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DRAFT Minutes of the Stratton Audley Parish Council on Wednesday 5th August 2015, in the Hunt Room of the Red Lion**,** Stratton Audley at 7.00pm

**Present:**  Mr J Honsinger (Chairman) Mr A Flack, Mrs L Korsak., Ms C Lloyd and Mr S Hopkins.

**Apologies:** Cllr C Fulljames (OCC) Cllr B Wood (CDC)

**In Attendance:**

**Members of the public:** 5 (including Mr A Mobley – agent for Mr J O’Neill)

1. **Apologies for absence**

None

1. **Co-option of members**

The Clerk advised that she had received expressions of interest in becoming members of the Parish Council from Mrs C Lloyd and Mr S Hopkins. The Council agreed unanimously to co-opt both applicants to fill the two current vacancies on the Parish Council.

1. **Declarations of interest** The Clerk advised that, since the Localism Act 2011 requirements to declare interests at meetings had changed, and Members are able to participate in discussions unless they have a “Disclosable Pecuniary Interest” in a matter under discussion. In view of this advice members declared a personal interest as residents in the Village in the planning application to develop The Green Barn.
2. **Appointment of Clerk**

The Council agreed to appoint Anne Davies as Clerk to the Parish Council and Responsible Financial Officer, at a salary range of SCP 23 (£2253.89 annually) paid monthly, plus travelling at 45p per mile.

1. **Public participation** – Four Members of the public present expressed dissatisfaction about the wording of the Parish Council’s response to Cherwell District Council regarding the proposed development of The Green Barn as it was felt that the failure to delete all the standard wording on the Cherwell District Council response form , had somehow changed the tone of the Parish Council’s response as Statutory consultee and that this response was not a true reflection of the Parish Council’s position . After discussion it was conceded that, while deletion of the whole of the CDC option would have been preferable, the Council considered that the response, which was identical to that contained in the minutes of 2nd June which were currently before the Council for approval, was correct and would leave the planning officer in no doubt as to the Parish Council’s views.
2. Minutes of the meeting of 2nd June

The Council agreed that the minutes of the meeting of the 2nd June were an accurate record of the proceedings and Authorised the Chairman to sign the same.

1. **Progress on Parish matters**

* Path/verge on Bicester Road. The Chairman reported that OCC had recently confirmed to him that, having surveyed the footpath, highway engineers recognise that the path requires attention, and it is hoped that they will be able to carry out improvements to it in the near future, and possibly by the end of the month. .
* Fibre-optic broadband is now available. Although it was reported that BT currently are taking about one week to provide the service.

Litter Bins in the Playground

Cherwell District Council have agreed to check and empty the litter bins in the playground.

Road Sweeping

The Chairman reported that he had been advised that the roads through the village would be swept on the morning of Friday 7th August. The Parish Council will distribute a leaflet door to door asking residents to move their cars so that the road is clear for the road sweeper.

Damage to the Manor Wall

The Chairman reported that the wall of Stratton Audley Manor which had been damaged by a combine harvester earlier in the year and had restricted the use of the pavement causing complaints from residents had now been repaired.

No 8 Brackley to Bicester bus service

The Chairman reported that he had attended a meeting about the local (no 8) bus service and could confirm that it is under review. He had taken action to alert all residents to the situation, and advised anyone who was likely to be affected by the changes to respond to the online consultation or consult their local County or District Councillor.

* Village Pond Bench Area

Concerns had been raised with the Parish Council that the area round the bench by the pond had become so overgrown that it was impossible to use the seat. The Chairman advised that he had arranged for Mike Gore, the Village handyman, to clear the site with a strimmer and this had been carried out recently.

1. **Report from District and County Councillors** –- none were present
2. **Finance** –
3. The Parish Council authorised the new Clerk to have access to the Parish Council bank accounts at the Co-operative Bank and authorised all Councillors to sign the request forms.
4. The Clerk reported that the external audit of the Parish Accounts had been completed by the Council’s auditors, who had no matters to draw to the Council’s attention.
5. The Council authorised the following payments:-

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| Cheque Number | Payee | Reason | Amount |
| 500151 | M Gore | Grass cutting(2 months) 3xcuts + playground | £540.00 |
| 500152 | John Hicks | Playground Inspection | £61.56 |
| 500153 | John Honsinger | Printing and sundry expenses | £106.08 |
| 500154 | S Watkins | CLP expenses | £84.67 |
| 500155 | Navitas designs | Website design | £288.00 |
| 500156 | BDO | audit | £120.00 |
| 500157 | J Olds | expenses | £109.03 |
| 500158 | HMRC | Clerk tax | £37.40 |
| 500159 | Mrs A Davies | Salary and expenses | £174.27 |

1. **Standing Orders**

The Clerk explained that she had had considerable experience in drafting Council Constitutions, and she would like to redraft the Parish Council’s standing orders to make them more relevant to the size of the Council, more comprehensible and reflect more accurately the nature of the Parish Council’s workload.

**Councillors unanimously agreed that this work should be authorised.**

1. **Community Led Plan –** *To receive an update on plan activities.*

Anthony Flack updated the meeting on the activities of the Community led Plan Group.

