

STONESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

CLERKS REPORT 2019/November

Clerks report to support the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13TH November 2019 in Stonesfield Village Hall.

1. Parish Matters

None

2. SAFER Working Group – Report from Cllr M Heduan

1. Traffic Technology (TT) Trial

Over a period of 4 months 11 surveys were planned using the TT 'Speed watch' radar device. Of these 7 surveys were executed and 4 cancelled due to adverse weather or equipment failure, 2 events were also used for SAFER whole team training.

Following a review of the TT radar device the SAFER team concluded the product was not fit for purpose and failed to deliver the functionality promoted by the company.

The problems included:

- Double/ triple counting the same vehicle
- Failing to start despite battery fully charged
- Loss of WiFi connection with the provided tablet during surveys
- Seizing during surveys requiring reboot and loss of data
- Data export process convoluted requiring a 3rd party app to work with a Mac.

The unit was returned to TT on 18th October and a full refund was transferred to SPC a week later. Note the TT unit was originally recommended by TVP as the unit to use for Community Speedwatch.

2. Morelock SID Investment

Following 2 visits to observe the Charlbury Speed watch team who use the SID, SAFER organised a demonstration of the Morelock Speed Indicating Device on 16th October in Stonesfield. After the demonstration the SAFER team decided to recommend to SPC that additional budget be secured to purchase the SID as the replacement for the TT device.

The benefits of the SID are:

- 100% feedback to motorists by displaying their speed on a large clear display.
- Customisable messages and built in icon library to reinforce feedback to drivers on their speed.
- Significantly greater detection range when compared to the TT device.
- Longer lasting battery allowing the device to be mounted for a week or more without being manned but giving drivers feedback and generating data.
- Can operate in 'stealth' mode with a blank screen, giving the impression it's not operational but still collecting data.
- Robust and weather proof device that is fully weatherproof, mounted on a strong ridged portable tripod or permanently fixed pole.
- The Morelock SID is also recommended and endorsed by TVP.

Note: SFAER is currently identifying locations in the village where poles could be erected so that the SID could be located for manned or unmanned surveys. Paul Bates has already mapped out potential sites and is liaising with WODC on this initiative as their support and buy-in is deemed essential.

A full breakdown of the costs and additional budget has been produced for the Clerk along with the items to be purchased from Morelock and 3rd parties.

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3. Blenheim Palace Transport Hub

Mick Heduan met with Roy Cox, Estate Director of Blenheim Estates on 17th October to discuss the local impacts of the newly implemented Transport Hub.

Please see the detailed email produced by Mick Heduan dated 21st Oct summarising the meeting and key points discussed.

4. Stonesfield War Memorial

SAFER will be attending the Royal British Legion memorial service on Monday 11th at 11am to observe how the event is run and identify the potential risks arising from moving traffic. Images will be taken to illustrate potential risks and pinch points. Anecdotal evidence suggests traffic using the 3-way junction during the event conflicts with safety of those attending. The observations and images will be used to recommend, or otherwise, an action plan for making future events safer for those attending. This may mean local traffic diversions during future events.

3. **SCT**

No update in advance of the meeting.

4. **Village Hall**

The village hall has been reminded to keep the building maintained. The clerk has asked for the village hall to confirm their maintenance plan. Nothing has been received.

5. **Sustainable Stonesfield / CALA Appeal**

The CALA appeal is now complete with no further action.

6. **Planning**

Applications received from WODC for this parish:

APPLICATION NO: 19/02824/FUL

PROPOSAL: Construction of detached outbuilding comprising WC, home office and Summerhouse with the occasional use as hairdressing salon.

Town and Country Planning Act

LOCATION: Whinstay Peaks Lane Stonesfield

APPLICANT: Mrs Cheryl Hitchcox

REGISTERED: 18th October 2019

Circulated via email to councillors as deadline for response ahead of meeting – submitted no objection or comments response from SPC to WODC.

7. **Allotments**

Allotment holders have been invoiced and payments are coming in.

8. **Financial Matters:**

Bank reconciliation has been circulated along with budget information to assist with precept planning.

External Audit

The external auditors are continuing to query with relation to the last financial year. Assets, grants (including size of grants) has been queried. The clerk has sent supporting information,

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minute evidence and several emails to continue to try and resolve all of the queries. The report will be circulated once received.

It is of utmost importance that all payments and decisions are approved, justified and recorded within meetings so that substantial evidence can be provided when questioned by external auditors.

