

**Minutes of Stretton Parish Council (SPC) Meeting on
Thursday 7 February 2019 @ 8.00 pm at The Jackson Stops, Stretton**

Present: Cllrs Richard Foster (Chairman), Greg Harker (GH), Molly Hayns (MH), John Leefe (JL), Brian Lester (BL), Paul Finlay (PF), Nick Begy Ward Member, PCSO Diana Freeman & Sarah Gresty (Clerk)

Members of the Public Present: 4 members of the public were present.

1. **Public questions and comments on items on the agenda** *(this session is for members of the public to comment on specific items on this agenda. Also, they may have issues for possible consideration at future meetings)*

A member of the Public read the following statement: *Words supplied by speaker: "Firstly I would like to say thank you to the Committee who give freely of their time and I appreciate that there have been some difficult circumstances recently. However Stretton is a very small Parish and the amount of money being spent, ie the precept, has risen considerably over the last few years.*

I appreciate that we now have a paid clerk and a defibrillator to pay for, but I feel that some expenditures are too high. I will give 2 examples.

The Laser Printer - £294.00

Sarah Gresty has requested a new printer and suggested 300-400 pounds as being the necessary price. We, Andrew and I, function as a business and use a perfectly serviceable ink jet printer and would not expect to pay more than £100.00 to replace it. We also buy replacement ink on the internet which is a whole load cheaper than buying it locally.

The question of whether to buy laser or ink-jet printers should be based on volumes and speed of printing. Yes, they do use less ink, but the cost of the laser printer is so much more than an ink jet, The volume of printing done by the clerk on behalf of Stretton Parish was not given or questioned by anybody at the meeting and I can find no reference to this item in previous meetings. As minutes/agendas etc are no longer printed in volume (we now pay to print them at home off the website) I cannot imagine that there is any 'high volumes', and speed of printing seems to me to be irrelevant in this case. Sarah kept mentioning 'printing large quantities for elections' to my knowledge we have never done this. As I mentioned in my previous email, in the unlikely event that we did need to, it is possible to upload .pdf files to commercial printers and receive them back within 2 days (as we did for the Fete).

Disaster Equipment *Another item which springs to mind is buying shovels and water carriers for some as yet unknown and unlikely 'disaster'. I feel that somebody's imagination is running away with themselves. We are a village of gardeners - we undoubtedly have more shovels and spades in this village than we have people capable of wielding them. (I could also mention rotting torches. It is far easier to get the people with no water to bring their own containers to the lucky people who do have water!) - Please could we have further details of what this disaster is likely to be?*

Would it not be better to identify the people in the village who are likely to have equipment for 'disasters' and are willing to help? Please remember, we pay for the precept in our rates!"

- a) **SPC Response:** Richard Foster spoke on behalf of the PC. A response in writing would be sent direct to the member of the public concerned addressing her issues. If after receiving this she would like the matter raising again for further discussion it could be placed on the agenda for the next PC meeting on 28th March.
- b) A member of the public mentioned the following:
Firstly, pointing out a correction to the Minutes of 13th September. Paragraph 1c was rectified by RF by hand. She then went on to reiterate that Stretton was a small parish with very few assets and workloads to maintain and felt the PC were overspending in certain areas and did not feel certain spending or proposed spending was necessary. Mention was made to CILC and the street lighting charges by RCC. Noted that the precept had risen over the last few years.

SPC Response: Richard Foster spoke on behalf of the PC. A response in writing would be sent direct to the member of the public concerned addressing her issues. If after receiving this she would like the matter raising again for further discussion it could be placed on the agenda for the next PC meeting on 28th March.
- c) A member of the public asked if the CPRE membership subscription had been paid.
Action: The Clerk to check this.

2. **To receive declarations of unregistered disclosable pecuniary interests in agenda items.** There were none.
3. **To receive Apologies for absence.** There were none.
4. **Chairman's welcome.** RF Welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2019.
5. **To approve and sign the Minutes for the meeting of Thursday 13 December 2018.** After the manual correction, all present unanimously agreed to the accuracy of the minutes. Proposed GH, Seconded JL, Signed RF.

6. **Matters Arising from Minutes.**

- a) **Grit Bins** – A quote of £255 per bin had been received from RCC. This was agreed to be too expensive and would be closed as an outstanding item.
- b) **Proposal to spend up to £150 on Emergency Response Equipment** – John McCarthy gave a report from the Emergency Plan Committee December meeting in when a request was submitted to the PC for the funds to purchase equipment. As chairman of the disaster committee he addressed directly the comments made earlier by the member of the public (see disaster equipment). He stressed that we cannot assume everyone has the necessary equipment when it is needed. Furthermore, the Emergency plan had been widely publicised including in every Newsletter for the past 2 years. He briefly went over the background as to why the village had been requested to organise a disaster response, highlighting the incident only the previous week on Bodmin Moor as a potential scenario that could affect the village. The plan was for the benefit of all villagers of Stretton especially those less able. A question was raised as to what the PC reserves were actually used for if not for the benefit of the village. John invited all the PC to attend the next practice exercise for the Emergency Plan to see for themselves why the equipment was requested. Dates TBC. On behalf of the Emergency Plan committee he formally accepted a donation of up to £150 as proposed to the PC.

SPC Response: Discussion took place as to the need for the equipment and it was agreed that: GH was in full support of this purchase.

Action: PF proposed the expenditure of up to £150 for the emergency equipment as request. Seconded by JL. One Councillor abstained from voting, the remaining were in full agreement.

