

MINUTES OF MEETING OF STERT PARISH COUNCIL

Held at St James Church on 4th March 2024

Present:	Chris Lawrence (CL)	Chairman
	Lucy Barker (LB)	Councillor/treasurer
	Lewis Cowen (LC)	Councillor
	Ann Harris (AH)	Councillor
	William Howkins (WH)	Councillor/Clerk

1. Apologies

Alec Edwards sent his apologies.

2. Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting of the PC were agreed, proposed by AH and seconded by LC.

4. Treasurer's report

LB reported that our balance with Lloyds Bank stands at £4,113.75, the only expenditure since the last meeting being one payment of £20 to Stert PCC for the use of the church.

LB recommended that this payment should be raised to £25 an hour and this was agreed unanimously.

5. Grist recycling

Nothing to report.

6. Summer Party

As a couple of residents in the village are hosting a party on their property during the summer in aid of the church, it was thought that it was unnecessary for the PC to organise one as well, as long as it was open to the whole parish. It was suggested that the PC makes a contribution towards it with the wine left over from the Christmas party and a cash contribution of £200. This was approved.

7. Defibrillator

The clerk had received an email from Wiltshire Council about a scheme to fund defibrillators but it would still cost Stert PC a contribution of £750 plus the cost of maintenance and replacement of pads and batteries. The pads need replacing after each use and every two years even if unused. LB said that a defibrillator would not be ideal in Stert as there is no central place to put it where a large number of people congregate and the chances of someone being around when someone has a heart attack are remote. It was suggested that an email should be sent around the parish to canvass parishioners' feelings on the matter and to ask if they would be prepared to contribute financially.

8. Phone box

It was reported that Sue and David Bromhead of Field Head have taken on responsibility for the running and maintenance of the phone box. It needs to be repainted and the PC would need to pay for that work. There is £50 a year set aside in the accounts for maintenance.

9. PL2024/01498 – Manor Farm

This planning application refers to the replacement of a lawful development certificate of non farming activities at the farm, and also outdoor storage, which have been continuing for some years. CL said the application involved no impact on the village and no increase in traffic. Therefore, as there are no environmental or traffic implications, CL proposed that the PC supports the application, which was passed with three votes for and one abstention.

10. PL2024/00195, 00934, 01962 – Vale Cottage

These applications involve new fencing and electric gates, new doors and flue on the annex and some tree works. CL said he couldn't see any of them as contentious but it was pointed out that the proposed new gates could make turning difficult. Nevertheless, a motion of support was passed by three votes for with one abstention.

11. PL2024/01245 – Orchard Cottage

Major concerns were raised about the impact of this proposal on Spout Lane and the residents of Spout Cottage as well as the disturbance caused to other villagers during construction. CL said this was a special part of the village and it is a conservation area for a very good reason. It is a wholesale redevelopment which would fundamentally change the nature of the conservation area. It was agreed by three votes with one abstention that the PC object to this plan. CL will draft a letter to Wiltshire Council explaining our decision.

12. Any other business

- (i) LB said an email had been received from the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) about this year's Best Kept Village Competition. Stert were runners up some years ago but the judging criteria are much more demanding now and it was felt that the effort of organising it was not justified by the possible outcome.
- (ii) An application had been received by Wiltshire Council about the felling of a cedar tree at Field Head. Councillors felt that the loss of one tree was justified for safety reasons and that the householders had planted other trees.
- (iii) LB suggested that it would be convenient if email addresses of parishioners could be transferred from the clerk to the chairman to make it easier for him to send out information to all residents.
- (iv) A letter to Wiltshire Council from Wilsford parish council about the condition of the A342 had been copied to Stert PC. It was felt that the problems highlighted in the letter could apply to many roads throughout the county. No response necessary.

13. Date of next meeting

It was agreed the next PC meeting would take place on Monday 17 June, which would also be the annual parish meeting.