

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Staploe Parish Council held on Tuesday 16th May
2017 at 7.45pm in the Village Hall at Duloe**

Present:

R. Squire (Chairman)	J. Thomson
J. Ibbetts (Vice Chairman) until 9.35pm	L. Crawford (Clerk)
G. Meola	Four members of the public
D. Smith	

Apologies for absence: V. Zwetsloot and Borough Councillor Tom Wootton

349. Election of Chairman

Richard Squire was nominated for the post of Chairman by Cllr Smith and Cllr Meola. There were no other nominations. There were 4 votes (unanimous) in favour of his election and therefore Cllr Squire was duly elected.

350. Election of Vice Chairman

Jo Ibbetts was nominated for the post of Vice Chairman by Cllr Squire and Cllr Thomson. There were no other nominations and she was duly elected.

351. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Meola declared an interest in the planning application for Maye Cottage as she is a neighbour. Cllr Ibbetts declared an interest in the planning application for the equestrian centre at Chapel Close, Honeydon as she lives nearby.

352. Public Open Forum

Residents from near Duloe Butts expressed concern about the amount of speeding traffic travelling between Duloe and Staploe and asked whether the 30mph speed limit could be extended between the villages. Cllr Squire explained that we had requested an extension in July 2014 but it was denied by Bedford Borough Council Highways Department on the grounds that there were not enough houses and insufficient evidence of a problem. However, Cllr Squire said that we could request data recorders on that stretch of road and in Duloe and Staploe to see if we could gather evidence of need.

A parishioner of Duloe reiterated his request for data recorders to monitor traffic and explained that people had been doing donuts in their cars in College Farm recently.

A resident of Staploe requested data recorders for Staploe due to concerns about the number of speeding vehicles passing through Staploe at all times of day or night when there is an event in Upper Staploe. Taxis are also speeding. He also expressed concern at the increased number of vehicles coming through Staploe when the events take place. The number of vehicles increases from 4-10 per hour to 25-30 per hour. He has regularly reported speeding vehicles to the police but has been advised to request intervention from the Highways department.

The Clerk agreed to send a letter asking for data recorders in Duloe, Staploe and Duloe Butts. She explained that letters have been sent to the three major taxi companies in the area. Cllr Squire explained that the Highways department have told us they have limited options within their budget. Speed bumps and average speed cameras cost around £50 000.

However, the Clerk has recently come across mobile Speed Indicator Devices which are being used by some other parishes to record speed data and show a smiley or sad face. They cost around £3000 each but can be moved around and they do gather data but not number plates. They can therefore be used to gather evidence of a problem and request road engineering solutions or enforcement options. Cllr Squire suggested that numbers of actual speeds should be avoided to avoid the potential for racers trying to trigger the fastest speed. The Clerk and Chairman agreed to investigate further.

A resident of Duloe pointed out that item 359 on the agenda included a statement from the noticeboard and website which did not match what was in the football pitch hire agreement. He suggested that the statement on the noticeboards and website ought to match the statement in the agreement. This point was debated at agenda item 359.

A member of the public who is married to a Councillor expressed an interest in the Council vacancy. The Clerk thanked the resident for his interest and offered to check whether married couples can serve on the Parish Council together.

353. Minutes of the meeting held on 21st March 2017

Having been previously circulated the minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Meola proposed and Cllr Ibbetts seconded.

354. Councillor vacancy

There is still a vacancy for a Parish Councillor. Two residents have expressed an interest. The Clerk explained that no one has requested an election so the vacancy will be filled by cooption. One of those interested wants to attend the July meeting before deciding. Now that two residents have expressed an interest the Parish Council will vote to decide who to coopt.

