

**Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of Stanford Dingley Parish Council held on
Monday 1st June 2020 at 7.30pm.**

Present: Cllr. H. Fullerton (Chairman); Cllr. C. Dent; Cllr. A. Bucknell; Cllr. E. Hanrahan; District Cllr. G. Pask; Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk).

Parishioners: Mr. O. Brooke; Mr and Mrs McCurdy.

1 Public Session.

No items were raised during the public session.

2 Apologies.

Apologies of absence were received and approved from Cllr. C. Plank.

3 Declaration of Interests.

3.1 Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items.

There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.

4 Minutes of last meeting:

4.1 Parish Council meeting on Monday 2nd March 2020.

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting of Stanford Dingley Parish Council (SDPC) held on Monday 2nd March 2020 were an accurate account of the meeting and they will be signed by Cllr. Fullerton.

5 Annual meeting of SDPC.

It was resolved to defer the Annual Meeting of SDPC until May 2021 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is hoped to hold an Annual Parish meeting in the autumn, but depending on the Covid-19 pandemic, it is possible, that it will be deferred until April 2021.

6 Planning.

6.1 To receive an update on decisions made by WBC:

19/02522/FUL Church View Barn.

The demolition of the existing stable block and the construction of a three-bay replacement garage building with adjoining log store, alongside associated parking, access and landscaping works and the change of use of the land to a residential use. Amendment moving the proposed garage to that of the stable block.

Whilst SDPC **objected** to the original application, there was **no objection** to the amendment. The Eastern Area Planning Committee **refused** this application.

7 Management of Parish Council Assets.

7.1 The Club Room.

Mr. Pottier submitted the following information prior to the meeting:

The Club Room is currently being used as a school room by Tara and Rory Hogan.

No charge has been made for this but Sophie and Seamus will make a donation to the SDPC for its use.

Once vacated a full deep clean and sanitation will be required before it can be used.

Meantime the branch overhanging the storage shed has been cut down but the branches and foliage need to be removed. A general outside tidy up is also needed.

It was agreed that Cllr. Fullerton will work with Cllr. Hanrahan and Mr. Brooke about a small working party to remove the branches to Cllr. Hanrahan's bonfire pile and generally tidy things up.

HF

7.2 The Village Field.

Mr. Pottier submitted the following information prior to the meeting:

Work has now been completed on the access to the Village Field, but some of the vegetation needs to be cut back and the bottom of the ramp improved or the

aggregate will simply crumble into the road. Ollie Morris will be back to replace the

roadside fencing once hay making is over. The bottom of the ramp can be addressed with him then.

The fences on the east and south sides still need to be repaired and / or replaced by the Plank's and the McCurdy's.

It was agreed that Cllr. Fullerton will speak to Ollie Morris about the bottom of the access ramp, before payment of the invoice is approved.

HF

Cllr. Dent cut the grass on Sunday (31st May) and commented that the entrance track looked good, but did raise concerns about the finish at the junction with the road.

8 **Flooding**

Mr. Pottier commented on flooding prior to the meeting:

Flooding all seems to be forgotten now and there has been no official contact from Thames Water on efforts they have been making to improve the sewage ingress into the drains. There has been activity but to what reason and outcome is unclear. This needs to be chased up.

We are now faced with the prospect of drought and no sign of significant rain until the end of June which may bring a different threat, that of wild fires and people new and old to the village need to be made aware that bonfires and impromptu BBQ's could cause a serious issue.

Cllr. Fullerton commented that he has received a response from Karen Cullen at Thames Water. Thames Water will be in touch when a meeting can be arranged.

Brain Connorton has 20 years of history of the sewer flooding (it was noted that in reality, there has been sewer flooding in Stanford Dingley for at least 40 years).

Whilst we are living through the Covid-19 pandemic, Stanford Dingley is likely to receive limited attention from Thames Water, the Environment Agency and WBC.

Cllr. Dent suggested that it might be worth contacting other parishes suffering from sewer flooding in the area and joining forces. Cllr. Dent agreed to lead on the sewer flooding and work with Mr. Pottier and Mr. Brooke.

CD

It is clear that the sewer flooding poses an Environment Health issue and WBC Environmental Health should be more involved.

It was noted that in the last month, there has been a new CEO of Thames Water appointed.

Cllr. Hanrahan reported that he had spoken to Kay Lacey. The work proposed by the PVFF has been put on hold due to Natural England.

Cllr. Bucknell asked about the status of the exploration works in the road for the flood alleviation scheme. A large dip has appeared in the road between Oaken and The Bull which is getting bigger. District Cllr. Pask agreed to take this up.

GP

9 **Tree Planting in the Parish.**

Planting trees around the parish has been suggested and supported by a number of different parishioners. One of the hopes is that it will bring the community together. There was a suggestion of a tree being planted for each household, although in reality it maybe only 10 to 15 trees. One thought was to plant trees around the village field, although this is slightly contentious due to views from dwellings across the field.

Cllr. Hanrahan will liaise with Mr. Pottier about obtaining the views of the covenant holders. The possibility of a community orchard on the Village Field was suggested. Once any trees have been planted, they will need to be managed, this would be easier if the trees are all in the same area. Cllr. Hanrahan will look at the parish with Peter Trentham with a view to identifying possible locations.

Cllr. Hanrahan will lead on the procurement of any trees.

EH

10 **The Website.**

Cllr. Bucknell showed councillors the work which has been completed on the new website. A new logo has been designed and the structure is in place, but population of the website is taking time. The site has been optimised for use from mobile phones.

Cllr. Bucknell was thanked for the work she has done on the new site. The new logo cost £70.00 and it was agreed that SDPC would cover the cost. The Clerk raised the issue that the original site is no longer accessible, Cllr. Bucknell commented that it has to be accessed using the full web address of <http://www.stanforddingley.co.uk>

11 Highway Issues.

Cllr. Dent commented that all of the following should be considered as highway issues: speeding, the state of the verges, volume and size of traffic. It was questioned whether there are different issues for the different lanes within the parish.

At a previous meeting, it was questioned whether byway STAN 1 could be reinstated or upgraded to accommodate agricultural vehicles and therefore remove the need for them to drive through the middle of Stanford Dingley. One of the issues with this proposal is the river, which would probably need a bridge and significant investment. The byway is on land owned by Willie Hartley Russell; District Cllr. Pask agreed to approach him about the suggestion.

GP

It was suggested that if tractor drivers meet cars that they insist that the other vehicle reverses to a passing point rather than driving up on the verges to pass, less damage would be done. Generally, it was felt that tractor drivers needed to slow down. It was agreed that tractor drivers should receive some form of safety briefing; Cllr. Hanrahan will speak to Jeremy Plank at Bushnells Green Farm and Cllr. Bucknell will speak to the Brakespears at Mazelands Farm.

EH
AB

It has been suggested that a 20mph zone is considered in the Village, but District Cllr. Pask commented that these are normally in urban areas and around schools. They need vertical or horizontal deflections at the entrances to the zones and some form of lighting. The Police are not in a position to enforce 20mph zones.

In Bucklebury, there was a children's poster campaign, with the winning posters being reproduced and then displayed around the parish. This has raised awareness of speeding. Cllr. Hanrahan and Cllr. Bucknell will look at the possibilities of posters in Stanford Dingley.

EH
AB

At the moment, with less traffic on the roads, speed has generally felt to have increased.

If speed is felt to be an issue, speed data needs to be captured using SID. This will give a clearer image of the problem and enable an action plan to be drawn up.

There was a suggestion that there should be a warning sign on the bend by the church; District Cllr. Pask agreed to ask Highways to install a blind bend sign.

GP

12 Priorities for this Council.

It was felt that this item needed a longer discussion and it was agreed to have a further discussion on this matter on another evening. Each councillor was asked to identify their top three priorities for consideration.

13 Reports.

13.1 District Councillor's Report.

District Cllr. Pask reported that the ethos of WBC has been to carry on as normal as much as possible through the Covid-19 pandemic. Council officers are working from home where this is possible and virtual meetings are taking place using Zoom. The recycling plants which were closed have now opened again on an appointment basis. Schools have the ability to be open.

Highway resurfacing is taking place on a number of the local roads, including Chapel Row and at the A4/Hambridge Road, where the junction is being reorganised.

BBOWT closed the carparks at Snelsmore Common and Greenham Common, but both of these have now been reopened.

13.2 Stanford Dingley Events Committee.

Mr. Pottier submitted a report prior to the meeting:

Covid-19 has wiped out all of the earlier planned events excepting an impromptu Easter Egg hunt which was organised by Catherine McKenzie; it was very well managed and received.

VE75 Vegetable boxes were distributed and circa 20 taken. September 5th is the potential date for the mini show (will be very mini) and could be made little later in the calendar if needed. At least 4 weeks are required to organise any form of large gathering and this will be dependent upon Covid-19.

It is hoped that the traditional Xmas time events can go ahead.

It was suggested that it might be possible to do something for VJ day, possibly a picnic on the Village Field. Cllr. Fullerton agreed to take this up with Mr. Pottier.

HF

13.3 Public Rights of Way.

Cllr. Bucknell reported that some of the Rights of Way posts have been repaired / replaced. There are a number of fallen trees near Little Orchard blocking the byway. Cllr. Bucknell will report these to WBC. Mr. Brooke and Mr. Bucknell have mended the bridge on STAN 14/2.

AB

14 Clerks Report.

14.1 Finances.

14.1.1 To receive the figures for FY19/20.

The Clerk reported that at the end of the Financial Year 19/20 (31st March 2020), the balance held across both bank accounts totalled £8,527.64. Expenditure for the year was £4,871.40 and income £6,254.32.

14.1.2 To resolve to claim exemption from External Audit.

SDPC meets the criterion for exemption from External Audit, it was therefore resolved to claim exemption. Cllr. Fullerton will sign the Certificate of Exemption.

14.2 Financial Statement dated 1st June 2020.

The Clerk reported that the following payments have been made since the last meeting:

Post Office Ltd	£180.14	SSE, electricity for the Club Room.
Norman Eggleton	£120.00	Removal of branch on tree at rear of Club Room.
Playsafety Ltd	£82.20	RoSPA inspection.
CPRE	£36.00	Annual membership.
Zurich Municipal	£488.53	Insurance.

The first half of the precept (£2,500) has been received and a VAT claim of £3,367.65 has been made.

Once all transactions have cleared the balance in the account will be £13,114.52, which reconciles to the bank statement dated the 30th April 2020 showing a balance of £13,721.26.

The Clerk questioned whether it would be prudent to move some of the balance from the Lloyds Treasury Account to the Business Instant Account. It was agreed to move £6,000 to the Business Instant Account.

15 Round Table Comments.

15.1 Conservation Area.

WBC has recently sent out details of a tool kit to produce Conservation Area Appraisals. Stuart Logan has already completed the work required, but it may be in a different format. It was agreed that Cllr. Hanrahan would contact Debbie Instow (WBC) about the possibility of using Stuart Logan's documents.

15.2 Importation of Combustibles.

Complaints have been made to a parish councillor about combustible rubbish being bought into the village for disposal. It was agreed that the situation would be monitored.

15.3 Community Support and Networks.

Thanks, were extended to Cllr. Bucknell who has organised the support network within the parish during the Covid-19 pandemic. All individuals who have been involved were thanked.

16 Date of next meetings: Monday 6th July 2020 at 7.30pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Signed:

Date: