment Agency Licence was required or if the landowners would suffice.

(b) Play equipment moving – To allow the Air Ambulance landing distance it would cost £3849.00 taking 4 days (matting and crane) to swing the play apparatus around so this was

deemed too costly and Air Ambulance would be approached to reconsider the site layout without moving the play equipment.

(c) Brook vegetation clearance – A quote was to be obtained for the works to be carried out in October when the vegetation had died back.

(d) Laying down of roadside hedge at Chillington Playing Field – Cllr Ansell would lead a group to lay the hedge and cut back.

(e) Addressing the overhanging tree – As this tree straddled the highway quotes from an expert would be required and would come to the September meeting.

(f) New slide – The cost for this slide to be erected, solid with the ground and no gap at the top, would be added to the request for Section 106 monies to see if it could also be funded.

(g) Air Ambulance – The situation of the landing site needed clarification and then consideration of vegetation to be cut back, how much grant would be provided by Air Ambulance together with a site plan and documentation detailing the apparatus so that planning could be obtained by Parish Council.

Cllr Cowley advised that a date for when the contractors would start work should be obtained and it was AGREED by all that this should be the Monday after the Chillington Show. Cllr Rogers offered to erect plastic barriers around the gas tank lid but the Chillington Community Association were responsible for this facility and wanted to erect a fence around the toddler/smaller children play equipment.

## **10. REPORTS**

- Cllr Rogers – Advised he had cut the permissive footpath grass either side. He offered to cut the proposed footpath route to the churchyard but was requested not to in view of obtaining land owner permission for such route change.
- Cllr Mrs Rowland – Noted that the fence entering by the Chillington playing field pedestrian entrance needed repairs and Cllr Rogers agreed to carry these out urgently.
- Cllr Mrs Doust – Advised that Graham Bass had kindly repaired the leaking public tap in Chillington. She had attended a meeting with Cllr Cowley with regard to play equipment on Stokenham Village Green and this project was moving along well. They had met with Playdale to agree an area to situate equipment on and both pubs were donating funds and money was coming in. Representatives would meet another play equipment company and they would get grounds works done for the area. Sadly it would not be ready for the summer holidays but those involved were hoping for installation in September.
- Cllr Cowley – Had been advised that a couple of places along the permissive path had kerbs which were unsuitable for a wheelchair or motorised vehicle. The main concern was the entrance to the Caravan Club site and this would be considered and contact made with the club. Cllr Mrs Addison noted an old sign needed to be removed from the permissive path and the landowners would be contacted. Cllr Rogers would look at the works and provide a cost.
- Cllr Gardner – Asked about provision of dog poo bins in Stokenham and along to Chillington. He was advised that they were provided along the path to Chillington and the ones opposite the Church House Inn in Stokenham could take dog and public waste. He then asked about broadband provision within the Stokenham Hall and was advised of the previous meeting response. Hope Cove had closed their coastguard station but others would cover.

## **CLERK'S REPORT**

- A resident had advised that the road narrow sign on the footpath into Chillington was again covered in vegetation which needed cutting back. On entering Stokenham from Kingsbridge the direction sign to East Portlemouth also needed attention due to vegetation.

- An informal meeting with architects on behalf of clients for Prideaux House had been arranged for Friday 9<sup>th</sup> August 11a.m. in the Wesley Smith Room.
- A parishioner had booked Chillington Hall for Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September for a birthday party from 2-4p.m. and requested use of the playing field for a bouncy castle. This was the same bouncy castle provider as previously and insurance details had been obtained.
- South Dartmoor Community Energy (SDCE) had emailed to ask whether Stokenham Parish would be interested in them running a roadshow this Autumn/Winter. They were a not-for-profit community energy organisation based in Ivybridge who worked across the South Hams to offer impartial advice on ways to save money on home energy bills and to get help and information on grants for heating and insulation in homes. During the last three years they had mainly been delivering energy advice in the larger towns and now wanted to focus on the smaller towns and parishes. As these areas were harder to reach SDCE were asking parish council if they had some ideas on which groups to contact and what day of the week would be most suitable? They were keen to hold it on a day when most people were already out and about. With 3 friendly Energy Advisors they could give a talk to a community group (eg lunch club/coffee morning) and look at people's energy bills on a 1:1 basis, set up a drop in session in the local hall and knock on doors to ask people if they could help. Also, if parish council knew of any people who they thought may benefit from advice, such as people living in fuel poverty, lone pensioners, people with ill health or those keen to use renewable energy they could organise some home visits from our Energy Advisors for that day. Home visits could also be arranged at a later date, once they met people during the roadshow. The Apple Day on 12<sup>th</sup> October was to be suggested as a suitable venue and date. The Luncheon Club would also be mentioned.
- A resident adjacent to the stream at the bottom of Helmers playing field advised that when she purchased her property 15 years ago the council had installed a grate to the drain to catch debris. She was also told that she was responsible for the vegetation to the middle of the stream and the owner the other side. Now the brambles and vegetation were so overgrown you could not see the water and she asked that this be cleared. Dealt with in item 9 (c) above.
- Peter Wilks advised that he owned the property opposite the Chillington hall and a tree within the playing field had overgrown the road and was brushing against their old slate roof and weathervane. He advised that this tree was a beautiful specimen and just needed a couple of overhanging branches removed and asked if this could be done speedily in view of the concern for his roof. Dealt with in item 9(e) above.
- A resident had noted that the only step along the permissive path was at the entrance to the Caravan site and asked if it was possible for this to become a ramp so that those with motorised wheelchairs could access the path. The Caravan Club would be approached.

## 11. FINANCE AND CHEQUES

***Balances were provided and the below transactions were approved:***

Current £1,129.34

Savings £88,916.53

Received - Nil

### ***Payments:***

HMRC – Tax & NI £181.93

Wages £1149.87

DCC– Pension £360.43

Play Inspection – Chillington Outdoor Annual Equipment inspection £78.00

South West Ambulance Service 'FRED Fund' – Grant contribution to Community Lifting Chair £667.00

*Cheques: None*

**12. NEXT MEETING**

The next full parish council meeting would be held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019 due to the August recess but a planning committee meeting would be held on the first Thursday in August 2019, if necessary, due to additional plans being received that could not await full council. Both meetings commenced at 7.30p.m. in the Wesley Smith Room at Stokenham Parish Hall.

Meeting finished: 21.29p.m.

Signed ..... Chairman      Dated: 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019.