355. Appointments and responsibilities

- Staffing committee. Cllr Meola, Cllr Ibbetts and Cllr Squire were appointed.
- A1 Working Group. Cllrs Squire, Meola, Smith, Ibbetts and Tom Tagg were appointed. Working groups are able to include parishioners who are not Councillors but they are only able to act in an advisory capacity to the Parish Council and cannot make decisions to spend money. Committees can be delegated to make decisions and spend up to a certain limit but have to be run by Councillors and must publish agendas and make decisions in public meetings as per Standing Orders. As the Council would like to encourage parishioners to join the group it was agreed that a Working Group was most suitable.
- Village Hall rebuild committee. It was agreed to disband this committee for the time being until funds / grants are available.
- Finance committee. Cllr Squire, Zwetsloot and Smith were appointed
- Village Hall committee. Cllrs Meola and Thomson were appointed.
- Rights of Way representative. Cllr Meola was appointed but will ask whether Mina Meola would like to be involved.
- Speedwatch. Cllrs Squire, Zwetsloot, (and Thomson in an untrained support capacity) along with R. Browning of Duloe and N. Cutts of Staploe were appointed.
- BATPC representative: Cllr J. Ibbetts will continue in this post

356. Ward Report

- Councillor Wootton's report.

Children's Services Inspection

At the beginning of April, Ofsted published its report on the Council's Children's Services function following an inspection undertaken in Jan– Feb. Overall, the Council requires 'improvement to be good', although adoption performance and the experience of care leavers was judged to be 'good'. The Council has produced an action plan in response to the report and is seeking to employ more social workers in the coming years.

Special Constables

Bedfordshire Police is undertaking a recruitment drive to bolster its cohort of Special Constables. Special Constables are volunteers who have the same powers as Police Constables, including powers of arrest and the ability to stop vehicles. They must volunteer for a minimum of 16 hours a month. There are currently 250 Special Constables in Bedfordshire.

East West Rail

A planned consultation on the implementation of the East West Rail scheme has been deferred in the midst of the General Election on the 8th June. A consultation was originally to be held between the 5th May – 16th June on the planned rail link but this will now be held at a later date.

The western section of the East West Rail scheme will connect Oxford, Milton Keynes and Bedford. In addition to this, a central section is planned which will extend the line to Cambridge.

Mobile Library Consultation

As a reminder, the Council is currently holding a public consultation on the future of its Mobile Library and Library Link services. Staploe is set to benefit from the new timetable with a Mobile Library stop at the Three Horseshoes every other Friday between 11.45am and 12.00pm vs the current 4 weekly timetable. The consultation will end on the 9th June. You can respond to consultingbedford@bedford.gov.uk or by writing to the Council at: Consulting Bedford, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AP

Local Plan 2035

A consultation is being held from the 24th April - 9th June on the Council's Local Plan 2035 which sets out proposed sites for housing and employment growth. For more information see www.bedford.gov.uk/localplan2035

- Ward Fund. £1000 is available again this year. Councillors agreed to come up with ideas.
- Ward Forum – Staploe hosting 7th June 7.15 for 7.30pm start. This has now been postponed until November. This is because Justine Ives of Bedford Borough Council

will not have any new information about Broadband until November and the police were unlikely to be able to come either.

