***STAPLEFORD ABBOTTS PARISH COUNCIL***

c/o Ellie Thomas, Interim Parish Clerk

7 Ashworth Place, Church Langley, Harlow, Essex CM17 9PU

Tel: 07599 249962, Email: [StaplefordAbbottsParishCouncil@gmail.com](mailto:StaplefordAbbottsParishCouncil@gmail.com)

[www.staplefordabbotts.blogspot.com](http://www.staplefordabbotts.blogspot.com)

**Draft Minutes of the Council Meeting**

**7pm Tuesday December 1 2020 ONLINE**

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| **Present:** |  | | |
| **Councillors:** | Jayne Jackson (Chair) JJ | Marion Francis (Deputy Chair) MF | |
|  | Colleen Atkinson CA  Barrie Challingsworth BC | Catherine Burnett CB  Kim Lidlow (KL) | |
| **Officers:** | Ellie Thomas, Interim Parish Clerk | | |
| **In attendance**: | 5 Residents | |  |

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| 670/20 | **Apologies for Absence** |
|  | None |
| 671/20 | **Declarations of Interest** |
|  | None |
| 672/20 | **Minutes of last Meeting** |
|  | Passed & signed as a true record with one small amend. |
| 673/20 | **Matters for Report** |
|  | **Website**: Links to quotes are with all Councillors, we will meet to vote soon as possible. If the meeting is next week MF offers apologies in advance.  **Action Groups:** CB contacted EFDC via the link provided but it did not take you to the correct person, so emailed contact@EFDC, someone emailed back saying the correct person would be in touch. Still chasing this. CB has been able to ascertain there is no registered group for Stapleford Abbotts. CB will register the walking group once able to connect with the correct people.  **Power Cuts:** people in SA are monitoring these, and reporting them to relevant body. Claims can be made after 3 cuts. Also concern about risks to health and welfare plus employment. Even short cuts cause inconvenience – resetting things and so on.  Still deliberating what we can do as a PC – KL has spoken to the electricity board, who will make a note of her call and that this will all be mentioned at the next PC meeting. KL’s contact had happened to be a parish councillor in Ireland so she was sympathetic. We are also encouraged to report it: the electricity board contact expressed consternation that we have so many power cuts. The village has 2 different systems, and users of each should report their own issues. Culprits are mainly overhead trees but more recently groundworks which damaged an underground cable. JJ reported power cut to electricity board on Friday when it happened – and made the point that elderly people in the village may suffer. You can get free torches and chillers for health reasons – electricity board encourage you to ask for this and we will publicise it in the Linkup.  CA suggested to write formally to the electricity board as a council and present them with the figures KL has amassed – Clerk to prepare a draft letter.  **Clerk’s Report**   * Planning courses with EALC - circulated and 4 people want to attend. Clerk to arrange. * Christmas activities from EFDC, activity packs going out in lieu of jollifications - circulated * Census 2021 – temporary staff wanted for April 2021 mass survey. * Christmas Support fund details - circulated * Libraries news circulated * Wellbeing drive instituted by EFDC’s young people - circulated * Foodbank update - circulated * Climate Action update - circulated * NEPP surgery Dec 9 * VAEF winter buddy scheme update - circulated * VAEF gardener’s van was recently robbed – circulated details and suggestions of help. * 87 bus to be withdrawn – details circulated * Local Restrictions Support Grant for lockdown info circulated * Awaiting response on Rangers - Nov 10 Clerk sent details of works that are needed. We were told that our request will be assessed for suitability with inappropriate or duplicate work requests being rejected. If the work is deemed suitable and can be safely undertaken it will be actioned. Completed and rejected works will appear on the Essex Highways Local Highway Panel website on a monthly basis. To follow up. * Winter Warmth VAEF initiatives are under way, EFDC’s Stay Well this Winter drive also – information circulated. * Sustainability Guidance soon to be on the way from EFDC * Stop Stansted update circulated * Notice boards have been delivered – fitting to be arranged. |
| 674/20 | **Finance** |
|  | Transactions for November 2020 – All agreed and actioned   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | EALC | HEALTH & WELLBEING CONFERENCE | 36 | | E THOMAS | CLERK NOVEMBER SALARY | 495 |   Budget – maintenance for village has been increased, and the sheet updated and to be circulated to all. Responses welcome from Councillors.  VAT – Ready to go ASAP. Clerk to arrange.  Field rents - no increase this year, letters to tenants go out tomorrow. |
| 675/20 | **Planning** (Development Control & Enforcement Team) |
|  | **Application No:** EPF/2470/20 Return Dec 7 2020 RETURN: object, concerns to report  **Location:** 5 Tysea Hill Stapleford Abbotts RM4 1JS  **Proposal:** Extension to dwelling to form a new dwelling with alteration to access for existing house  We are concerned that the 2m extension is encroaching on the neighbours. As it is, it has not been approved and is 2m further out than the other houses. It is not in keeping with the surrounding environment. Will it affect the side window on the existing extension, and therefore light to the existing house? Is the head height clearance in the loft sufficient for safety? Are the side windows and balcony encroaching on neighbours privacy? Some neighbours have remarked that their houses are being overlooked. We would add that the existing building at the bottom of the garden at 5 Tysea Hill is 11m x 2 1/2m, so we would question overdevelopment of the site.  **Application No:** EPF/2495/20 Return Dec 7 2020 RETURN: object, concerns to report  **Location:** Esperanza Nursery Stapleford Road Stapleford Abbotts RM4 1EJ  **Proposal:** 8 No. semi-detached houses (Amended application to EPF/1029/20).  We are concerned firstly about this application causing overdevelopment and overpopulation on the site. Will this development become an estate beyond the curtilage?  