

# STRETE PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Helen Darch

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF STRETE PARISH COUNCIL (PC) HELD IN STRETE PARISH HALL ON THURSDAY 18 JULY 2019 AT 7.00 PM

### PRESENT

Cllr Kate Gill, Chairman (KG); Cllr Ralph Clark (RC); Cllr Ian Cumberlidge (IC); Cllr David Rothwell (DR); Cllr Peter Hales (PH); Cllr Graham Campbell (GC); Cllr Julian Brazil, County Councillor, Kingsbridge Division (JB); Cllr Richard Foss, District Councillor, Allington & Strete Ward (RF); Mrs. Helen Darch – Clerk; four members of the public.

### PUBLIC FORUM

Four members of the public attended the meeting but chose not to speak.

### COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

JB reported on Five Mile Lane [Slapton]. Roadworks have appeared here and there are detours but these are not major. Works will be staggered so diverted traffic doesn't have to be sent through major towns. The lower end of the road around Slapton has now been done.

The Slapton Line Partnership [SLP] is holding drop-in sessions which present their proposals for when the Slapton Line [Line] eventually goes and isn't repaired [also referred to in 0719/5 and 8]. JB remarked there must be realism about the vulnerability of the road to storms and whether central government will continue to be willing to provide more monies if the road needs to be repaired again. Two alternatives were referred to:

- To considerably increase the size of the car parks at the two ends of the road; that is Torcross and Strete Gate.
- To develop the area as a tourist site but with no cars permitted.

In summary, the Line hasn't been abandoned but it is unlikely that in future government funding will be applied for.

GC remarked it would be good if signposting was better so that travelers were aware the road was closed some time before reaching Slapton. JB agreed and that signposting would be better.

### The report was received.

### DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The favorite place for the memorial to be relocated is to Strete Gate at the moment. He wasn't sure if the SLP had considered the car park at Strete Gate but there was room for parking. The new district councillors are getting to grips with their roles. Planning is very busy with 13 applications at the Development Management Committee on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July. There was a £400,000 deficit projected in finances to the year-end but there might be funding available from Central Government through rates. SHDC is about to declare a climate change emergency with an aim to be carbon neutral by 2050. The District Council is now plastic-free.

IC asked if there was any money for the steps at Strete Gate which were removed last year. RF promised to speak with Dan Field or Cathy Aubertin about this. IC noted the absence of steps created a crush on the road and that it could be a health and safety issue. RF offered to try this argument. IC finally wondered if the grant monies received last year in particular the £44,380 [Coastal Revival Fund] might be used toward this work. RC remarked there was an issue with Strete Gate carpark in the ongoing consultation and community involvement. RF agreed and said the SLP is aware.

RC also commented on second-home ownership and the current situation whereby owners of properties registered for business rates as self-catering and holiday let accommodation might obtain small business rate relief rather than pay council tax. If, however the property was registered for council tax, the owner might be charged up to double the council tax due on the property at the discretion of the district council. The outgoing leader of SHDC had written on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to propose all second homes be treated in the same way and all pay council tax irrespective of circumstances. JB confirmed the new leader of SHDC and other councils are lobbying the relevant minister [MP for Richmond North Yorkshire] and central government to amend these rules around second homes.

**The report was received.**

**JB then left the meeting.**

**0719/1 APOLOGIES** – Cllr Louise Newman (LN).

**0719/2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2019**

The above minutes were AGREED as a true and correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

**0719/3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Parish Councillors were invited to declare any unregistered or other interest, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting. **None were declared.**

**0719/4 CLERK'S REPORT**

**Pub and Asset of Community Value.** The pub was placed on the register on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015 and SHDC must review this by no later than the five-year anniversary [SHDC advice 'The Community Right to Bid Assets of Community Value' accessed 17/7/19]. The relevant legislation in The Localism Act 2011 Part V Chapter 3 clause 87(3) requires an asset must be removed from the list by five years from the date of entry into the register. However, this deadline can be amended by the Secretary of State [clause 87(4)].

The Clerk emailed the SLCC to ask their opinion on this and if this had been raised already by other authorities that wish to extend the protection on these assets. They replied to say that one reapplication has been done by another authority and to approach SHDC to ask how they would want an application prepared to extend the registration.

**Resolved: Clerk to approach SHDC to seek advice on an extension to the asset of community value entry on the register for the pub.**

**Street sweeper.** Has been in this week Monday, Wednesday and Thurs to sweep the village. They will return next week to weed areas.

**Hedge cutting.** At the moment we are within the closed season for most hedge cutting. But once the nesting season is over, we shall want to ask owners to cut hedges.

**TPO.** The Clerk has emailed South Hams TPO to confirm the temporary TPO [effective until 17<sup>th</sup> October] will be made permanent. They replied that the Tree Specialist will come back on this [2<sup>nd</sup> July].