357. Planning & development

- Maye Cottage, Woodhouse Lane, Duloe. The Parish Council did not object.
- New cattle barn, White House Farm, Begwary. The Parish Council did not object but asked about waste management and was reassured that it would be a straw based system with the manure spread on local fields. The other query was about the total number of cattle on the site and the Clerk was informed that it would be a maximum of 400.
- Commercial equestrian centre at Chapel Close, Honeydon. The Parish Council did not object but pointed out that parking and traffic would need to be carefully managed and consideration given to locals if any on site competitions were planned.
- No decision has been made by Bedford Borough Council on any of the above yet.
- Traveller site
 - Court hearing 3rd April.
In December 2016 Mrs Rooney applied to live on the St. Joseph's site again. However, on Monday 3rd April Bedford County Court issued an indefinite injunction in relation to the St Joseph's site. It forbids the Rooney family and persons unknown from taking up residential occupation of the site and also forbids them from causing or allowing any caravans, mobile homes or other forms of residential accommodation to be stationed on the land. In addition, the court ordered that there should be liberty to apply to vary the injunction and should planning permission be granted for residential use the injunction would cease to apply. The Judge also ordered the defendant to pay the Council's full costs in relation to this matter with the exact sum subject to further assessment.
- Bedford Borough Local Plan. It was agreed that the Clerk should write on behalf of the Parish Council to express their support for the draft plans to allocate new housing development to urban, edge of urban, and Stewartby and develop one or two supersites rather than allocating development to smaller villages. Councillors agreed that it would be easier to provide the necessary schools and infrastructure in these locations. Their preference would be for the Thurleigh and Clapham supersites because they are brownfield sites and these sites are closer to Bedford than Wyboston so would stimulate the Bedfordshire economy more than Wyboston which would be more likely to use St. Neots. However, they do have concerns about secondary school provision as this does not seem to be mentioned.
- Policy for commenting on planning applications. A new policy was adopted which means that any applications likely to have a wider impact or deemed to be controversial will be discussed at a Parish Council meeting and consultation deadlines extended with the Borough if necessary. Applications deemed less likely to be controversial will only be discussed at a Parish Council meeting if a parishioner or Councillor requests it to be. Otherwise the Clerk will respond with "No objection". The Parish Council will not make comments without discussion at a public meeting. It also explains how different types of applications will be publicised. The policy was adopted and will be published on the Planning Applications page of the website.

358. A1, Highways and Rights of Way

- A1 Working Group – schedule the first meeting. The Clerk will arrange a Doodle Poll to select the best date.
- Respond to the A1 East of England Stage 3 Report.
The Clerk agreed to write to Madeline Russell, Alistair Burt, Tom Wootton, Mayor Dave Hodson, Glenn Barcham (Borough Highways), and Highways England in support of Package B (removing the roundabouts and creating local bypasses) and against Package A (a new offline route) due to cost and lack of need once the roundabouts are removed.

359. Use of Playing Field

- At present the Football Club maintain the playing field all year round and use it for football matches and training from the beginning of September to the end of May and for training in August. Notices on the fixture list on our website and the Village Hall noticeboard state that:
- “Any groups wishing to play football matches with 10 or more people in any capacity other than as part of Staploe and Duloe Football Club must seek the permission of the Clerk: Lucy Crawford 01480 471 526 / lucy_crawford@hotmail.com”
- Should this notice be amended or removed to allow more freedom to members of the public to use the field and does the restriction contradict the trust document for the playing field?

Cllr Smith explained that he was concerned that the primary legal document governing the use of the playing field is the Playing Field Conveyancing and Trust Deed not the Football Pitch Hire Agreement. He pointed out that the deed says that the playing field was entrusted to permit it to be used for the inhabitants of the villages of Staploe and Duloe in the Parish of Eaton Socon in the said county of Bedfordshire and the surrounding district for the purposes of a village playing field and he was concerned that the above statement on the fixture list was restrictive to members of the public. He did not believe that hiring the village hall should mean that members of the public are no longer permitted to use the field when other members of the public were permitted to use the field.

Some Councillors were concerned that if this statement or a similar restriction was not in place then other sports club could use the pitches without any obligation to maintain them. Also, hirers of the hall may believe that the hall insurance covers use of the playing field when it does not. All formal or pre-arranged events on the playing field require the Parish Council to obtain a copy of the organisers insurance and a risk assessment. This is particularly important where users are being charged to use the hall and may believe that this includes the playing field.

Cllr Meola pointed out that there was a discrepancy between the statement in the Football Club agreement which had been approved by the Parish Council and the statement quoted above listed on the Village Hall noticeboard on the football fixture list and the Football Club page of the website. She suggested that the word “formal” was key and that this was sufficient and that no numbers needed to be given.

Cllr Squire proposed a motion that the following item should replace the clause currently in the Football Club Pitch Hire Agreement for 2017/18 section 2 (e), and be

added to the Fixture List on the Village Hall noticeboard and on the Football Club page of the website in place of the current statement and that a similar statement be added to the Village Hall hire agreement. Cllr Meola seconded the motion.

