

**Minutes of a Meeting of Stanford Dingley Parish Council held on  
Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 at 7.30pm in the Club Room, Stanford Dingley.**

**Present:** Cllr. E. Hanrahan (Chairman); Cllr. A. Bucknell; Cllr. H. Fullerton; Cllr. S. Logan; District Cllr. Read; Mrs. H. Pratt (Clerk).

Fifteen members of the public.

**1** **Public Session.**

**1.1** **Flooding.**

The flood warden reported that flooding from the river Pang has only occurred (in recent years) in 2007 and 2013/14. The Pang Valley Flood Forum (PVFF) was established in 2014. Other instances of flooding in Stanford Dingley, which have occurred since 2013/14, have been sewer flooding resulting from high rainfall. The sewer becomes overwhelmed from the north (Meadowlands, Burnt Hill and Frilsham), the west (past The Old Boot) and also from the south (Jennets Hill). Sewage from all three directions flows to the sewage station in Stanford Dingley from where it should be pumped to Tutts Clump, however if there is too much sewage the system fails and sewage comes up through the drains in the road in the centre of the village.

Roadside gullies should be able to accommodate the flow, but are often not kept sufficiently clear by WBC. The Dredge Gang clear a lot of gullies, but do not have the necessary kit to clear the gullies properly.

The situation is frequently reported to Thames Water (TW), who are aware of the water ingress into the sewage system. They have lined the sewer and the manholes from St. Deny's to the centre of the village, but this has made little if any difference.

As a result, villagers are discussing and preparing to undertake preventative measures, including the purchase of a pump, to put the dirty water into Butcher's Piece. Letters are consistently being written to TW, copying Laura Farris MP and District Cllr. Read. The Environment Agency don't hold Thames Water to account. Whilst TW has a 2-hour service level agreement, it took 2 weeks for tankers to arrive. It was questioned whether TW could write letters to Stanford Dingley residents stating they are not at risk of river flooding and take responsibility for the sewer flooding.

It was suggested that there should be more culverts in the centre of the village. WBC needs to maintain the gullies on at least the annual basis assigned to them (last cleared on the 23 April 2023). When the hedges are cut, it was suggested that the Dredge Gang should follow and remove the resulting detritus, so that it doesn't block the gullies.

Poor drainage on Back Lane left an 18" deep puddle on the bend, and resulted in a car getting stuck. A puddle this deep is a risk to life. If the wet weather is compounded with cold weather the situation is even worse because Back Lane is not on a gritting route.

Whilst it was acknowledged that WBC is under extreme budgetary pressure, it was questioned what Stanford Dingley residents get for their Council tax.

Plans for a flood alleviation channel for Stanford Dingley were drawn up, but parishioners understood informally from the PVFF that the project had been shelved. John Winstanley (WBC) has commented that the project is not shelved, but needs to be reviewed.

Reed bed mitigation measures behind Mazelands Farm and on Butcher's Piece were discussed.

Thanks were extended to the flood warden and members of the Dredge Gang for an outstanding job assisting the community.

Seven members of the public remained for the main part of the meeting.

**2** **Apologies.**

Apologies of absence were received from Cllr. Rudd.

