

DRAFT

STEEP PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: Mrs. Caroline Robinson

CLERK: Mrs. Jenny Hollington

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday, 7th January 2013 at Steep Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllrs. Caroline Robinson (in the Chair)
Jim MacDonald
Suzi Openshaw
Simon Bridger

Terry Cook
Graham Banks
Nick Hurst

In Attendance: County Councillor - Vaughan Clark
District Councillor – Nick Drew
Clerk - Jenny Hollington

There were no members of the public present.

The Chairman opened the meeting by wishing everyone a very happy New Year.

13/01 APOLOGIES: Clls. Jenny Martin, and Charles Gibson

13/02 MINUTES:

- The Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 24th September were amended (as agreed at P.C. Meeting held on Monday, 3rd December). Minute 12/142 Discussion with Austin Builders (last paragraph) was amended to read “Councillors decided to back the scheme **in principle**”.
- The Minutes of the Meetings held on 3rd and 10th December were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed accordingly.

13/03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - The Chairman reminded Councillors that any interests should be recorded as necessary.

13/04 PUBLIC COMMENT – There were no members of the public present.

13/05 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT –

County Councillor, Vaughan Clarke, reported on the census results for 2011 which shows some clear trends from 2001:

- the number of people aged 65 and over increased by 21% and now stands at 18% of the population;
- more than 34,000 of Hampshire’s residents are aged over 85, a 35% increase since 2001;
- home ownership has decreased from 76.5% to 71.5%
- householders with cars has increased by 1%
- numbers with degree-level qualifications have increased to 30%, now far outstripping those with no qualifications at all (19%)

For a second consecutive year, HCC has beaten its target to reduce carbon emissions from its buildings, schools, street lights and other operations. The plan has also reduced the County’s energy bill by £1.4 million. To help meet targets for future years, a major boiler control programme involving 1,500 installations is due to be implemented in schools which aims to cut carbon emissions by around 3,200 tonnes by 2013/14. Further work will go ahead to install more energy efficient streetlights across Hampshire.

13/06 DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT

District Councillor, Nick Drew, said he is keen to engage with residents in Steep Marsh, following the recent planning issues. It is hoped that a meeting can be organised, in conjunction with Steep P.C. and representatives of EHDC, and held in Steep Marsh in either March or April. An appropriate venue needs to be found – the Clerk to action.

He also drew Council's attention to a document entitled East Hampshire: Ward Level Data which contained many useful snippets of information including the fact that life expectancy in Froxfield and Steep is now 81.9 for males and 85.7 for females! The information will be circulated as soft copy and made available via the Newsletter and website.

13/07 FINANCE

(a) Payments - The following cheques were approved:

Cheque no. 100193	£ 500.00	K. Bennett (contribution – circular bench)
Cheque no. 100194	£ 500.00	CAB (donation)
Cheque no. 100195	£5,220.00	Chris Budd (BOAT 31)
Cheque no. 100196	£ 100.00	SLCC (Membership)

(b) Precept - The new tax base figures, following the recent changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme, have been received from EHDC and circulated prior to the meeting. The precept was discussed in conjunction with these figures and the budget. It was noted that by increasing the precept to £10,500 to cover the shortfall in the proposed budget, the difference in the Band D figure would amount to approximately £3.33 per household per year.

Councillors unanimously AGREED that the Precept for 2013/14 should be raised to £10,500 – the Clerk to action

(c) Donation Request – A letter received from the Kings Arms Youth Project requesting a £50 donation towards one of their projects, was discussed. The Clerk was asked to liaise further with the organisers to find out whether any young people from Steep utilised the scheme.

13/08 PARISH PLAN

The proposed action (September 2012) to set up further working parties to look at Communications, Community and Recreation in order to enable a faster response to the outcomes of the Parish Plan was discussed further. However, it was felt appropriate to defer this item until a later meeting.

13/09 REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

Common and Hangers

- The New Year's Day Walk into the Hangers to toast the New Year at the Poet's Stone (via the Trigg Point) was a great success helped enormously by the beautiful weather.
- Residents in Cockshott Lane have now received letters informing them that they are not allowed to prune the trees.
- It was noted that the signage in the Hangers is not the responsibility of EHDC.-

Footpaths

- The "footpath" sign at the Ashford Chase end of Footpath 18 (Hangers Way) is missing. The Clerk to notify SDNPA. The bad condition of this footpath was also noted – Cllr. MacDonald is in the process of applying for funding for a project that will incorporate improvements to this part of the path.

- E-mail correspondence regarding the condition of the path and litter on the C18 at the junction of the Dunhurst entrance was discussed – Cllr Banks will liaise with the Bursar at Bedales to see if they can offer any assistance.

Roads and Traffic

- A new spring has appeared in Church Road which runs down the lane and into the field – the situation will be monitored;
- Village roads in general are in a very bad condition – the Chairman will keep up her campaign for repairs.
- The Clerk was asked to advertise a link to the appropriate area of the HCC website so that residents are able to report faults on the roads themselves, rather than relying on the Parish Council (www3.hants.gov.uk/roads).
- The Clerk said she has reported the lack of grit bin at Rockpits Lane twice to no avail – she will now take it further.

Village Hall and War Memorial

- The Community Christmas Carol event had been a great success with over 120 people attending. Feedback has been very positive, although it has been commented that it was hard to hear the order of carols – next year a loud speaker or microphone system should be used. The Clerk was asked to record the Parish Council's thanks to all who helped especially Ben Harlan, Director of Music at Dunhurst, who stepped in to lead the singing at very short notice and also Laura Beardsmore who played the flute. The Clerk was also asked to send a letter to thank the children from Steep School who played the hand bells and sang so beautifully. The donation of the Christmas tree by Bedales was also gratefully acknowledged. Consideration to growing a tree on the grass next to the Village Hall for future years was discussed. The Clerk was asked to investigate whether there would be insurance implications in doing so.
- Solar Panels – the Clerk was asked to finalise a 3rd quote and organise a Trustee Meeting as soon as possible so that a decision can be made on this.
- Electricity Sub-Station – the Trustees are still waiting to hear back from the Energy Company.
- The War Memorial does not appear to have flooded as much this year despite the rain. Cllr. Bridger said he would trim the hedge.

13/10 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS –

The next Parish Council Meeting will take place on Monday, 4th February at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall.

The next Planning Meetings will take place on Monday, 14th January and Monday, 28th January at 7.30 p.m. at Steep Village Hall.

The Meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.