

STANTON & STREATLAM PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting held on 27rd July 2023 in Stainton Village Hall

Present J Teasdale (JT) N B Hutchinson (NBH) B Toulson (BT)
J Rowlandson (JR) S Chapman (SC) (Clerk)

1. Public Participation Ms K Hoel, Ms J Latheron, Mr T Smith

- a) Ms Latereron and Ms Hoel attended to voice their support for the planned Solar Farm installation. They thought it was good that GSK was acting to minimise the carbon footprint of the site, reduce reliance on fossil fuels and hoped that more companies would follow suit. They thought the planned Hedgerow planting would certainly help reduce the visual impact that the installation would have. Regarding the location of the proposed site they believed it would have been chosen on the basis of being where the solar panels received the most light and so generated the best output. They wondered if there was also the potential to increase the number of birdhouses/bat boxes provided to benefit local wildlife. They also agreed that the suggested Community Payment could perhaps be a little higher.
- b) Mr Smith wished to see the remaining stubs of the original Memorial Park railings left as a reminder of the reason for their removal – to aid the war effort of the time. He said it was a part of the history of Stainton and they should be retained as a mark of respect to those residents who fought and died in that war. The Council would be quite happy to agree to this as any new railing could be installed with three support posts and this would still retain visibility of the original railing.

2. Apologies

J Taylor (JMT) A Dobinson (AD)

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Dispensations

None

5. Approval of May Minutes

Proposed by JT, seconded by NBH

6. Progress or changes since last meeting

- 6.1 Mrs C Merrigan-Martin wrote opposing the Solar Farm proposal and had reported that the photographs taken from her location were still not available online. (At the time of this meeting the application for the Solar Farm had not appeared on the DCC Planning website so they may appear once the application is submitted.)
- 6.2 As yet there is still no bus timetable on the bus shelter for journeys from Barnard Castle to Bishop Auckland and Darlington. There was expected to be changes made to the services being run and this may have delayed getting new timetables out.
- 6.3 Bus shelters refurbishment – Mr Fright was asked to provide a price to re-felt both shelters and apply wood treatment. In Addition he was asked to cut back the shrubbery around the Stainton Grove shelter to allow for the work to be carried out.
- 6.4 Mr Chorlton has agreed to undertake a training course arranged by UTASS on the Safe Use of Pesticides and the Parish Council will pay for this. The course is demand led so will not run until sufficient people apply to do it. UTASS had hoped to run a course in August but demand did not meet the required level to do so. The website will be monitored to see if the course is offered at a later date and Mr Chorlton will be signed up to it.

7. Correspondence received/sent

We received a complaint from [REDACTED] as he had attempted to contact the PC on several occasions via the contact form on the PC website and had not received any response. When this was brought to our attention it was investigated and it was found that the link on the website was not functioning as it should. Our website provider was informed and a repair asked for and at this time we are assured that everything is now working correctly.

██████████ had reported or enquired about 4 issues and these are:-

- 7.1 The need for a tree surgeon to examine a tree in the Memorial Park that he was concerned about. – The PC will arrange for the trees in the park to be surveyed for safety.
- 7.2 The timetable for PC Meetings - There is no specific notice regarding the dates of future meetings on the website but the date and time is generally included at the bottom of the minutes and the minutes and agendas are displayed on the village hall noticeboard prior to meetings.
- 7.3 The January and March Minutes had not been uploaded. He was unable to find this information on the website – This was an oversight by the clerk as the most recent documents hadn't been turned into PDF format and uploaded but the site has now been updated.
- 7.4 A query as to how much of the Memorial Park wall was to be restored. - The area of the wall to be restored is only the frontage as that is where the most obvious degradation has occurred.
- 7.5 ██████████ also reported that he has problems with vehicles parked at either side of the entrance to his property. Unfortunately this is not an issue that the PC has any power to affect so any parking issues need to be reported to DCC, Highways dept., and they will take any necessary action.
- 7.6 A follow-up email has been sent to DCC regarding the closure of the double gates at Stainton Grove play area to request that they are secured between grass mowers requiring access.
- 7.7 CA Stamp has been asked for a price to clear the footpath at the base of the triangular field.
- 7.8 R Toward has been asked to give a price to clear the overgrowth of grass that has narrowed the footpath below Hesley Rise.
- 7.9 W Fright has been asked to give us a price to re-felt the roofs of both the bus shelter in Stainton and the one on the A688 at Stainton Grove and to also apply a wood treatment. In addition he would need to trim back the shrubbery around the Stainton Grove one in order to get full access to it.

