Parish Council

Thursday 19-Oct-2023 @ 18:30
Dave Law Sports Pavilion, Park Crescent, Stewartby

MINUTES

1: Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Burnage

2: Declarations on Interest in items on the Agenda

None

3: To consider any applications for dispensation

None

4: Public Participation

None

5: Minutes of the previous meeting

10.2 The Council did not RESOLVE to buy card Readers and this matter was deferred to the next meeting.

6: Matters arising from previous minutes

The Clerk advised that she had now heard from the Internal Auditor. They have been experiencing issues with their e-mail system and has not been receiving messages. They have confirmed that they have received the information to carry out the quarters 1 and 2 bank reconciliation reviews and that this should be available for the next meeting.
The Clerk will speak other Clerks to see who they use as an internal auditor.
Miracle Design & Play are scheduled to repair the roundabout in the play area on the 24th October 2023. After speaking to another contractor, the issue is unlikely to be what was first thought.
The Clerk advised the meeting that Woodfines had been instructed to draw up the agreement between the Stewartby Bowls Club and the Parish Council. They have been provided with the information from the last meeting and have asked for an internal floor plan of the building. The Clerk will feedback any other issues that are identified that may need resolving as part of the agreement.
The Clerk advised the meeting that several hours over the past month had been spent trying to resolve the issues with E-On in relation to the electricity supply at the Sports Pavilion. Court action has been halted and the account formally transferred to the Parish Council from the 31st January 2020. Any charges prior to this date will be passed to the relevant organisations. The Clerk is hopefully that an up-to-date invoice will be received for the next meeting so that the Parish Council can determine next steps.
The Clerk advised that she had not advised Biffa about the second lift that was agreed. Cllr Law will resolve this matter
It was initially thought that there were not sufficient volunteers to run a Speedwatch Scheme however Cllr Spice from Bedford Borough Council agree to help and support.
It was noted that Caretaker had done an excellent job at refurbishing the Sports Field benches.

7: Chairman’s Report

Cllr Melville advised that the Village Hall roof was worse than originally thought and a further quote for the additional works has been circulated for consideration.
He congratulated everyone for the contribution that they had made to the Parish Council and being shortlisted as one of the Finalists in the Town & Parish Council of the Year Award. Cllr Melville also advised that he had presented to the Police & Crime Commissioner’s meeting and, as a result, had Councils asking him to meet with him.
Cllr Melville advised that the poppies and soldiers should go up next week.
Cllr Melville also raised the issue with Cllr Spice of the lack of response from

Bedford Borough Council officers as this means that issues remain unresolved and the Parish Council looks inept. He referred specifically to the issues with Montgomery Close and the link road to Hansons Reach. Cllr Spice will speak to Andrew Prigmore about this.
Cllr Melville also advised that he had received no response from Bedford Borough Council regarding the worst performing bus route in the Borough, which is the only route that serves the village of Stewartby. As an indication of the issues, the following statistics were provided:
• 287 planned buses did not turn up in the last week
• During one week in September only 32% of buses turned up
Cllr Law advised that S106 monies had been used to fund this route. Cllr Spice agreed to follow this up

8: Report from Bedford Borough Council

Cllr Spice advised that she had arranged for the land around the old School Caretaker's Bungalow to be tidied up. This should happen within the next two weeks.
She also advised that the consultation regarding the school merger should start early 2024. Cllr Walker would be a good contact if the Parish Council wanted to discuss this further. The Parish Council suggested that in future the school site could be used as a much-needed Health Centre or Nursery.
Cllr Spice advised that she will be attending for some of the Christmas Fair on the 25th November 2023. She asked whether the Borough Councillors could have a stand at this event. The Council felt that this would not be appropriate however suggested that they run a surgery in the village on an alternative date.
She also advised that she would be attending the Memorial Service on the 11th November 2023 to lay the wreath on behalf of Bedford Borough Council.
Cllr Spice advised that we needed to submit any applications for Ward Funds by mid-December 2023 if it was for an external item. The Council RESOLVED that it would look at submitting an application for the repair of the swing on The Green.
Cllr Spice agreed to help with the Speedwatch Scheme.
Cllr Spice talked briefly about the EWR plans for Stewartby Station. The Council advised that in general they supported the new station however students need to be able to get to Kimberley College safely. Cllr Law asked about compulsory purchases.
Cllr Melville thanked Cllr Spice for attending but noted that there had still been no communication to the residents of the village and that we felt largely unsupported to date. Having been in post for 6 months, it is now assumed that their settle in period was over and more promise of active support needed.