The following payments require cheque signatories and approval in the November full council meeting:

C No 102179	WODC – grass cut	£545.82	Inv 333293369
C No 102180	LGPS pension	£2018.52	incl back date to Oct
C No 102181	Clerk expenses (incl postage)	£54.36	Oct expenses
C No 102182	Clerk PAYE current	£confidential	PAYE
C No 102183	HMRC / PAYE / NI	£confidential	PAYE
C No 102184	LGPS pension (November)	£tbc	November 19
C No 102185	Tudor Stone	£270.00	011019 GLEBE
C No 102186	Village Hall	£18.40	2553
C No 102187	Clive Parsons PAYE	£confidential	Nov
C No 102188	Clive Parsons expenses	£2.00	bin bags
C No 102189	Scribe additional user	£34.80	Phil read only
C No 102190	Royal British Legion	£50.00	wreath
C No 102191	Roberts Garden Machinery	£631.48	brushcutter – common
C No 102192	Morelock – SAFER	£3500.40	Inv 0000081413
C No 102193	Playing Fields Association	£2,000.00	Grant (Nov 19)

The £confidential relates to PAYE. Councillors see these figures for approval during the meeting. There may be further cheques to add.

SAFER require approval for broken mirror:

The main damage is a large piece missing in to LH corner (and a crack across RH side) so still serviceable in short term.

The mirror 'glass' (it's actually plastic) is not replaceable / repairable. A new identical mirror is £115.97

<https://www.barriersdirect.co.uk/traffic-management-c1220/traffic-mirrors-c1044/rectangular-hi-vis-traffic-mirror-weather-proof-p7471>

Product code: CMT8350P

SAFER require approval for bag with 10mm padding for the equipment £60.00 plus postage £5.82, plus VAT.

SAFER will require additional budget for replacement camera – approx. £1,160.00.

Brushcutter for the common – budget of £574.00 requested for a new Danarm TLE 48 brushcutter.

Precept

Following the meeting of councillors subcommittee to discuss the precept ahead of this meeting it is proposed to increase the precept by 15% taking the current precept to £32,177. This equates (based on band D) to a £6.52 increase (per year) per household.

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The increase is felt justified on the basis that looking at annual expenditure it costs the parish council £32,246 in running costs (this includes a moderate grant fund of £3,000 – a reduction on previous years). The increase proposed still does not bring cover to full expenditure but we anticipate a grant of £2,000 towards the common and it's possible to have some VAT rebate during the year to cover the shortfall. Any surplus income can be given as grants to increase that fund area.

Running costs for the council have increased, we have to take in to account the salary for the clerk but also PAYE and pensions which have not previously been required. Although planning fund is not required to the same level we still need to keep a budget for legal expenses (£1,000) in. Insurances have increased as have subscription costs (accounts package and annual email / cloud server costs).

Increasing the precept to this level still keeps Stonesfield in line with neighbouring equivalent parishes at the lower end.

Councillors are asked to make a decision / approval on this precept so that figures can be submitted to WODC when due.

Pension

The clerk has now completed enrolment of SPS to the LGPS pension scheme. The clerk has attended training and all paperwork and back payment to end October 19 has been submitted to LGPS to bring us up to date. (£2,018,.52 on cheque number 102180).

Grants

Councillors are asked to consider and approve or decline the grant request from Playing Fields Association which has been circulated.

SAFER have requested additional spending to be approved / declined in this meeting.

The common requires a grant for the brush cutter to be approved / declined in this meeting.

No other grant requests have been submitted this month.

9. WODC Arts / Stonesfield common

The clerk has met with WODC, the current SPC plans don't seem to meet. We need to focus more on art and it has to be sustainable. The clerk will ask the sustainable art group to meet and discuss. Information plaques do not really meet 'art' in criteria. Other examples on such a small grant budget have had one individual sculpture, a sculpted bench, a mosaic created by the local school where an artist works with the children. It is an important part of the criteria that the art is created by a 'professional' – an artist or sculptor who does the work as a job. People can work with them (i.e. school children, local groups) but it must be led by art and that is the focus.

This is ongoing. Councillors are asked to advise the clerk on thoughts so this can be moved forward.

10. Land at North Farm Stonesfield

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The legal paperwork for this is currently with the solicitors. No update at this stage but our signed agreement has not yet been submitted as the SPC solicitor is checking a few things before she is satisfied that we can proceed.

11. Councillor Training

Courses below – please confirm to the clerk if you wish to be booked on.

OALC have a Parish Meetings course on 30th January at Woodgreen Offices, WODC, Witney – its £25 plus VAT per attendee. Its starts at 10am and is usually a full day.

Charitable Trusts and Parish Councils may be good for those involved with SUSTO / Common etc. This is on 12th Feb and is in Didcot at Didcot Civic Hall. £90 per attendee.

Roles and responsibilities for Councillors – aimed at new but I think is good for all. I have been on this 18th March – Didcot Civic Hall - £90 plus VAT.

There will be more courses including a specific Chairman's course which I would strongly recommend both the Chair and Vice Chair attend as it contains the latest important information. The date 15th July is the likely date. A little way off but worth adding to the diary.

SPC is a member of OALC and these courses are at a significantly reduced rate due to this.

12. Clerk Training

The clerk CiLCA training is ongoing. This is being funded elsewhere but will benefit this council. 12th November is a full training day for this and the final day will be in December but the course will take a few further months to complete.

13. Date of Next Meeting – 8th January 2020 – 7.30pm – Stonesfield Village Hall

Karen East, Clerk to the Parish Council
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