“When the playing field is not in use members of the public are permitted to use it for recreational purposes. However, any formal sports match or pre-arranged event must obtain authorisation from the Parish Clerk.” Cllrs voted unanimously in favour of the motion which was duly passed.

360. Maintenance

- Cutting grass on Duloe Common. Cllr Smith and another parishioner are managing this at present and will ask Cllr Squire for help if it becomes a problem in future.
- Staploe bench. The wooden slats have rotted and Adrian Woolley has kindly agreed to replace them with resin slats at his own cost. Cllrs asked the Clerk to thank him for his generosity and to ask how much it would cost to replace the slats on the bench in Duloe – to be discussed at a future meeting.
- Noticeboard in Duloe. Cllrs Meola and Thomson will obtain quotes to repair the board in the coming weeks.

361. Police, crime and antisocial behaviour

Nothing to report.

362. Finance.

- Receipts and payments. See page 8
- Bank reconciliation. See page 9
- Internal audit report for 2016/17. Kim Webb of 20, Staploe conducted the internal audit of the 2016/17 accounts on 21st April and did not report any concerns. Her report has been circulated to Councillors and will be uploaded to the website with the accounts.
- Approve accounts for 2016/17. Having been previously circulated the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements were unanimously approved by the Council and signed by the Chairman and Clerk.
- Review financial regulations. Section 5.7 was changed to read:
 - A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members in May to authorise payment and then by two members at the meeting following when the payment is made thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.
 - Sections 6.11 and 6.12 were changed to read:
 - Council records are held on the Clerk’s personal computer, backed up to an external hard drive weekly and to Microsoft Onedrive daily. Councillors all have access to the Clerk’s Onedrive files. There are three online bank signatories who all use their personal computers to authorise bank payments using a PIN Sentry device.
 - No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN, password or Onedrive link or permit use of any security key relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee. PIN Sentry devices shall be held securely.
 - The revised regulations were proposed by Cllr Smith and seconded by Cllr Squire.
- A list of regular payments was drawn up for the coming year and signed off by two Councillors for the year and by two Councillors for each of the payments authorised

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in May. It was agreed to change the format to include “actual payment” in case there was any difference from the budgeted figure.

- Councillors agreed to set up a standing order for £216.65 to A. R. Worboys for grass cutting for the remainder of the season. Beginning on 1st June 2017 with the first payment, and monthly payments thereafter with the final payment being on 1st November 2017.
- VAT reclaim. The Clerk has reclaimed £650.17 for VAT paid in 2016/17.

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Summary of Transactions for Staploe Parish Council for Approval at Meeting in:					May 2017
Payments					
Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Cheque Number / Reference	Amount
03/04/2017	Opus Energy	Power to street lights 30th Dec 16 to 2nd Apr 2017 (correction)	Direct debit		£137.02
24/04/2017	Opus Energy	Power to street lights 3rd Apr to 23rd Apr 17	Direct debit		£28.33
16/05/2017	A R Worboys	Grass cutting payments 1 & 2 of 8	BACS payment		£433.30
16/05/2017	SLCC membership	Staploe 50% share of L. Crawford membership for 31st May 17 to 31st May 18	BACS payment		£54.00
16/05/2017	BATPC membership	Subs for year 2017/18	BACS payment		£91.00
16/05/2017	Screwfix	Under sink water heater for Village Hall	BACS payment		£89.99
16/05/2017	Zurich Municipal	Annual insurance premium 1st Jun 17 to 31st May 18	BACS payment		£410.46
16/05/2017	Duloe Village Hall	Hall hire (May), contribution for elec (CCTV/DVD), maintenance	BACS payment		£235.00
16/05/2017	L. Crawford	Expenses	Cheque		£1.83
16/05/2017	Toner Giant	Black Lexmark toner	BACS payment		£80.53
01/06/2017	A R Worboys	Grass cutting payment 3 of 8	Standing order		£216.65
24/06/2017	L. Crawford	1st Quarter pay L. Crawford	Cheque	100878	£740.37
24/06/2017	Bedfordshire Pension Fund	1st Quarter pension L. Crawford	Cheque	100879	£198.29
01/07/2017	A R Worboys	Grass cutting payment 4 of 8	Standing order		£216.65
Total					£2,933.42
Receipts					
Date	Payee	Details	Type of transaction	Reference	Amount
03/04/2017	Barclays	Interest on base rate reward account	Credit		£1.81
13/04/2017	Bedford Borough Council	Precept and support grant	Credit		£5,019.50
02/05/2017	Barclays	Interest on base rate reward account	Credit		£1.60
02/05/2017	Viking	Refund for trolley returned in March 2017	Credit	100003	£122.36
Total					£5,145.27
Transfers					
None					
NB. A payment of £53 to Duloe Village Hall and £90 to Andy Muskett were authorised at the March PC meeting and recorded in the March minutes but were only paid in April so these two payments are recorded in the 2017/18 accounts.					
Posted balances after the above transactions clear					
CommunityAccount 30833940				£7,210.66	
Base Rate Savings 43461580				£8,033.41	