8. Financial Report

Balance of Account as at 27th July 2023 £28,136.59

S Chapman	Gift to thank Internal Auditor	£25.00
Village Hall	Room hire, 2 hrs at £15 per hr	£30.00
I Chorlton	Summer plants for troughs and planters	£59.49
HMRC	Tax on Clerk's wage (June/July)	£68.60
Playsafety	Play area inspection	£94.20
S Chapman	Clerk's wage June/July	£274.00
R Toward	Grass cutting (4 cuts)	£500.00

It was reported that disappointingly, once again some of the new plants had been removed from the planters by the bus shelter. If this continues to be a recurring issue it may be necessary to relocate the planters which would be a shame as they do provide a splash of colour on the entrance to the village. Our grass cutter was commended for the tidy appearance of the areas he was responsible for.

9. Play Area Inspection Report & Resurfacing

9.1 As expected the report referenced the condition of the surfacing under the swings but this is something Council is currently progressing. The outside safety barrier was mentioned and no-one knew when that had been damaged but the report said it still fulfilled its purpose.

The condition of the gates were raised – Councillor Taylor has been unable to remove the front gate to refurbish it and the swing gate is also heavily corroded but still useable. The spring rockers were flagged up as being dirty but Councillor Toulson has offered to try and clean them up.

9.2 We received 3 quotes for the resurfacing under the swings, see-saw, and the rockers.

Bounceback Safety Surfaces; £5,430.00 with a plain black surface.

DCM Surfaces; £10,569.00 with a mottled red/black wet-pour surface.

Sovereign; £7,142.05 a wet-pour surface under the swings and grass tiles under the other items.

A possible alternative course of action was suggested in that the rubber tiles be removed, the surface covered with sand then grass tiles put down and covered in wood chips. However it is believed that there is a concrete surface under the rubber tiles so there would be insufficient depth for this option.

However it was agreed that the option of putting grass tiles under the rockers and see-saw would be better than using wet-pour in these locations.

Although the quote from Sovereign was very detailed it was recalled that there had been issues with them during the installation of the wooden climbing frame and the rockers and it was felt that we did not want to deal with this again. The quote from DCM Surfaces was twice as expensive as the Bounceback quote and several thousand pounds more than the Sovereign quote. It was agreed that the representative from Bounceback be contacted again as unfortunately he arrived earlier than expected so there was no opportunity to speak directly to him. Councillors would like the opportunity for a face-to-face meeting to establish what we require.

10. Memorial Park Wall & Railing Restoration

Quotes were previously sourced for the park wall restoration and a couple of names suggested who could be asked to quote to make the railings. As previously recorded, the stubs of the original railings will be left in situ throughout the restoration.

11. Memorial Park Tree Pruning

██████████ has had one of the trees pruned back as it was overhanging his property. Council will ask a local tree surgeon to look at the remaining trees to see if any action is required to ensure they are healthy and if any further action is necessary.

12. Proposed New Solar Farm

At this time the planning application for this proposal has not been submitted to DCC.

13. Kinninvie Crossroads

There are still traffic lights in operation at the crossroads while it's potential closure is still under debate. The police have described it as an unsafe crossing and the traffic lights unfortunately keep breaking down and causing more issues. If the closure went ahead, local opinion is that it would place pressure onto the Dent Gate Lane route. The Parish Council set a letter of objection to the proposed closure but has agreed to send a follow up asking that other solutions rather than closure are looked for and that local resident be consulted before any action is taken.

There being no further issues raised by councillors, the meeting was declared closed.

14. Date and time of next meeting

**28th September at 7.00pm In
the village hall.**

Signed

Date