

STAINTON & STREATLAM PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting held on 21st March 2019

Present J Rowlandson (JR) J Teasdale (JT)
 B Hutchinson (BH) J Brown (JB) S Chapman (SC) Clerk

1. **Apologies; None**
2. **Public present; None**
3. **Declarations of Interest: - (in Agenda items) - None received.**
4. **Requests for dispensations to Councillors - None received.**
5. **Minutes of the last meeting:- (17 January 2019)**
Proposed by JB and seconded by NBH.
6. **Matters arising from last meeting**

6.1 *Parish Council Website:-* This is now complete and online after being approved by councillors'

6.2 *Stainton Quarry* – Following a PC enquiry to DCC regarding reports of trees being cut down and removed from the quarry a response was received. DCC have stated that the quarry management has denied that trees were removed from there and said the trees were removed from homes adjoining the quarry. Since that time there have been reports of wagon loads of straw being taken onto the premises although the reason for this is unknown it was not felt that approaching DCC again would shed any light on the matter.

6.3 Parking issues within the village and on the village green are still under investigation but photographic evidence of vehicles causing obstruction on the road or on the green would be useful if action is to be taken.

6.4 VAT – Responsibility for reclaiming VAT will be taken by the Clerk.

6.5 At this time, due to an error on the part of Barclays, the bank mandate change has not yet gone through but another attempt to get this set up will be made as soon as possible.

6.6 The 2019/2020 precept has been approved by DCC and payment is expected to be made in April.

7. **Financial Report**

At the 27th February 2019 the PC account balance was £16,194.98

Payments approved at this meeting:

Clerk's wage	£149.60
HMRC payment	£ 37.20
Printing/Internet etc.(3 months)	£ 23.97

7.1 The grass-cutting season has already started (due to the weather conditions) and the first cut has been made, we are expecting the first invoice from C A Stamp.

As was previously agreed with councillors, this payment will be made even if invoices come due for payment between council meetings. We are also expecting an invoice for the setup fee of the website plus the cost of hosting it for the present year.

7.2 Instead of the Clerk claiming for irregular itemised hours every two months it was agreed by the councillors that a flat rate of 15 hours be paid each month and this would include a partial payment towards internet costs incurred by the Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council. This to start from May.

8. Correspondence

8.1 Barclays Bank – Letter to advise there was an issue with the identification provided by Councillor Teasdale. A phone call to the mandate department in Manchester revealed that the local branch had failed to confirm the authenticity of the supporting documents and the copy they then sent was illegible. JT will need to visit the branch again but the paperwork was approved for BH.

8.2 Letter from The Pensions Regulator – confirmation of a submission that due to the Clerk's wage falling below the financial threshold there was no necessity to enrol her in a workplace pension scheme.

8.3 Information about a Mazars presentation regarding Annual Governance returns. This will be at County Hall on 3rd April and will last for about one hour.

8.4 National Salary Award – The pay scale for Parish Clerks has been reviewed and updated. Changes will be implemented from April 1st and the Clerk's hourly rate will rise from £9.34 to £9.58

8.5 DCC – they are carrying out a review of polling districts and of polling stations.

8.6 CDALC – Review of the payment of Basic Allowances, Subsistence and Travel Allowances made to councillors. Records must be kept of any such payments and published online.

8.7 DCC – The Big Spring Clean 2019. This can take place between 19th February and 9th April.

8.8 DCC – Notification of the Wheels to Work loan scheme for those aged 16+ with a full or provisional license.

8.9 NALC – Revised version of Model Standing Orders incorporating new mandatory requirements – to be approved at the next Annual Parish Council Meeting.

8.10 CDALC – notice of the revision of Government policy regarding unauthorised development and encampments.

8.11 Department for Communities and Local Government – Transparency code for smaller authorities covering what needs to be published and when.

8.12 CDALC – Standards in public Life – Local Government Ethical Standards. This is NALC's response to a yearlong Parliamentary inquiry into ethical standards in local government and aims to reform and improve behaviour in parish and town councils.

9. Playground Refurbishment Project

After examining the two plans and quotes sourced by Councillor Brown, it was agreed that the design and quote from Sovereign was the most suitable for the Stainton play area.

Two DCC councillors have agreed to support the project by allocating £3000 each towards it from their yearly budget allowance. This will be administered through Teesdale Action Partnership so they will be approached to get the relevant application forms and set things in motion.

As part of the project, the wooden play trail will be removed so the only remaining equipment will be the swings. These will have their seats and chains replaced by Sovereign. The framework is in need of repainting and this will be done by volunteers.

10 Arising Issues

10.1 Barford Storage Depot – There have been reports that there appears to be an occupied residential caravan on the site. DCC will be asked if this is allowed and if permission for it has been granted.

10.2 Street Lighting – The street lights have been removed from the road leading from the A688 into the village leaving the footpath along there in darkness. This will impact on pedestrians in winter months as it is a school route.

10.3 The footpath leads from Stainton into Barnard Castle and a large extent of it has become so overgrown as to necessitate pedestrians walking in single file as the path is so narrow.

The Council considers items 10.2 & 10.3 to be matters of safety so both issues will be reported to the Highways and Lighting section of DCC to see what can be done to improve matters.

Date and Time of the Annual Parish Meeting

30th May at 7.00pm

(rescheduled from 23rd May due to Euro elections)

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30th May at 7.30pm

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Chairman

Date.....