

Stretton Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting on Thursday 1st June 2017

19.30 pm held in St Nicholas' Parish Church

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Richard Foster (Chair), John Leefe, Gideon Visser, Brian Lester, Nick Begy (Ward Councillor), Greg Harker (Acting secretary) plus 11 members of the public

1. Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed the participants and explained the difference between this and normal PC meetings. He had selected a list of topics currently being addressed by the PC but stressed that this was an opportunity for the public to speak on any topic.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Secretary Sally Skyrme.

3. Chairman's Annual Report

The Chairman delivered his annual report. **A copy is at Attachment 1**

4. Accounts Summary

Cllr Visser gave a summary of state of the accounts which were very healthy. The opening balance was £4,839 and the closing balance was £7,235. The main reason for the increase was the delay in spending on defibrillators. This was now to proceed, but only a single defibrillator would be bought. A precept of £3,000 had been requested. Following a request to view the accounts Cllr Visser explained that they were as yet un-audited. After discussion, it was agreed that draft, un-audited accounts could be made available and are attached to these minutes (**at Attachment 2**).

5. Neighbourhood Watch Report

Mr John McCarthy, the neighbourhood watch representative, gave his report, a copy of which is **at Attachment 3**.

6. Defibrillator Progress Report

Cllr Harker briefed the meeting on the progress towards obtaining a defibrillator for the village. The Parish Council had recently taken the decision to proceed with purchase of a single defibrillator. Investigation had shown that there are already 2 defibrillators within the parish – one at Stowe Court in Stocken and the other at The Shires. These defibrillators are currently held in offices, but the owners have agreed to place them in cabinets on external walls such that they will be available 24/7 to residents of Stocken and Stretton. The defibrillator at The Shires is not central to

Stretton village and, therefore, a new defibrillator will be purchased and located in the old telephone box (which hasn't been used in the last year), opposite the Jackson Stops. The Council has already taken steps to take ownership of the telephone box via the Community Heartbeat Trust and a 90 day consultation process has started. The Karen Ball trust has agreed to put £1000 towards the purchase (about half the cost) and, once installed, familiarisation sessions will be organised.

7. Tree Planting Update

Cllr Leefe updated the meeting on the Council's plans to improve the quality and variety of the trees within the village. There would be some thinning of existing trees in the paddock on the north side of Rookery Lane. Here, a mixture of Laburnham, crab apple and old apple trees would be replaced by 2 walnut trees which, together with existing walnut trees would make a walnut avenue. Also, on the corner entrance to Manor Road (Walnut Close side) an overgrown sycamore tree and 2 repressed walnut trees would be removed and 3 small ornamentals would be added (Sorbus St Joseph and Scarlet Hawthorn). This would make a far more attractive entrance to the village. Although no vote was taken, there was general approval at the meeting for the approach being taken.

8. Noise Abatement and Pollution Update.

Cllr Harker updated the meeting on efforts to reduce noise and air pollution effects of the A1. Although aware of previous efforts, the council had been requested to assist Ms Haywood of Spinney Lane in her request to Highways England (HE) to reduce noise pollution. As a result, HE had been contacted and had responded with a report and a promise of more communication to understand the villages' concern.

The HE report acknowledged that Spinney Lane was an area already recognised as significantly affected by traffic noise. However, HE have identified some 600 similar sites across England and a criteria has been set that any action must impact a minimum of 10 dwellings. By their records Spinney Lane fell short of the required number of dwellings. The report offered some hope, however, with HE promising to come to Stretton to take measurements of the noise and discuss potential solutions. The PC has replied, welcoming the opportunity to meet with their representatives, but also pointing out that many more houses were significantly affected by the noise, for example in Rookery Lane and Walnut Close. There would not be a quick resolution to the problem, but it was important for residents to come forward with their experience of the impact of the noise. Over the coming weeks and months this would enable a case to be built to convince HE of the need to take action.

9. During questions, the point was made that several years ago, HE had made a promise to lay 'quiet asphalt' in the Stretton area. A promise that had not been fulfilled. The PC recognised that this was exactly the sort of evidence needed to build the case and undertook to review PC minutes of the period to establish what exactly was promised and by whom.

10. Open Forum

11. Following discussion of the above topics, the Chairman invited members of the public to air any further points of view they wished. The following topics were discussed:
- a. **Movement of a property boundary.** It was explained that, in the past, apart from a couple of metres, it was possible to walk from Manor Road (Hollytree Cottage) to the A1 roundabout by remaining on the verge. It was suggested that the fencing of The Spinney had been moved towards the road and there was, therefore, no longer room to get by without stepping into the road for a longer period. This was considered to be a hazard. The Chairman said that this would be investigated and the owners of The Spinney approached to establish whether a boundary had been extended beyond the Land Registry Deeds.
 - b. **Grass/Weeds growing through newly laid asphalt.** Residents of Walnut Close complained that grass and weed shoots were already coming through asphalt that had been laid only days previously. This was not an isolated occurrence because a similar problem had been noted on the cycle path between Greetham and Cottesmore. Ward Cllr Begy agreed to take up the matter with the transport and highways department of RCC.
 - c. **Cutting of the Church Cemetery grass.** Given that there was a contract with Mow and Sow for cutting the church cemetery grass, parishioners were surprised at the state of the grass. The Chairman explained that this point had already been raised with Mow and Sow, who were requested not to leave the first cut until 1st Jun in future.
 - d. **Stretton to Greetham Foot/cycle path.** There was widespread disappointment that the proposed cycle/footpath between Stretton and Greetham had been struck off the list of improvements to be made by RCC. Cllr Begy explained that all proposals for improvement were scored according to a set of criteria and, although scoring well in some areas, the Stretton to Greetham footpath did not score well in others and, therefore, did not justify the £300k expenditure. It was understood that the footpath could be placed back on the list at the request of the PC, but unless changes were made to the application –

bearing in mind the scoring criteria – the result would be the same. Therefore, as well as garnering support by asking the community how they would utilise the footpath, it would be beneficial to consider the application against the scoring criteria. The Chairman agreed that this would be taken forward as an issue by the PC at its next meeting.

- e. **More Community Events.** There was a plea for more community events within the village. As well as raising funds, these events were particularly effective in integrating new arrivals to the village. In this regard, Mrs Lessey announced that she would be holding a Macmillan morning at The Old Schoolhouse on the last Saturday in September. She also announced that the ‘Welcome to Stretton’ pack was available but details of individuals needed permission before a social list could be published. The Chairman said that we were fortunate in that Ms Haywood, who had recently moved into the village worked in media and he would discuss with her how best these ideas could be taken forward.

12. Date of the next PC meeting

There being no further topics for discussion, the Chairman advised that the next PC meeting would be in the back room of the Jackson Stops at 8.00 pm on 6th July at which members of the public are invited to observe. He then duly closed the meeting.

Prepared by:

G S Harker

Acting Secretary to Stretton Parish Council

7 Jun 17

Approved by:

R Foster

Chairman

Attachments:

1. Chairman’s Report
2. Non Audited Account Summary
3. Neighbourhood Watch Report

Attachment 1: CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO STRETTON

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

ST NICHOLAS' CHURCH – THURSDAY 1 JUNE 2017

People

This report covers the last twelve months and, as in previous years, it is characterised by change. Sadly, Pippa Atkin, Peter Ransome-Jones and Lee Overton felt they could no longer serve as councillors but I am delighted that Peter still does a sterling job as StrettonVillage.com Webmaster. Moreover, the village must thank Emma Chan for her editorial efforts on the Village Newsletter and we give a warm welcome to Jo Haywood as her replacement. Jo is a professional communicator for Hinchingsbrooke & Peterborough Hospital and brings her media experience and great energy to the role.

Pippa was replaced as a parish councillor by Gideon Visser and Peter by Greg Harker, both of whom have already contributed enormously to the decision-making process. Furthermore, as no group of villagers has requested an election to replace Lee Overton, there will be important co-option decisions to be made over the next few weeks. For now, suffice to say that we already have a very promising volunteer for consideration.

At this stage, thanks are due to Cliff Bacon, who, as well as advising Sally Skyrme, our Parish Clerk, has also volunteered to act as Internal Auditor for the annual accounts, which will be presented in the next month or so. Thanks also to Sally who, despite living in Leicester and having a lot on her plate, has served us well in her first year. It is also very important to thank Nick Begy who, as our Ward Member at the County Council, has represented us manfully over the year and regularly attends our meetings; as does PC Laurie Appleton, whose regular crime updates are invaluable, keeping us well-informed as they invariably do. Thanks are also due to my excellent Deputy Chairman, John Leefe, whose wise counsel and admirable litter-picking leadership contributes enormously to our community and to Brian Lester, who brings his great understanding of rural affairs to the table.

Places

To spread yet more light on the subject, Rutland County Council has replaced all the old street-light bulbs with LED filaments, which are very much cheaper to run, and steady progress is being made towards the formulation of a Community Plan. This involves looking at all aspects of the village environment and facilities for our residents. For example, as well as enhancing the landscape by planting more attractive trees, strategies are being formulated to reduce road noise and air pollution, control excessive speeding and make the population safer by the availability of cardiac defibrillators and stricter control over dog-fouling.

Neighbourhood Watch's (NHW) John McCarthy is also heading up a small working group to put together a Community Response Plan in the event of, for

example: total electrical power or mains water failure to the village; excessive snow-fall or severe flooding, or the response to a series of catastrophic traffic accidents on the Great North Road. Thanks are also due more generally to John and his wife Sue for their valuable contribution to our safety and security through our NHW.

The views of all village residents would be welcome on all the above topics, as well as any additional suggestions or concerns you may wish to raise. In that vein, all villagers are reminded that your Parish Council meets every two months, usually at the Jackson Stops at 8pm on a Thursday, and everyone is welcome. Agenda items are posted on the village website as well as on the noticeboards in the Bus Shelter on Manor Road and on Stocken Hall Road.

I close my report by wishing all residents a blissful summer in this historic and lovely location.

Richard Foster
Chairman

Attachment 2: Stretton Parish Council Un-Audited Accounts for 2017

	Income	Expenditure	2016/17		INCOME	EXPENDITURE
01.04.16 Opening Balance				£ 4,839.11	Opening Bal 01.04.17	£ 7,235.82
Precept	£ 4,393.01				Precept	£ 3,000.00
Interest	£ 2.87					
LRALC subscription, training and literature		£ 520.60	£ 200.00		LRAC	£ 150.00
Memernship of CPRE		£ 36.00	£ 36.00		CPRE Sub	£ 36.00
Rural Community Council subscription		£ -	£ 50.00		MOW & SOW	£ 200.00
MOW & SOW churchyard & Other maintenance		£ 210.00	£ 400.00		Insurance	£ 300.00
Insurance 01.06.16 to 31.05.17		£ 273.75	£ 300.00		Street Lighting	£ 200.00
CAB Donation/Support		£ -	£ 100.00		Donations	£ 200.00
Street Lighting Costs		£ -	£ 200.00		Clerk's salary	£ 900.00
Clerk's Salary to April 2016 (Penny)		£ 243.00	£ 243.00		Clerk's Expenses	£ 60.00
Clerk's Salary May - Dec 2016 (Sally)		£ 654.00	£ 825.00		Defibrillators (1)	£ 1,000.00
Donation to Friends of St. Nicholas (insurance for bonfire)		£ 107.13	£ 100.00		Trees & Bulbs	£ 500.00
Trees		£ -	£ 500.00		TOTALS	£ 10,235.82
Defibrillators		£ -	£ 2,000.00			£ 3,546.00
Refund from anti wind farm campaign	£ 155.00				BUDGET CL/BAL	£ 6,689.82
Printer, ink, stamps and other stationary		£ 109.69	£ 106.00			
Totals to 31.03.17	£ 4,550.88	£ 2,154.17	£ 5,060.00			
Surplus for year				£ 2,396.71		
Closing Balance				£ 7,235.82		

Attachment 3: Neighbourhood Watch Report to Stretton Parish Council AGM – 1 June 2017

Village Activity

There has been some activity on the periphery of the village but nothing to get unduly bothered about. There are still people filling their vehicles with fuel at the Ram Jam fuel station and driving off without paying and there has been a deal of hare coursing. In addition, there have been a couple of reports of car registration number plates being stolen. There have also been reports over the past month of strangers either walking around Stretton village in the early hours of the morning or vehicles cruising meaningless around the village in no particular hurry. Also, an intruder walked through the grounds at the Shires School during the night. The Police were called but the person had left the area before they arrived. Stretton NW (Sue & John McCarthy) monitor crimes happening within the County via several police links and the Neighbourhood Watch App and they could do with **a volunteer from the Stocken community to assist us in their endeavours. If you can spare an hour of your time, primarily for a chat with John & Sue to let them know how they can ensure that all our residents are being catered for, then that would be a great help.** In the meantime if you have anything to report as to suspicious activity or vehicle sightings then please share your experience with them and they will pass it on to the rest of the village via the e-mail list they have.

Post Meeting Note: Mel Pilbeam has volunteered to be the Stocken representative for NW.

Community Speedwatch.

During the next couple of months a Community Speedwatch Scheme is being set up to tackle speeding problems around Stretton and Stocken. Currently there are 9 volunteers. However a recent e-mail from James Gibson (Safe & Sustainable Travel Manager, Leics County Council) has indicated that the funding situation for running schemes in Rutland has not progressed in the same way as in previous years. He is in contact with his Rutland colleague (Tish Barwell) to see how CSW schemes in Rutland will run in the future . He will be in touch when he returns to work after his holiday.