9: Clerk's Financial Report

9.1 Authorise payments for BACS Transfer
The Clerk advised the meeting of the invoices that were due to be paid and talked them through the report. It was RESOLVED to authorise the invoices for payment as per the BACS Report apart from the invoice for ACE Fire & Security relating to the Village Hall as it was felt that this should be covered under the existing contract.
The Clerk advised that the invoices to JMR had also been setup for payment but that a process should be agreed for these and similar invoices as the fall outside the usual process.
It was noted that the query to Wave relating to the sewage charges was outstanding.
9.2 Balances of Accounts
Members were advised that as at the 30th September 2023, the balances of the Parish Council and Sports Fields accounts were as follows:
£59,950.42
£31,117.71
£33,405.81
£444,945.72
9.3 Internal Auditor's Report
Please refer to Matters Arising. The Report should be available for the next meeting.
9.4 Budget Monitoring April – September 2023

The Parish Council considered the Budget Monitoring Reports for the period April – September 2023. Expenditure is currently in line with the budgets apart from those areas that were identified at the previous meeting.
The Clerk was asked to e-mail the spreadsheets out to all Councillors for information.
Cllr Nelsey raised concerns that the S 37 monies were not being spend. He was advised that Wootton Poor Trust usually submits an application for funding to support residents of the village.

10: Quotations for authorisation

10.PAT Testing
Cllr Fraser suggested that we train the caretaker and purchase equipment to do this ourselves however this was not thought to be the best way forward. Cllr Haley advised that it would be better to continue to outsource for liability reasons.
10.2 Christmas Light
10.3 Fire & Security for Sports Pavilion and Village Hall
The Council was spilt on whether to make a decision about this given that the quote had been sent a few hours before the meeting. The Clerk advised that as soon as she had received it, it had been sent to Councillors.
10.4 Replacement Locks
This matter will be deferred to the next meeting.
10.5 Staff Christmas Meal
10.6 Card Readers/Fees
Cllr Nelsey talked the Council through the quotes received. No system will integrate with Scribe and therefore the Clerk will need to make manual entries for all transactions.

11: Planning Applications & Decisions

Planning Applications
11.1 Ref: 23/02117/FUL Full Planning Application for proposed removal of the current wall at the rear of the garden and installation of a new closed feather boarded fence around the boundary of the garden which is currently open @ 29 Oxford Blue Way Stewartby Bedford Bedfordshire MK43 9GF

11.2 Ref: 23/02225/FUL Full Planning Application for proposed single storey front, side and rear extension @ 9 Pillinge Road Stewartby Bedford Bedfordshire MK43 9NW
Planning Decisions
11.3 Ref: 23/01813/TELPN Telecommunication Prior notification of proposed Installation of Fifth Generation (5G) equipment, comprising 15m H3G street pole and additional equipment cabinets @ land Opposite Play Area Entrance Park Crescent Stewartby Bedfordshire – Refused

12: Amenities

12.1 Highways/Lighting
Clerk advised that street lights had been repaired and Cllr Law advised that the “S” had been put back on the Industrial Estate sign.
12.2 Recreation Area
It was noted that JMR is doing an excellent job and that he should now be used as a preferred contractor.
12.3 Newsletter
The newsletter has been delivered however some issues with the printing have been noted.
The next newsletter will go out in January 2024.
12.4 Sports Field/Pavilion
12.5 Village Hall
None
12.6 Policing
None
12.7 Covanta
Cllr Law attended a recent meeting. She advised that the plat is running as it should and that the emissions are within the permitted limits. Patrick Murray is the new

General Manager.
There have been two Schedule 5 notifications, one was caused by a gas bottle explosion.
The Parish Council have a tour of the site planned for the 2nd November 2023 at 6.30 pm.
Cllr Law advised that she will be attending a Millbrook Power meeting on the 30th October 2023. Cllr Nelsey advised that he would be unable to attend this.
Cllr Law also advised that the train services would recommence in mid-November 2023 with the full service returning in the new year.

13: Dave Law Pavilion Committee – including non-domestic rates and agreement with the Bowls Club

The meeting was advised that the Council would be liable for the non-domestic rates. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk should look into the Dave Law Sports Pavilion seeking charity status (VAT implications need to be considered).
Cllr Nelsey advised that no new bookings were being taken for the football pitches as Warners are currently working on them. It was noted that the Soccer School may cause damage to the works that have been undertaken.
The Committee asked for help on Sunday from 1.00 pm and on Thursday from 6.00 pm to setup/take down everything for the soccer school.

14: Community Events 2023

15: Village Hall Expenditure Review

This matter will be deferred to the next meeting

16: Code of Conduct Review

17: Items of an urgent nature or for inclusion on the next agenda

None

18: Close of Meeting and items for the next Agenda.

Meeting closed at 8.56 pm. Please see above for items for the next Agenda including Scribe Update (to be completed by next meeting)

19: Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Thursday 16th November 2023 @ 6.30 pm.