**STAUNTON COLEFORD PARISH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD ON 21st JANUARY 2021 AT 19:30**

*[N.B. These minutes remain in draft form until approved at a subsequent meeting of the Council]*

**PRESENT**

Cllrs Sadler (Chairman), Dyson, Elsmore, Mobbs-Morgan, Richards & Smart.

Locum Clerk Mr Crighton

**2765 APOLOGIES**

District Cllr Wheeler

**2766 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** None

2767 DISPENSATION REQUESTS None

2768 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 12 JANUARY 2021

 It was resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting; arrangements would be made for them to be signed by the Chairman.

2769 MATTERS ARISING

 2769.1 re minute 2753.1: it was agreed that the Clerk would confirm with Chapel Tree Services that they had removed all the timber they wanted and if so their account (ref 39) would be paid.

2770 STAUNTON MEEND

 A detailed discussion was held to consider the future management of The Meend.

 2770.1 RENEWAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION

 It was reported that the current permission expires on 16 September 2021, that the renewal process

was a lengthy one requiring consultation with a number of bodies (Natural England, Open Spaces Society

and others, and residents). In view of the severe limitations on public activity due to COVID it was agreed

to seek an extension to the current permission for up to 5 years.

 2770.2 SEASONAL MANAGEMENT FOR 2021

 2770.2.1 RETURN OF PONIES FOR SUMMER GRAZING

 It was reported that before the ponies returned work was required on repairing the fencing,

which needed to be boar-proof. Cllr Richards to provide estimate of cost. Cllr Sadler to contact the Moorland Mousie Trust to see if they wished the ponies to be returned for 4 months (end May to end September). It was pointed out that the animals did not return for summer grazing last year because of COVID and that the situation in that regard had not changed – in fact was worse if anything. The annual costs of having the animals was estimated at £1050 plus any unforeseen expense such as feed supplement and vet bills).

2770.2.2 BRACKEN CONTROL

 It was agreed that Cllr Mobbs-Morgan, Elsmore and Richards would survey the area to

see if it was suitable to divide the land into various areas with each to be treated in a different way

i.e. bashing, flailing, cutting, rolling and the use of volunteers in areas not suitable for machinery

(subject to COVID restrictions being lifted).

 It was commented that the objective of creating acid heathland did not seems to be being

achieved because of bracken and tree cover (Birch) but it was pointed out that the grass was there

but needed a chance to grow.

 The possibility of re-wilding was considered for some of the area and it was believed

funding for such a project was available so long as there was some public benefit. (Cllr Dyson to

research).

2770.2.3 BIRCH CONTROL

 It was reported that the use of machinery at the start of the project caused the seed bed to

regenerate

2770.2.4 DRY STONE WALLING

 It was appreciated that the stone walling group could not return until COVID restrictions

were lifted.

 2770.3 LONG TERM MANAGEMENT PLAN

 It was agreed that parishioners must be consulted on any long term plans but that this was difficult

at the present time. It was agreed that a questionnaire would be drawn up seeking parishioners’ views and

placed on Facebook with paper copies to be available at suitable points in the village for collection. In the

short term it was agreed to proceed with:

* Seeking an extension of the current planning permission
* Undertaking bracken control
* Exploring the feasibility of using different bracken control measures in different areas.
* Repairing fencing
* Not allowing ponies back during the COVID restrictions

2770.4 FUNDING

 Possible sources of funding include DEFRA (further extension of existing grant schemes), Heritage Lottery Fund, Wye Valley AONB (Cllr Sadler to enquire), local businesses. However, before any funding application could be submitted a long term plan and budget would need to be agreed.

2770.5 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT / ENHANCEMENTS

 It was agreed that it might be prudent to consider such developments as disabled access and virtual fencing.

2770.6 CURRENT ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

 This was in hand as detailed above (ie fence repairs and bracken control)

2770.7 CLARIFICATION OF COMMONERS’ RIGHTS

 The Clerk was asked to research these and produce a definitive list. It was understood one commoner had a right to cut timber and the Clerk was asked to clarify with the insurance company any liability which might fall to the Parish Council by the exercise of this right with the use of, for example, a chain saw.

2770.8 FORMALISE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

 It was agreed that following the public consultation and the completion of a long term plan it was essential that a project manager be identified to lead a committee. This is a major undertaking which the Parish Council does not have the expertise or man power to take on alone; there has to be a parish / village involvement.

2770.9 ASH DIE-BACK TREE OFFER

 It was reported that GCC were offering saplings to replace Ash trees which had to be felled because of die-back. The time scale for acceptance of the offer was too short to establish a need; thus no action would be taken.

2770.10 BT CABLES

 Thanks were offered to Cllr Elsmore for reporting the fact to BT that branches were leaning on the cable across the Meend.

**2771 ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

Feb – allotment land

 Feb – work on Rookery Lane

 Feb – defibrillator

 Feb – footway alongside A4136 between The Elms and the White Horse.

 Jun – arrange tree inspection

**2772 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date\*** | **Time** | **Meeting** | **Venue** |
| 1 Feb | 1930 | Monthly Council meeting | Virtual |
| 1 Mar | 1930 | Monthly Council meeting | Virtual |
| 12 Apr | 1930 | Monthly Council meeting (provisional) | Virtual |
| 10 May | 1900 | Annual Parish meeting | Virtual |
| 10 May | 1930 | Annual Council meeting | Virtual |
| 7 Jun | 1930 | Monthly Council meeting | Virtual |
| 5 Jul | 1930 | Monthly Council meeting | Virtual |
| 2 Aug | 1930 | Monthly Council meeting | Virtual |
| 4 Oct | 1930 | Monthly Council meeting | Virtual |
| 1 Nov | 1930 | Monthly Council meeting | Virtual |

\* Last date for submission of:

* agenda items – 8 days before meeting (Friday two weeks earlier)
* written reports – 5 days before meeting (Wednesday of previous week)
* written dispensation requests – 3 days before meeting (Friday of previous week)

**Rota for undertaking in-house checks prior to these meetings**

Cllrs Elsmore & Dyson before the March meeting

Cllrs Smart & Sadler before the June meeting

Cllrs Mobbs-Morgan & Richards before the October meeting

Cllrs Dyson & Smart before the March 2022 meeting

The meeting closed at 2120.