Connecting to the main sewer is a concern also: is this going to be a problem, especially with the backflow currently being experienced throughout the village? Villagers are also experiencing more flooding as developments are removing natural run offs. Houses on south side of Oak Hill Road, midway between the Top Oak and the Oak Hill Green , experienced flooding in their gardens from Friday and over the weekend. Any further overdevelopment including Esperanza is placing houses at risk of flooding. Is the information they are working with up to date? The new plans for 8 houses are not available on the website for us to make comparison with. As far as we can see, the Highways report is 10 years old. The Ecology report is 5 years old. There are 6 car parking spaces earmarked here - we are concerned that this will create traffic problems. We are also not sure about the Biodiversity & Geological Conservation section as this states everything is alright -  at this end of the village it becomes an area of interest, so this issue would need to be held up to scrutiny.  **Application No:** EPF/2576/20 Return Dec 14 2020RETURN: no objection  **Location:** Holly Trees Murthering Lane Stapleford Abbotts RM4 1JT  **Proposal:** Proposed single storey rear extension.  **Cotleigh:** work has commenced but concern that there is no apparent planning permission, Clerk to alert planning & enforcement officers. |
| 676/20 | **Parish Council Projects** |
|  | Drone footage – get an update from Craig if he has more. |
| 677/20 | **Correspondence** |
|  | Letter from Navestock PC about Skip A Hoy moving/ letter from Maggie at ECC about sign cleaning. |
| 678/20 | **Meetings of Outside Bodies and Training Courses** |
|  | CB: Attended Health & Wellbeing Conference – it was excellent, with over 50 delegates and some excellent speakers on topics including health, lifestyle and climate. CB has emailed Danielle Frost and is awaiting a reply about a health and wellbeing plan for the village. We could be eligible for micro-grants for helpful additions like talking benches. A very interesting participant was Michael Goggerty, who spoke about obesity & social isolation causing a higher health risk than smoking 5 a day. We can build his research into plans and applications for grants. Also interesting were links to Covid, and emotional health. CB to contact Danielle and work on a plan. Thank you CB for her participating. Suggested that we identify source for an outdoor gym, which would fit in with a Parish Room area. CB to work on plan and proposal and seek funding. |
| 679/20 | **Highways** |
|  | Issue with ditch near the school – JJ to send details to Clerk to report  CB to report hole in road near the stream that caused a flat tyre: reported by another resident too. |
| 680/20 | **Matters for future Agendas** |
|  | Website  Action group for pathways  Health & Wellbeing |
| 681/20 | **Open Forum** |
|  | 2 Residents expressed concerns about Field End/ Ralwyn.  Resident 1 has spoken to EFDC about his concerns. He saw 20+ trucks of spoil going in this summer raising the land. Can we get EFDC to look behind the houses? He expressed concern about large playground, grazing field now a lawn, sheds and a huge wood frame doubling the house in size. Neighbours are being overlooked by the shed, is anyone going to live in it?  Resident 2 is worried about the water table changing, they cannot use three of their stables because of this. Acknowledged the laurel and bamboo might help a bit but not deal with the problem.  During summer there was also an issue with a quad bike that frightened animals. Neighbours are falling out due to issues created by the development – eg swimming pools flooding. Locals had heard of classic car storage on the site but have not seen anything to this effect yet.  Lockdown \*& EFDC intervention did make things cool down – but since September there has been an increase in trucks going there, some with rubble to be infilled into the land and covered with topsoil. There is also a proper road between the two houses and a small heap you can’t see past.  There is apparently a covenant on this land, which the Land Registry has not released – also a CPH number as people whom lived there before had cattle.  CA: This is connected to a planning application that was refused. Uncertain as to what our role as Parish Council is, and how we can carry out communications with all the people involved in the application.  Resident 1: the other parties don’t want to discuss.  CA: we have tried to communicate before – I would rather not talk now but bring all the people concerned into a discussion. Perhaps in Village Hall with social distancing.  MF: We may be unable to contact them due to their communication with us – we could ask for a legal rep at a mediated meeting.  CA: we need to hear all sides: we don’t know if we alone could resolve this. Personally, I don’t wish to discuss this without all parties present.  We should meet with the other side and concentrate on issues.  MF: we can have no communication until our dispute is resolved. Residents can meet the owners, and open forum comments are minuted. We do not need to make any comment.  Resident: can I have legal representation at a meeting?  CA: yes this is OK. (CA then left the meeting at 20.17).  Resident: the owners have not wanted to discuss before.  BC: One person who should be there is the EFDC case handler, as we have limited power.  JJ: we should feed comments across and get this officer to check, or get a meeting with everyone. In my experience the people from the other side are quite nice, and forthcoming.  CB: we need to be clear and not have confusion on what is said and done.  BC: the site is huge for 2 houses.  CB: can we agree a first step forward? This kind of thing has happened before and we firstly affirmed no engagement with them till the issue was resolved, and that we should be equitable and fair. We have not communicated with them, but really we are not in a position to be mediators.  BC; they were refused planning permission, so they can’t move forward.  JJ: I don’t know yet what they will do now it has been refused: we need to talk to EFDC. I will ask them and feed back. I’ll take this up next week. Many thanks for coming – we are not now quorate so must close, and please keep in contact. |
| 682/20 | **Time & Date of next meeting**  Meeting ended 8.28pm  Next meeting will take place on January 5 2021, 7pm by Zoom |

**Signed by Chair:..........…………………………………………………………..Date:…………….**

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