**Financial regulations.** Have been updated and sent out to councillors in draft based on latest DALC/NALC template. To review and adopt in September. Last discussed 10/15.

**The report was received.**

**0719/5 CHAIR'S REPORT  
18<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

**Slapton Line.** The SLP has held two information events in the past few days. These were at Slapton and Stokenham respectively 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> July. I have since received an email from Alan Denbigh thanking me for attending also with the question as to whether Strete would like a drop-in session sometime soon.

We are working on the likelihood of the War Memorial being placed at Strete Gate. The hope is it can be placed in the picnic area behind the free wall parking. Pedestrian access would be from the doorway through the wall and working access would be via the car park. I have tentatively suggested we might require a bigger car park to both Bryan Toll and Charles Dixon. Probate is ongoing for Michael Toll. There is likely to be a wait for that but the plans for moving the memorial could be acted on relatively soon.

**Strete Gate.** On the 9<sup>th</sup> July I did my usual visit on my way home to find smoke rising from the car park. I drove in to find my way blocked by youngsters [two boys aged around 11 or 12] tending a small bonfire of pine needles which they had neatly arranged on the tarmac with a very charred cushion made of foam, which must have been fire-retardant, just below the ticket machine. They must have seen my exceedingly grim expression and done an immediate runner!

Fortunately, I had some bottled water in my car which I used to put it out. Adults on the beach queried where the smoke was coming from.

**Playpark.** It is in very good shape and looks inviting, with the exception of the football goal which always looks sorry for itself and in need of love and attention. My small visitor is still enjoying it.

**VAS sign.** Over recent weeks I have been able to study its function. It is a fairly good indicator of traffic coming into the village. However, vehicles doing more than 30mph as they approach barely register on it. We are lucky if we get a 'Slow Down' message. I think it might be worth approaching Devon County Council yet again with regard to moving the '40' sign further back to Norn's Cross and replacing it with the '20' sign. 40 seems to be an invitation to speed into the village as drivers are not really able to see the '20' sign. It is not just cars: waiting to come out today I witnessed two tractors with empty trailers barely registering SLOW DOWN. Not good at all.

**The Chair's report was received.**

#### 0719/6 PLANNING & PLANNING MATTERS

Moortosea [2032/19/CLE] Application for a lawful development certificate for an existing use or operation – construction of ground floor rear extension. Moortosea, Totnes Road Strete TQ6 0RU. RF explained the certificate applied for is where an applicant wishes to comply and where planning permission is not already in place. So, the application is a matter of note and whether the Council considers the application to be accurate rather than whether the council approves the application.

**It was resolved there was no comment to make.**

#### 0719/7 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

##### NP Report for PC – July 2019

Following the Exploratory Meeting arranged by the examiner, Deborah McCann, and her decision to suspend further examination of Strete NP for six months, a meeting was arranged by Duncan Smith of SHDC at Follaton House, Totnes on Tuesday 9th July.

The meeting was chaired by Duncan Smith with Mr C. Dixon and Mr J. Smith (representing Strete Estate), Kate Gill and Ralph Clark (representing Strete NP) in attendance.

The purpose of this meeting was to establish and clarify the objections raised by Strete Estate to Strete NP and to try and find a way forward to resolve these objections.

Duncan Smith of SHDC was supportive of the work undertaken to produce Strete NP and informed Mr Dixon that the NP complied with the Localism Act 2011, the legislative requirements and the policies of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan.

It is important to note that most of the policies in the NP are not contested by Strete Estate.

##### POLICY SNP8: HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SITE AT COX'S FARM FIELDS

a) 17 new homes, designed to enable home working and built to high eco-standards, including at least 5 affordable homes. **Mr Dixon queried the wording 'home working'. It was suggested this should be interpreted as having high speed internet connection to each property.**

b) a public car park and open space to serve the needs of the village, **Mr Dixon requested the opportunity to consider some revised/additional wording to this**

c) vehicular access from the A379 and The Plat, joined up to enable permeability **Mr Dixon acknowledged this was a practical solution**

d) footpath links between the A379, The Plat and Blackbird Wood. **It was suggested the footpath link between the A379 and The Plat would form part of the vehicular access. There was no discussion on the link to Blackbird Wood or open space although the issue of Low Density well-spaced properties was mentioned.**

The development shall conserve and enhance the Conservation Area and designated assets. **Mr Dixon expressed a wish for the two sections in Cox's Farm Fields that sit inside the Conservation Area to be included within the**

***proposed development site. Mr Dixon also expressed a wish for access to be included from Cox's Farm to the proposed development site link road. This is requested to improve safe access onto the A379.***

The points raised by Mr Dixon in respect of SNP8 ought to be easily resolved. If agreement can be reached that will enable Mr Dixon to recommend inclusion of the site for housing development to his client, it will then be necessary to arrange dialogue and a site meeting with Historical England. Historical England has expressed concern at the closeness of the proposed housing development site to the Conservation Area as have some members of the community. Any housing development proposal in this area has to be treated with extreme sensitivity in accordance with all the regulation guidelines that have been incorporated into the NP as well as the wishes of the community.