Bank Reconciliation 16th May 2017

STAPLOE PARISH COUNCIL BANK RECONCILIATION 1st APRIL 2016 TO 16th MAY 2017						
Date of bank statement		16/05/2017	Line of cash book:		16	
Prepared by Mrs. Lucy Crawford, Parish Clerk						
DATE				BARCLAYS		
				Community Account 30833940		
				Receipts	Payments	Balance
1-Apr-17	Balance bf		£5,145.22			
16-May-17	Posted balance per accounts		£9,978.73	£5,141.86	£308.35	<u>£9,978.73</u>
Unpresented cheques / uncleared payments:						
	None					
	Total				£0.00	
16-May-17	Balance as per bank statement		£9,978.73			
16-May-17	Posted balance - cleared balance		£-			
16-May-17	Balance cf		£9,978.73			
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363. Insurance and Assets

- Asset register. See p10. This was approved as an accurate record of the assets.
- Renew insurance. The Parish Council entered into a fixed three year agreement with Zurich in 2016. The insurance was renewed at a cost of £410.46 for 1st June 2017 to 31st May 2018.
- Street light inventory. This was reviewed with no amendments.

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Staploe Parish Council Asset Register 2017				
Code	Item	Date purchased	Cost Value for audit	Replacement value for insurance
	Village equipment			
SPC1	1 Bus Shelter Honeydon	Unknown	£1.00	N/A
SPC2	21 Street lights	Estimated at 1990	£7,589.10	£1,713.96
SPC3	3 Seats	1990's	£1,707.65	£2,032.00
SPC4	4 Dog bins	2 bought 1/03/2012 (Staploe and Vill Hall)	£89.61	N/A
SPC5		1 bought 21st May 2013 (posts Woodhouse Lane)	£83.66	N/A
SPC6		1 bought 31/1/2014 (fire proof, A1 bridge, Duloe)	£203.00	£293.00
SPC7	3 English Oak Notice Boards	1999	£3,974.95	£3,699.00
SPC8	1 Aluminium notice board (Vill Hall)	21/01/2014	£407.57	£426.51
SPC9	1 Telephone Box	2011	£1.00	N/A
SPC10	1 Vehicle Activated Sign	2002 approx	£5,975.75	£8,556.15
SPC11	1 Elisia 18" Mower	May-04	£480.24	£980.43
SPC12	1 Stihl Bushwacker	May-04	£319.82	£461.57
SPC13	1 Stihl Hedgetrimmer + accessories	Nov-15	£336.90	£405.87
SPC14	CCTV camera	Jan-15	£1,364.86	£1,713.96
SPC15	6 planters	Nov 2015 and March 2016	£766.62	N/A
SPC16	2 dog waste signs	15th March 2016	£49.75	N/A
SPC17	1 lions head water pump near Bridgeside in Staploe	19th Century	£1.00	N/A
SPC18	Hard drive for CCTV data	May-16	£48.78	N/A
SPC19	Projector	Feb-17	£239.98	N/A
SPC20	Screen	Feb-17	£47.99	N/A
SPC21	Lexmark CX410de Printer / scanner	Feb-17	£199.98	N/A
	Playground Equipment:	2006		
	Item			
PF1	Single arch swing with cradle seat		£1,014.00	£1,567.77
PF2	Cradle swing safety surfacing		£420.00	£649.37
PF3	Single arch swing with flat seat		£1,003.00	£1,550.77
PF4	Flat swing safety surfacing		£546.00	£844.19
PF5	Multi play system		£3,646.00	£5,637.18
PF6	Multi play safety surfacing		£875.00	£1,352.86
PF7	Cransley metal seat		£415.00	£641.64
PF8	Cransley litter bin		£299.00	£462.29
PF9	Installation of cradle swing		£380.00	£587.53
PF10	Installation of cradle swing safety surface		£612.00	£946.23
PF11	Installation of flat swing		£380.00	£587.53
PF12	Installation of flat swing safety surface		£714.00	£1,103.94
