



STARCROSS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held in Starcross Pavilion on Tuesday 16 May 2023 at 7.00pm

Present:

Cllrs Hopper (Chairman), Allen, Cadbury, Chase, Eyre, Lovell, McNally, Pegg, Rastall, Williamson and Zawadzka

Also present:

Suzanna Hughes (Clerk), District Cllr Taylor and two members of the public.

APM160523.01

APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

APM160523.02

REPORTS

The Chairman circulated the following Committee reports:

Finance & Governance Committee

Jim Hopper (Chair). Liz Chase. Justyna Zawadzka, Vicky Williamson.

A much more complicated year with inflation and energy costs rising but even though we invested in a large project at the Bonhay Play Park our work with available grants and careful budget expenditure enabled us to more or less break even again. This enables us to plan more projects the largest of which is to add a Pergola style extension onto the terrace of the Pavilion building.

The Pavilion continues to play an important role in the village. We changed our emphasis somewhat with a little less focus in hire and a more community slant and our two successful Tuesday and Thursday Café mornings are an illustration of this. It does mean our income is reduced and has to be replaced via the Precept but it has increased local usage. The new equipment at the Bonhay Play Park is very popular. Plans are now in progress to re-wild an area at the top end with the help of Starcross Action for Trees and we hope this will progress during the Autumn. More details for both Pavilion and Play Park are on the relevant Committee reports.

Our 2023/24 Precept Budget included a small rise so that our estimate is that for a Band D property the total Parish Council cost is £ 1.42 per week. This can vary slightly according to Teignbridge's adjustments. Starcross has a very solid Council with 11 local members working to improve the village where they all live. In addition to their committee responsibilities Councillors work on particular projects. Currently a report on the cycle path through the village and the condition of street paths, a project to monitor traffic speeds with new signage, and our routine pressure on TDC and DCC over the condition of the highway and the unsightly old garage.

Finally we updated our Website at last. It still needs work to populate it after which it will contain much useful information. Right now it has an updated news page which is also available by email. Send us your details to receive this.

Thank you to all of our Councillors who work hard to improve life in Starcross.

JH 15/05/2023

Planning Committee

Daryl Pegg (Chair), Andrew Cadbury, Diane Lovell, Justyna Zawadzka.

The impact of Covid and recovery has greatly affected planning applications and decisions by Teignbridge. Process time was exceeding more than six months, which has had a knock on effect for those applications discussed by Starcross Parish Council planning committee.

Between July 2022 and February 2023, 69.85% of applications were granted permission to proceed. In most of these cases work has begun (some are complete) Probably the most controversial was the construction of the 2 metre fence around Starcross Primary School which went ahead with very little disruption to the everyday routine and in no way has it impacted on the overall complexion of the School. This system is to be implemented throughout schools in Devon, the premise being to ensure a safer environment for the children.

0.15% of applications withdrawn. The reason behind this was unclear but we could speculate that the project was overly ambitious or too expensive.

30% of applications were refused permission to proceed. Grade II listing, environmental impact etc. were instrumental in the refusals. Currently, one enforcement order has been appealed and is awaiting a decision from Teignbridge. One has gone ahead regardless of the rejected application. Teignbridge are aware and monitoring.

Starcross Parish Council have been building a relationship with the planning team and enforcement team at T.D.C, who are willing to impart advice and know-how on request.

Thanks must be extended to the members of the planning committee, Andrew, Diane and Justyna, for their input when discussing the applications.

DP 13/05/2023

Sports Pavilion and Sports Field Committee

Sally Rastall (Chair) Jim Hopper, Stuart McNally, Vicky Williamson

The Sports and Pavilion Committee is responsible for the running of the Pavilion, its facilities, bookings to support local groups and clubs and the grounds surrounding the Pavilion and the Sports Field. The Starcross Parish Council also supports the Community Food Larder which is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays 9.0am until 11.0am in the Pavilion and run by Westbank Volunteers.

Since February this year the Parish Council have taken on the management of the Pavilion Cafe, which is open every Thursday from 11.0am until 1.0pm. This is proving to be a friendly Community Hub where residents and visitors can meet up for light refreshments and a chat.

The Post Office which is also based each Thursday in the Peacock Cookson Room in the Pavilion is open from 11.30 am until 1.30pm. The SPC are also pleased to support the 'Breakfast Club' run by Westbank every Tuesday morning in the Pavilion.

The Sports Field has now certainly been put on the map with football matches or practices for all ages from under 7yrs to adults every weekend and families and friends supporting the players every time. Over 140 girls and boys now play football in Starcross.

It has always been the SPC's intention to offer as many facilities as possible at the Pavilion and are now planning to renovate the West facing patio area and also erect a Pergola which will be fitted to the West side over the double doors . This will not only provide a covered viewing platform but also offer the opportunity for music events in the summer to be held under cover.

The Pavilion which provides baby changing and disabled facilities continues to be available for hire to private parties, corporate meetings and FREE USE for, groups and clubs in the Meeting Room.

SR 12/05/2023

Parks and Gardens Committee

Liz Chase (Chair), Vicky Williamson, Pauline Allen, Stuart McNally

It's been an exciting year for us as we managed to achieve some real improvements in Bonhay Big Park as a first stage in our plan to make it a much more interesting place to be.

The Parish Council agreed to fund new play equipment so, following a consultation process with the community, we chose to purchase a Trim Trail and a Nest swing for less able-bodied children - from Rhino Play. This has transformed the look of the park and the new equipment has been extremely popular. We were delighted to receive a donation for use of the village, from the Welcome Holiday Park via Westbank, which enabled us to purchase a picnic table. With these new additions we were able to use the revamped park for a Village party celebrating the Queen's Jubilee. Many thanks to the organisers and the volunteers who put in such effort to litter pick, tidy, set up and run stalls...it was a well-attended event and much fun had by all.

And that isn't the end of our plans...we are looking into the creation of a wild area, starting with the overgrown bank adjoining the Boatyard which is almost the last natural corridor for wildlife in the village, and hopefully encourage a bit of learning and recreation in a more natural environment. To start this off there will be a community event here at the Pavilion on 30th May (everyone welcome) to share and gather ideas on how we could achieve this.

One of the first additions we hope, will be a native hedgerow marking out the wild area, which Starcross Action for Trees are kindly helping to organise

This Committee is also responsible for maintaining the walkway along the Strand, the Millennium Garden at the end of New Road and the green area by the War Memorial and we feel our contractors (Plant Tech and Tom Greenslade) have done a great job in maintaining the green spaces so nicely. We'd also like to throw out a mention of the people (young and older!) we've noticed picking litter in the park and surrounding areas....a big thank-you, you are helping make our village nicer for everyone and your efforts are much appreciated. For our part we have organised the planting of new shrubs and summer bulbs along the Strand, the Parish Council has recently bid for funding to improve the planting in the "circle bed" between the park and Bowls Club, continues to support the efforts of Starcross in Bloom and hopes everyone will see the improvements for years to come.

EC 15/05/2023

APM160523.03

RESIDENTS' QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

The editor of the Starcross Newsletter asked why the Annual Parish Meeting hadn't been advertised in the Starcross Newsletter. The Chairman advised that due to a change in the meeting date, the deadline for the Newsletter had already passed and it was therefore not possible to use the Newsletter as a means of advertising the meeting. The date had, however, been published on the parish website, Facebook page and notice board. She expressed concerns generally that the Council does not use the Newsletter to promote what it is doing. She was advised that the Council does use the Newsletter when appropriate and when the deadlines allowed but as a general rule it uses its own website, Facebook and the notice boards to circulate news, minutes and agendas and details of any other activities in which it is involved. Residents can also sign up to an electronic newsletter on the home page of the Council's website <https://starcrosspc.org.uk/>. The Council will continue to use the Newsletter as a platform to circulate information to residents, when appropriate.

A resident asked about the land in front of the Old Vicarage and whether planning permission is required to keep the items that are being stored in this location. The Chairman requested that District Cllr Taylor follows this up with TDC.

SIGNED:
Chairman of the Parish Council

DATE: 13 June 2023