The most significant issue raised by Strete Estate was the restriction on second homes detailed in **POLICY SNP9: PRINCIPAL RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT**

It was agreed that a meeting would need to be arranged involving SG members, Strete Estate and SHDC to listen to the concerns of all parties in respect of this sensitive matter. These discussions may provide an opportunity to secure a compromise leading to Strete Estate agreeing to Cox's Farm Fields being included in Strete NP for future housing development.

The meeting is to take place at Strete Parish Hall commencing at 6:30pm on 6th August.

There may be an opportunity to make progress with Strete Estate.

Mr Dixon is to be invited to comment on policy SNP9 and SG members will be asked to only consider and comment on the points raised by Mr Dixon. Any decision to remove the Principal Residence Policy can only be made by representatives of the community.

We are entering a phase where negotiations must be focused and clear as to what is included in the NP and where compromise could be proposed.

On-going discussions with Duncan Smith are to take place on the issue of compromise proposals. Should agreement be reached Mr Dixon advised that any undertaking to proceed with housing development at the site was unlikely to commence for at least three years due to the issue of probate for his client. This would also be subject to a viability appraisal and planning application to allow consultation with the Parish Council and the community.

**The NP report was received.**

**0719/8 UPDATE ON THE SLAPTON LINE, PLACING OF THE WAR MEMORIAL & PROVISION OF EXTRA PARKING ALONG THE SLAPTON LINE**

The SLP had put on two meetings for the public to attend and learn about the future plans for the Line. These were held on the 10<sup>th</sup> July at Slapton and 16<sup>th</sup> July at Stokenham. A number of Strete councillors had attended these meetings.

GC felt the displays and stance taken was quite negative. He was concerned no proposals existed to resolve what happens when the Line breaches next time and then what would happen. He observed there is a large piece of land at Torcross which could be used for a replacement road if the Line washes away. The Strete Gate end of the Line could be reinforced and piles driven down. He noted the Line is extremely important for tourism and local traffic and business would be affected particularly down at Torcross. Slapton might be cut off [accessible only through back roads].

RF stated the policy is to keep the road open as long as possible. However, the views of the national organisations involved with the Line ie the Environment Agency and Natural England have considerable weight behind them. For instance, piles cannot be driven down as the land is in an SSSI. Any foreign material brought in has to be vetted eg tarmac. The road cannot be moved any further back though if minor damage occurred that was likely to be repaired. RF reckoned the road is worth around £5m per year in the community based on work done with Plymouth University.

GC commented that the road predated the SSSI. It was explained that the protection started with a designation as a shingle bank to which the protection offered fauna and flora was added. However, if the Lea is breached and becomes saline then the flora and fauna would most likely change.

RC commented there is a gradual process whereby people adapt to the notion of the road wearing away gradually. Possibly technology will emerge to solve this in the future.

RF observed when the last major breach happened in 2001/2 it was thought there would be no need for repairs for another 25 years. However, people and business have to adapt and prepare for a next phase when the road is breached.

**0719/9 ACCESS TO THE BEACH FROM THE PUBLIC TOILETS**

**It was noted that this had been discussed as part of discussions above [0719/5] and there was nothing to add.**

**0719/10 VILLAGE PUMP**

IC had cleaned up the pump and it can now be put back and repointed. He confirmed he was happy to do the repairs needed.

**The report was received.**

**0719/11 UPDATE ON CONTRACTS**

**Greenspace.** There had been no invoice for July but the contractor has had difficulty with a broken-down tractor. GC remarked he will contact the contractor when he is required. He thought there would not be as many cuts as contracted for in July and August [3 per month] but he will keep tabs on this. Cuts were needed around the sewerage plant, Manor Farm to Start Bay Park, and around the recycling bank.

**Playpark.** The Localities team had forwarded the latest [6 month] Allianz report on the state of the playpark. There was nothing urgent that would invalidate the insurance but there are some items identified that need to be fixed. Also, the report suggests strimming activity is damaging support posts on some of the play equipment but this had been raised in earlier reports. A letter from SHDC was received 18<sup>th</sup> July regarding insurance and proposing the parish council might want to take over the insurance on the playpark currently take out by SHDC and recharged to the parish.