**3** **Declaration of Interests.**

**3.1** **Updates to the Register of Interests.**

	There were no updates to the Register of Interests.	
3.2	<u>Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items.</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.	
4	<b><u>Approval of minutes of the last SDPC meeting.</u></b>	
	It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting of SDPC held on Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2023 were an accurate record of the meeting and they were signed by Cllr. Hanrahan.	
5	<b><u>Planning.</u></b>	
5.1	<u>Planning Applications.</u>	
5.1.1	<b>23/02731/HOUSE -Wisteria Cottage.</b> <i>Proposed rear extension and PV installation.</i> SDPC had <b>no objections</b> to this application which has been <b>approved</b> by WBC.	
5.2	<u>Village Design Statement.</u> The Village Design Statement has been finalised and is currently with WBC awaiting a final consultation in the spring (2024).	
6	<b><u>District Councillors Report.</u></b> District Cllr. Read reported that good progress has generally been made in delivering WBC's Strategy, but improvement is needed on delivering on-street EV charging points, time taken to handle new housing benefit claims and the number of households actively fostering children and young people. The WB Rural England Prosperity Fund business grant scheme is now live, offering support to small, local, rural businesses with capital initiatives. The next District Parish Conference will be held on Tuesday 30th January from 2pm to 4.30pm in Shaw House. It will be a hybrid meeting. Additional grants are available for those suffering from Winter challenges. The planning application for the first phase of the improvements to Newbury Wharf has been submitted to the planning department. Community Ownership Fund grants are available to support community groups taking over and running community assets for the community.	
7	<b><u>The Club Room.</u></b>	
7.1	<u>Replacement Door.</u> It was resolved that an order would be placed for an olive-green composite door for the Club Room from We Do Doors at a cost of £1,389 including installation. A composite door has been selected on the basis that it will be less susceptible to swelling than a solid wood door and require less maintenance. Cllr. Bucknell will place the order and oversee installation.	AB
7.2	<u>Replacement Hob.</u> Following electrical issues with the electric hob in the kitchen it was agreed that Cllr. Bucknell should purchase a mid-range replacement hob.	AB
8	<b><u>Emergency Plan.</u></b> Cllr. Hanrahan will circulate the Resilience Plan.	EH
9	<b><u>Finances.</u></b>	
9.1	<u>Budget for FY24/25.</u> The following expenditure in FY 23/24 was approved: PVFF - £100 Libraries - £200 NewsLink - £50 West Berks CAB - £100 The draft budget is based on the majority of the work planned for the Village Field taking place in this financial year. The budgeted expenditure for FY24/25 is £12,201.01, including VAT and capital projects of £5,208.01. The non project budget expenditure is £6,993.00 including VAT. The budget includes a new laptop and software for the Clerk.	

**9.2** Precept for FY24/25.

It was resolved to raise a precept of £6,000 for FY24/25, this being an increase of £1,000 over FY23/24.

**10** Projects.

**10.1** Community Resilience / Update on the Generator.

Everything is in place for the plinth to be laid, behind the Club Room, for the generator. The path around the side of the Club Room needs to be dug out with a mini digger, this work is waiting on better weather.

**10.2** The Village Field.

Thanks were extended to District Cllr. Chris Read for the WBC Members Bid to support the project. Cllr. Logan has liaised with a contractor for 8 apple, 4 pear and 4 plum trees. Manual assistance with planting the trees may be required.

Various options for creating some wild flower meadow have been explored and it has been agreed to plant 300 wild flower plugs and to sow 400m<sup>2</sup> with yellow rattle seed.

**10.3** Restoration of the Village Pump.

A WBC Members bid for £411.60 has been approved covering 70% of the cost of the restoration of the pump opposite Casey Court. It was agreed that SDPC would cover the remaining 30% of the cost, plus the VAT which will be reclaimed.

**11** Reports.

**11.1** Events Committee.

On Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February, there will be a wine tasting evening. The Club Room needs to be cleaned and the tables need to be retrieved from the shed.

Plans are being made for a “Party in the Paddock” event on June 8<sup>th</sup>, the theme will be the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day.

There will be drinks in the pub on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

**11.2** Dredge Gang.

The Dredge Gang have done lots of work on the drains.

**12** Clerk's Report.

**12.1** Finances.

**To receive the financial statement dated 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024.**

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

Keys for the Club Room	£20.00
Fuel for cutting the Village Field	£190.00
Post Office Ltd: SSE – 2/7/23 to 20/10/23	£29.15
C. B. Heslop Company Ltd: Payroll	£18.00
Salaries/HMRC (1 <sup>st</sup> July 2023 to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023)	£728.00
TWK Electrical Ltd: Club Room hob inspection	£96.00
Connecting Communities in Berkshire: CBAS Membership	£180.00
Triangle Management Company Ltd: Dog bin reinstatement	£108.00
Phone box light	£58.80

Once all transactions have cleared the balance in the account will be £7,545.75. This reconciles to the bank statement dated the 29<sup>th</sup> December 2023 which showed a balance of £8,600.54. The Business Instant account contained a balance of £6,544.29 on the last statement dated the 29<sup>th</sup> December 2023, giving an overall total of £15,144.83. The sum of £2,409.16 is ring fenced for community resilience, prior to reclaiming any VAT.

**12.2** Annual Parish Assembly.

The Annual Parish Assembly will take place on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April and will be an internal event with no outside speaker.

**12.3 Correspondence.**

The next District Parish Conference takes place 30th January between 2.00pm – 4.30pm at Shaw House. It will be a hybrid event.

**13** There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.45pm.

**14 Date of next meetings:**

**SDPC: Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7.30pm in the Club Room.**

Signed:

Date: