

Staple Parish Council
12th June 2024
Staple Village Hall

Present

Cllr Bartlett - Chairman
Cllr Martin – Vice Chairman (minutes)
Cllr Loukes
Cllr Kirk
Cllr Davis Marks
Cllr Ewart

Meeting started at 7.30pm

Welcome from the Chairman

Updated on vacancy of clerk

1. Apologies for Absence

- a. Sue Chandler, KCC
 - i. Cllr Davis Marks queried her absenteeism rate as she is regularly absent. Chairman said she is normally present, but will check.
- b. Martin Porter on holiday
- c. There is a vacancy for a councillor.

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Minutes from last meeting.

- a. These were published in the Parish Magazine.
- b. Proposed by Cllr Loukes, seconded by Cllr Davis Marks. All agreed.

4. Matters Arising

Thanks to everyone who helped at or attended the D-Day commemorations.

Rev Michael Morris took a short service. Cllr Ewart and Cllr Sue Chandler helped with refreshments. The Chairman had hand delivered information about the D-day commemorations around the village and around 70 people attended including villagers, friends and guests. It was a very good turnout. The beacon looked good and overall it was a fitting tribute from Staple.

New Clerk – Cllr Bartlett has asked the clerk in a neighbouring parish to consider working for Staple as well. Awaiting their return from holiday.

Action: Cllr Martin and Cllr Kirk to create an advert for a new clerk

5. Public Session – comments or questions from public in attendance

Land at travellers' site, Summerfield.

It's noted that this is within the Woodnesborough Parish, however Staple is able to comment on this.

Locals have advised that they largely support the proposal for a house on this area and hope it would mean the caravans will move.

Land on the triangle – behind Summerfield Nurseries housing estate.

Cllr Davis Marks confirmed he had sent a strongly worded letter to senior directors at Dover District Council on the advice of Cllr Bartlett. He had to chase a response as none of them had replied. Finally he received a reply from the Leader of the Council, Kevin Mills, apologising as he thought someone else had replied.

On the afternoon of the Parish Council meeting, Cllr Davis Marks received an email from Sarah Platts, Head of Planning at DDC, advising that the breach was being investigated. She went on to add that the previous enforcement notice had been withdrawn as the occupiers of the land had committed further breaches, but the site continues to be monitored. Another planning application has been submitted to regularise the breach.

This response is unacceptable as in the view of the Parish Council this is rewarding "bad behaviour".

Action: Cllr Davis Marks to respond to this email.

Village Hall signage

Query about lack of signage for the Village Hall. All agreed that there used to be a sign at the junction of Mill Road and Buckland Lane but it has disappeared.

Action: Cllr Kirk, on behalf of the Village Hall committee, to organise new signage.

Pot holes/general road conditions

Comment that those in Buckland Lane have merely been filled with soil. This comment has been forwarded to Cllr Chandler.

Cllr Kirk confirmed that the builders are contractually obliged to return the roads to condition they were before they started, but that they are not physically allowed to do this.

Action: Cllr Davis Marks to write to Site Manager.

No further queries, Cllr Bartlett thanked all for coming.

5. FINANCE

5.2 Bills to be approved.

- Clerks' salary - £271.05 + £31 expenses + overtime £20.25

- Laptop needs replacing. Cllr Bartlett confirmed it's very old and slow. Cllr Loukes will endeavour to resolve, if not possible then a quote for a new laptop will be obtained.

Action: Cllr Loukes to look at the Clerk's laptop.

- £100 Black Pig nibbles for D-Day commemorations. This was funded by a grant and therefore the Parish Council didn't pay for it.
- Mr Kilbee – audit accounts.

There was then a general finance housekeeping discussion following the change of roles and departure of the clerk who left on 29 May. This included updating the Bank Mandate to include Cllr Ewart, Cllr Martin and remove Cllr Kirk. The new clerk will be added when in post.

There is currently no defined budget for 2024 – 2025, however this will be the responsibility for the new clerk.

6. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.

Temporarily suspend public access conditions to the recreation ground for Staple Fayre.

Proposed – Cllr Ewart, seconded by Cllr Davis Marks. All in favour.

Further administration housekeeping discussions following the clerk's departure. This included the Clerk's email address. Cllr Kirk suggested that these are temporarily auto forwarded to Cllr Loukes as he has the Clerk's laptop.

Proposed – Cllr Kirk, Seconded Cllr Martin.

7. REPORTS

7.1 Cost of Living Grants that DDC offers – anything from £500 - £2,000. Cllr Bartlett has strongly recommended to other local councils that they apply. This is for anything that will help a group of people with their wellbeing, for children etc.

7.2 County Councillor

No report received from Cllr Chandler.

7.3 Village Hall and recreation Grounds

Proposal to move the damaged bench to replace it with a resin one.

The new amplifier has been burnt out by someone who hired the village hall. The Bookings Officer and Cllr Kirk are trying to find out who this was.

The area used by the pre-school is very untidy. Suggestion made that the Village Hall requests a donation from the Summer Fayre specifically for this area.

Action: Cllr Kirk and his brother, former Cllr D Kirk have volunteered to tidy this area up.

7.4 Highways, SID, Speedwatch, footpaths

KCC is only clearing the footpath that runs parallel with the Street. Some footpaths are quite bad in places.

Action: volunteers needed to make up a Footpath Clearing Group.

7.5 Planning

Summerfield change of planning. This was explained by Cllr Davis Marks as requiring hedging and fencing to screen the new estate from the triangle land behind it.

Proposed – Cllr Davis Marks, seconded, Cllr Kirk. All agreed.

Cllr Martin commented that the large builders' lorries involved in the Summerfield estate are eroding the verges and damaging property entrance.

Action: Cllr Davis Marks to write to site manager.

7.6 Kent Police

No report received

8. Councillor Vacancy

9.

Interested applicants to email clerk@stapleparishcouncil.co.uk

10. Damaged finger post

Cllr Martin agreed that this can be repaired in their workshops.

11. Annual Audit report

No report received.

12. Annual Governance Statement

Signed by Chairman

13. Accounting Statements for AGAR 2023/2024

14. Annual Governance Statement 2022/2023 AGAR

15. Accounting Statements for AGAR 2022/2023

16. Locum for Clerk to Parish Council. Cllr Bartlett had already investigated this but found it very expensive.

17. Notice of Public Rights –anyone can look at our accounts until 23 June 2024.

Action: Cllr Bartlett to publish on village noticeboards.

18. Date of Next meeting 10 July

Cllr Martin gave apologies

Meeting ended 9pm.