**Resolved: The Clerk would speak with BHIB about any extra costs on the premium if the parish included the playpark area in its cover.**

**0719/12 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

**KG (Chair) Playpark. Reported on in 0719/5 and 11.**

**LN Transport and Roads.** Vicarage Lane will be cut in the next few weeks.

**DR Health and Safety.** DR is now the Parish Hall representative. There are considerable plans for works in the Hall to include the gable end wall where there is a report and pricing awaited. The porch at the back will also be replaced at some point. IC had presented a report on works to the trees around the Hall which includes a schedule and pricing.

**IC Rights of Way, tree warden and Strete Gate.** Rights of Way are being well used. He noted that the right of way across Philip Knight's field out of Strete [on left hand side] is from the bench on the Totnes road and is marked with a sign post.

**Tree warden.** A tree at the bottom of the Tannen land has been cut down. It was an Ash but had no signs of Ash dieback. **Unfortunately, the tree was not protected but IC will look further into this.**

**Strete Gate:** the steps are being dealt with. The sweeper turned up lateish at the carpark and there was a lot of rubbish in the corners. It needs a good litter pick. Maybe one for LN to arrange. He wondered if SHDC should schedule the sweeper to do the work earlier in the day. The bins are emptied.

The major buddle holes were cleaned out on Wednesday.

**RC Planning and Neighbourhood Plan.** RC noted the planning appeal decision for Blindwells was outstanding. A ruling is expected by the 31<sup>st</sup> July. Approval for the plans to the Old Vicarage has been granted at the Development Management Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

**PH The VAS sign and local transport liaison.** The VAS is now working well. There are now at least three weeks between charges. He will let the battery run down at some point to check its life. He had been in Torcross when the RNLI were running a two-minute voluntary beach clean by members of the public. He suggested this could be tried at Strete Gate. **Resolved: that the bank in line with the VAS and the area around the VAS mounting post be added to the scope of one of the grass cutting contracts so that the device has a clear view of oncoming traffic unhindered by foliage so that it can operate properly and equally, drivers have a clear view of the VAS .**

**PH is also attending the Stagecoach Southwest Annual Stakeholder conference on 27<sup>th</sup> July and wanted any items anyone wanted to be raised. GC asked if the hospital bus routes to Torbay, Kingsbridge and Exeter RD&E hospitals might be reinstated. Resolved: PH will raise the possibility of a bus connection from Strete to the major hospitals at the meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> July.**

**GC Village Green.** GC reported back that he had spoken with Daisy's Dog Food and [she] agreed to provide emergency dog bags at the Green if the Parish Council fund this and erect a sign on the Village Green.

**0719/13(a) FINANCE**

The Clerk supplied the meeting with a list of cheques for payment. RC asked about cheques 1652 and 1662 which had not been listed on agendas. It was confirmed these were for the Clerk's expenses and expenses incurred by Ian Cumberlidge. These payments had been reported in the minutes for May [0519/12(a)] and June [0619/13(a)]. A late cheque 1666 was added to the list on the agenda.

1663 – Lee Bray expenses £277.70	1664 – Chris Ellis strimming £100.00
1665 – Clerk salary July £244.25	1666 - Strete Parish Hall hire for June £40.00

**It was proposed and AGREED by all present to authorise payments as enumerated above.**

**0719/13(b) FINANCE**

A monitoring report for the year to July 2019 had been circulated already along with a cashflow projection. The latest projection of 2019/20 to the end of September gives CR 9,513 to include the second half precept of £6k. It was agreed the latest monitoring should be published on the noticeboards. **Resolved the Clerk would provide the monitoring statements for the boards and website.**

**Online banking.** The Clerk presented a short report that outlined the merits and drawbacks of using online banking for the parish accounts. **It was resolved to leave matters as they stood at the moment with manual banking and telephone/branch access to information.**

**0719/13(c) FINANCE**

Cash at bank – £7,221.27 CR Current account at 08/07/19, £10,278.36 CR Business Reserve account at 08/07/19.

**0719/14 CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence as listed on the agenda was noted. A later addition being the letter from SHDC regarding the insurance at the playpark was noted and discussed in 0719/11.

**0719/15 REPORTS**

Councillors were asked if there was anything else to add. IC referred back to his report on the felled ash tree.

**0719/16 THE NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2019 IN STRETE PARISH HALL AT 7.00 PM.**

**THE MEETING WAS CLOSED** at 8.50 p.m.

Signed: ..... Cllr Kate Gill (Chair)

Dated: 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

**ACTION POINTS:**

**Clerk: to approach SHDC to seek advice on an extension to the asset of community value entry on the register for the pub; to speak with BHIB about any extra costs on the premium if the parish included the playpark area in its cover; to provide the monitoring statements for the boards and website.**

**IC: to look further into the felling of an ash tree at the bottom of the Village Green.**

**PH: to raise the possibility of a bus connection from Strete to the major hospitals at the meeting of the Stagecoach Southwest Annual Stakeholder conference on the 27<sup>th</sup> July.**