1. There had been a highly successful Village picnic on 19h July. The event seemed to be more successful every year, with 80 people attending the event, which provided an excellent opportunity for residents to get together. In response to a comment that residents had not known the event was taking place, the Chairman clarified that he had personally delivered a flyer to every house in the Village. All Councillors agreed that it had been an excellent event, and suggested that, another year, it would be a good idea to erect banners across the road and put large posters on road junctions and other strategic positions, to increase awareness in the Village.
2. The second major event planned will be a Vintage Tea Party which will be held in the Church at the end of September.
3. The CLP Group is also beginning to plan a Village Food Festival to take place on 4th June 2016. Organisers are presently looking for sponsors, support in event management, stall holders and the providers of beer for a mini beer festival. The event is likely to be marketed as the Stratton Audley Food and Music festival incorporating a Scarecrow competition and the organisers hope that the whole village will participate.
4. The Community led Plan group, having obtained responses to the questionnaire which was distributed around the village, is now preparing its draft plan for presentation to the Parish Council, ideally by the end of the year. Anthony Flack advised that this would conclude the initial work of the CLP and it may then make sense to call the group the Stratton Audley Community Group. A member of the community commented that the CLP name had good recognition in the Village and questioned whether it should be dropped.
5. **Parish Council Web site**

The Chairman reported that the new Stratton Audley website was near completion and final copy is being loaded onto its pages. He and the Clerk have had some tuition on how to upload information, but the hope is that Village organisations will populate their own pages themselves. It is hoped that organisations and village societies will appoint their own Editors to input their information, keep it updated and participate fully in its ongoing development. The Parish Council will have overall control and act as the Webmaster Administrator. It is expected that the web site will be available for approval at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

1. **Playground**

A grant application to assist in funding the expected cost of the entire refurbishment of the playground has been submitted to WREN, who will advise by October/November whether the application was successful and, if they are minded to approve the application, are likely to inspect the site. If the grant application is successful the Parish Council would hope that work on new play area could start in early 2016. The Parish Council’s aim is to increase the relevance of the playground to older aged children in the village, by including a covered sitting area where children over 10 can meet with their friends. While the Parish Council does have a preferred supplier for the entire works, if funding is agreed the Parish Council will invite all interested residents to view the proposals and make suggestions to enable the Parish Council to “fine tune”, ideas which may include reviewing its options for play equipment.

The Chairman reminded Councillors that the refurbishment of the playground had been a long standing Parish Council project, that had been delayed over deliberations as to whether the access to the playground would need to be changed, and , if so, whether to do so would require planning permission. The Chairman reported that he had spoken to WREN who confirmed that, in view of the fact that the present access has been assessed as suitable for some disabilities, they were not interested in alterations to the access and, in any case, would not fund this type of work. As a result the grant has been submitted and receipt has been confirmed. The access to the playground could be dealt with as a separate issue at a later date, if thought to be necessary. Planning permission would be required but OCC and CDC had both confirmed that they would have no objections provided they did not have to fund the work.

The Council noted the receipt of the safety report on the current playground, and noted that there were no recommendations requiring immediate attention.

1. **Planning Applications**
   1. To consider all recent Applications received from Cherwell District Council or on the District Council website up to the date of the meeting including:
   2. To consider all recent Applications relating to the Parish:

15/00640/OUT amended proposals Green Barn Stoke Lyne Road – plan showing three detached houses.

The Council noted that, although Cherwell District Council had notified residents of a variation to the application for development at Green Barn by changing the layout of the development and reducing the proposed number of houses to three, the Clerk had not yet received a formal request from the Local Planning Authority for a response. The Parish Council considered the change and councillors confirmed that they were broadly in agreement with the development as it represented an improvement to the current site, and authorised the Clerk to respond the District Council “ The Council wishes to raise no objections to the application and has no further observations” should a formal response to the application be required.

* 1. To note Notices of Decision –

i)15/00212/F Installation of 11 external air conditioning units Willows Gate Stoke Lyne Road – approved

ii)15/00825/F installation of replacement roof to conservatory Stratton Audley Hall Bicester Road – approved

iii)15/00117/TCA – tree work 8 Cavendish Place – approved

iv)15/00847/TPO tree work Stratton Audley Manor Mill Road - approved

1. **Correspondence received***– to note correspondence received not otherwise on the agenda where decisions are not required.*

The Clerk reported an email from SSE indicating the availability of grant funding towards the cost of proposals to increase a community’s “resilience” in the event of a power outage or a long period of inclement weather. Councillors agreed to consider putting together a proposal for submission – possibly including the purchase of a Village defibrillator. If a bid was successful this would mean that the village would have the benefit of a defibrillator available locally at no cost to the Council tax payers.

The Council noted a request from Thames Water for publicity to assist the company to trace private pumping stations , and suggested that their request was passed onto Shelswell News.

1. **Reports from meetings** *– to receive any reports; for information*.

The Chairman reported his attendance at the meeting in Banbury regarding the current risk to rural bus services. He had leafleted all residents with the information he had gleaned from the meeting and asked them to respond to the online consultation.

1. **Items for information or next Agenda only** –

It was noted that the Parish Council at present has a Facebook page. It was suggested that the question as to whether this should be retained would be discussed at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

It was noted that the report from the Community led Plan group is expected to be available for discussion by the Parish Council within the next 6 months, and that the group has now formed a Social Fund Raising Committee.

1. **Date of next meeting** –the next meeting will be 2nd September at 7pm in the Hunt Room of the Red Lion.

Please note the new numbering system for items in the minutes. They now run on sequentially from one month to the next across each statutory year and then begin again from no.1 at the start of the new financial year.

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