PF13	Installation of multi play system		£600.00	£927.68
PF14	Installation of multi play safety surfacing		£1,275.00	£1,971.31
PF15	Installation of seat		£158.00	£244.29
PF16	Installation of litter bin		£121.00	£187.08
PF17	security fencing during installation		£300.00	£463.84
PF18	Secure storage during installation		£300.00	£463.84
PF19	Carriage		£410.39	£634.52
	Subtotal		£13,468.39	£20,823.85
	Total		£37,357.60	£41,106.30
Where VAT was reclaimed the values exclude VAT. Values for the play area include installation costs as advised by BDO to L. Crawford May 2013				
Changed from previous year				
Installation of cradle swing was excluded from previous registers in error. Included for end of year audit submitted May 2017				

364. Newsletter, website and Hamlets Exchange

- New editor needed. Margaret Smith has now moved and the Hamlets Voice is seeking a new editor to assist Frank Squire and Emma Thompson. Cllr Meola agreed to talk to a resident of Woodhouse Lane, Duloe.

365. Community Event

- Village Walk to Bushmead Priory on 23rd July.
- There will be a village walk on Sunday 23rd July from Duloe Village Hall leaving at 2.30pm to Bushmead Priory (3.4 miles) for a tour and a high tea at 4pm kindly provided by Kay Wade-Gery. She will need to know numbers by 16th July. There will be no charge but Kay would ask that visitors make a donation to Macmillan Cancer Support and we will make a collection on the day. Those who are not able to walk the full distance can drive to Bushmead Priory. There is a slightly longer alternative option for the walk back if people prefer (4 miles). Cllr Thomson agreed to produce and circulate a flyer two weeks before the event.

366. Correspondence

All correspondence was covered under previous agenda items

367. Clerk's appraisal, contract, salary and pension

- Clerk's appraisal. This was conducted by Cllr Squire and Cllr Meola before the meeting. She has almost completed the ILCA course and found it helpful. She has been given the targets of completing the course by October, issuing draft agendas two weeks before each meeting and conducting Councillor training on standing orders.
- Clerk's salary & contract. Cllr Squire proposed that the Clerk's salary move up to SP24 (£11.41) from the current SP23 (£11.05) in June. Cllr Thomson seconded.
- Obtain a quote for withdrawal from Local Government Pension Scheme? (£500 to obtain the quote alone). Cllrs agreed that this was too expensive and that the clerk should appeal to the trustees of Bedfordshire's Local Government Pension and if necessary, to the ombudsman for a more reasonable cost in view of the fact that only around £2000 has been paid into the fund.
- Transparency code application to fund 3 hours of Clerk's time per month for 2017/18. The government are providing funding for Parish Councils to comply with the Transparency Code again this year. The Clerk has applied for £476.64 (3 hours per month including pension). Cllr Thomson proposed the application and Cllr Squire seconded.

Next meeting of the Parish Council Tuesday 18th July at 7.45pm.