

Notes on Stanton St Gabriel & Whitchurch South Parish Meeting - 4th May 2021 7.30pm

Attending:

Cllr Andrew Carey, Cllr Chris Noon, Cllr Julia Eager, Cllr Clare Mahaddie, Jim and Penny Rose, Sandra Reeve, Helen Halkes

Cllr Carey, as the zoom host, introduced the Parish Councillors. Cllr Carey was voted as Chair and Cllr Eager as Secretary.

The notes of the 2019 Parish Meeting were agreed.

Transport:

Cllr Noon explained the A35 severance investigation and the rural transport response from CVPC. He described how the Highways Authority are going to move the 40 mph limit further back towards Charmouth. The license for 30mph speed limit on Chideock Hill is coming to an end but there is no news on what will happen when it expires. The new pedestrian crossing at the west end of Morcombelake has made a huge difference - thanks were given to Chris Everidge who instigated and drove that process through. Chris Loader has an A35 forum but there has been no meeting during the past year or so due to Covid. CVPC have been working with West Dorset Western Area Transport Action Group (WATAG) to get a winter bus service as well as an evening bus service. Jim Rose advocated the use of electric buses to improve the quality of the fleet and the service. Using the smaller school buses to access the villages was discussed as they are not used during the day. Cllr Noon highlighted the lack of investment from Dorset Council in public transport.

Events since last meeting:

- Cllr Mahaddie explained the delay in installing the new postbox after closure of the old Post Office. There had been a risk that Royal Mail did not provide a new box because the one at the JH hall was theoretically adequate to serve the village. A letter from CVPC to Royal Mail explaining the need for a central location was delayed as the letter went to the wrong Royal Mail department. A further delay was caused by Covid restrictions.
- Closure of Moores Bakery has meant the loss of a valuable village service, particularly the excellent bread. Helen Halkes asked about the future use of the Moores building. Cllr Mahaddie suggested that CVPC should be asked to write to the owner for information. This was agreed.
- Jim Rose recommended the Charmouth Bakery.
- It was commented that Felicity's did a great job during Covid to support those who were isolating and could not get out.

River Char Community Project:

The work done on this looks promising and the survey response was very helpful. Phase 1 is testing the water and the results will be known soon and published in a report in time for circulation in late August and distribution at the Whitchurch fete and flower show. Phase 2, next year, is designed to involve the local community, including Charmouth school pupils, in work to improve the water quality. Jim Rose was keen to know results of the tests on the quality of the water. He thinks that there is material getting into it from local farms. Cllr Carey said that tests would probably reveal that the key sources of pollution are old septic

tanks and their soakaways as well as some intensive farming practices. It was agreed that data from the study was essential before the next stage of the project.

National Trust's South West Outdoor Festival (SWOF) at Filcombe Farm

There is no news on whether the NT were intending to revive this project which had been cancelled in September 2020 because of the pandemic. Cllr Mahaddie would oppose it vigorously as the access route is not at all practical and proposed activities would damage the delicate Golden Cap environment. It was agreed that CVPC should be asked to write to the National Trust (NT) opposing any future revival of the festival plan.

Jim Rose reported the opening of the new coastal path up Stonebarrow from Charmouth, overseen by Dorset Council.

Broadband:

It was felt that the worst problems are in other parts of Char Valley such as Wootton Fitzpaine and Whitchurch North.

Condition of Stonebarrow Lane:

Jim and Penny felt the state of the lane had not deteriorated though there are still problems in very wet and icy weather. They feel that the building work on Bredon has been handled without causing further problems on the lane.

Affordable housing:

Cllr Mahaddie described how CVPC is starting to look at the possibility of developing further affordable housing for new local households in the parish. This would probably be by means of a Community Land Trust and would require significant work from a dedicated team of residents together with CVPC. To establish the scale of the need there might be a survey of local residents in the near future once a suitable list of questions was devised. There was discussion about how some local 'affordable' housing is not very affordable for local people.

AOB:

Stonebarrow Manor - Penny Rose is hoping that some of the new houses there will be affordable. Cllr Carey said that CVPC would be asked to comment to that effect in their planning response. It is possible that the plans will not be approved anyway as they could be judged contrary to the current Local Plan.

Parish Boundaries - There may soon be an opportunity to adjust the boundary between Stanton St Gabriel and Whitchurch South. The meeting favoured a simplification of the boundary to run along the A35.

Jim Rose commented that Stonebarrow Manor is actually in Whitchurch South.

Footpaths - Jim and Penny Rose had tried to follow a footpath up onto Hardown Hill from Gibbs Lane but it was inaccessible. Cllr Eager said that she had tried to access it 5 years ago and it was not accessible then. Cllr Mahaddie confirmed that all Rights of Way have to be registered by 2026 but had found that DC's definitive map was not up to date and there were long delays in registration because of inadequate resources at the Council. Cllr Carey will add a section about reporting problems with footpaths on the 'What do I do if.....' page of the CVPC website.

Cllr Carey thanked everyone for coming and hoped that more residents would be able to attend next year when we should be able to meet in person.