7. **Clerk's Reports.**

- a) Proposal to agree and approve Draft 2019/20 precept of £4700
 - i) The budget expenditure was discussed line by line as follows:
 - ii) Memberships – £220. (lralc/ioc/cpre)
 - iii) Audit fee – £170. If Stretton PC is accepted by LRALC it was hoped this cost would be reduced from last year.
 - iv) Equipment/repairs etc. – *Because of questions on printer costs by members of the public, the Clerk kindly offered to pay for the printer herself and charge the Council for every copy printed. This proposal would be considered as an Agenda item at the next meeting.*
 - iv) Clerks Salary - £2,678. This is set by the NJC scales in accordance with the Clerk's contract of employment.
 - v) Clerk Expenses - £260. This is based on recent levels of expenditure but is expected to be an over estimate as costs are likely to be less in 2019.
 - vi) Stationery and postage - A nominal £20
 - vii) Defib. Maintenance - £225 is the contract price
 - viii) E Telephone - as per contract price of £60
 - ix) Grit bin - £100 contribution set aside for a severe winter spell
 - x) Street lighting - £382 fixed price from RCC

Action: Nick Begy agreed to ask RCC for the breakdown of this charge.

- xi) Training - £200. Due to an election year a higher budget has been set aside for new Councillors.
- xii) Insurance - £300 a small uplift anticipated
- xiii) Donation - £100 allowance in case of a valid request is received

RF reminded the meeting of the need to build up some reasonable reserves again. Funds had been returned last year when it was determined that a second defibrillator could not be installed at Stowe Court (part of The Shires). Subsequently, however, there was a change of mind by The Shires management and so the second defibrillator was reinstated. The 2nd defibrillator installation being paid for in this FY. Cllr. Brian Lester proposed a precept request of £4600

Cllr Molly Haynes Seconded and all present agreed unanimously

[Action: Clerk to submit the precept request to RCC.](#)

[Clerk to amend the budget and repost to the Website](#)

- b) Financial report - Income & Expenditure report to 24.1.19. It was noted that these figures were part of the budget.
- c) Cheques presented for payment:
 - Chq. 100435 - Sarah Gresty -Printerland invoice 18.12.18 £294 .00 - **CANCELLED**
 - Chq. 100436 - RCC £948.57 clerks salary from 1 August to 31 Dec 18
 - Chq. 100437 - void
 - Chq. 100438 - RCC street lighting £347.35

- 8. **To receive an update on the confidential report form Police Authority** – PCSO Diana Freeman introduced herself as the new PCSO, she has moved from the Rutland South to Rutland North beat. As per the January report circulated on the SPC website prior to the meeting, she confirmed the main crimes in Stretton area to be diesel thefts from lorries on A1 laybys and deer poaching. There is to be a joint operation concentrating on these 2 issues. Nick Begy drew attention to reports in Greetham of a suspicious white transit van seen over the last 3-4 weeks going into driveways and reversing out again. This was duly noted by all present and an email would be sent to the police in case they are unaware.
- 9. **Defibrillator update** – The new defibrillator at Stowe Court is due to be installed on 26th February. The defibrillator itself is an existing one provided by The Shires and will be fixed to the outside wall of No1 Stowe Court. The Shires have agreed to take on maintenance and electricity costs for its future life. The Hosting Agreement has been signed as has the Managed Solution Agreement and the cost to the Council will now be £770 rather than the £800 in the budget. Karen Ball Trust have agreed to pay £200 for the installation costs.

[Action: Clerk to send Managed Solution Agreement to Community Heartbeat Trust.](#)

Village defib. agreement by Community Heartbeat to transfer the phone box to SPC for the value of £1. Transfer requests has been sent.

[Action: Clerk to chase Vicky at Community Heartbeat Trust.](#)

- 10. **Planning Proposal: 2018/1352/FUL Proposal: Barn conversion and extension to create ancillary Accommodation. 5 Spinney Lane, Stretton, Rutland LE15 7RB.**

Parking concerns discussed but no objections to the planning in principle.

[Action: Clerk to lodge response with RCC: Support application with the additional note: SPC would like the Planners to take into consideration the parking issues in this application. Given the narrow width of the road and the proposal to use garage space for accommodation.](#)

- 11. **Woolfox Development – update/discussion.** RF reported that as far as he has heard from RCC no significant developments of this application have been made; Nick Begy confirmed this. Requests for various reports are in the process of being produced. It is hoped that a webpage like that for St. Georges will be set up to enable up to date information to be communicated. It was thought that the astronomical costs of connecting this site to the national electricity grid would be prohibitive. The application has been reduced from 10,000 houses to 7,500. It was again urged for all residents to keep a keen eye on the local news and

the Local Plan which will be published around May time. Also, it was noted that it has taken St Georges scheme 2 years to reach a level of suitability.

Action: This item would be a standard on the agenda

12. Correspondence (All correspondence received by Stretton Parish Council has been posted on the Website <https://strettonvillageparishcouncil.co.uk/other/correspondence> prior to the meeting.

The PC wished to note the very significant improvement to the village website which had now separated the Parish Council documents from the main website. The meeting unanimously and formally thanked Penny Isaacs and Andrew Haynes for hosting the website and for all their hard work and support.

13. Items for future Meetings

- Possible redress from public session 1 a) and b) above.
- How often is the A1 rubbish cleared? NB agreed to contact Highways England and bring this to the next meeting

14. Dates of next meeting: Thursday 28th March 2019 at 8pm

Ending on some uplifting news.

Nick Begy reported that Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue Trust, a newly registered charity has signed a 20 year agreement with the Forestry Commission to take over the management and restoration of the yew tree avenue.

For more information:

Email info@yewtreeavenue.co.uk

FB [yewtreeavenue.co.uk](https://www.facebook.com/yewtreeavenue.co.uk)

www.yewtreeavenue.co.uk

Meeting closed at 21.26

Date _____