



# STAPELEY & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Carol Jones

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## Parish Councillors are summoned to a MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

**DAY/DATE: MONDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2021**

**TIME: 7.30 PM**

**VENUE: STAPELEY COMMUNITY HALL,  
PEAR TREE FIELD, CW5 7GW**

Enquiries to: Clerk: Carol Jones

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OR 07498 160 908

Issue date: 10 November 2021

Signed *C M Jones*

To: Councillors M Theobald (Chairman), M Docker, S Ford, J Gibbs, G Gwinn, P Groves,  
J Hillman, A Jacobs and K Nord  
Copy: Borough Councillor A Martin

### Notes for Members of the Public

Please note that this is a face-to-face meeting and the number of attendees is limited owing to Covid-19 guidance and the Parish Council's own restrictions introduced in accordance with its Covid Risk Assessment.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question or make a statement under the Public Question Time slot, are asked to submit them in writing to the Clerk ([carol.jones@stapeleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:carol.jones@stapeleyparishcouncil.gov.uk)) by noon on 15 November 2021. These will be read out at the meeting and written responses will be provided.

# A G E N D A

## 1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence should be notified to the Clerk as soon as reasonably practicable but prior to the meeting.

## 2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, the nature of that interest, and in respect of disclosable interests, to leave the meeting prior to the discussion of that item.

Whilst the Clerk can advise on the Code of Conduct and its interpretation, the decision to declare, or not, is the responsibility of the Parish Councillor, based on the circumstances.

## 3 MINUTES – 25 OCTOBER 2021

### 3.1 Approval of the Minutes

To approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2021.

### 3.2 Clarification under Minute No. 79 – Code of Conduct

Members asked for clarification of the definition of a co-optee as set out in Minute No. 79.

Although S.27(4) refers to the definition of a co-optee, it is use of the term 'co-optee' which caused confusion.

It does not relate to the appointment of new councillors, in an electoral context; for example, where a casual vacancy occurs. The term 'co-option' in the context of the Code of Conduct relates to individuals who are not elected or co-opted in the electoral sense (i.e. they are not officially Members of the Council) but they can be appointed to a Committee or Joint committee for a specific purpose and/or term. The logic of including this group in the Code of Conduct process is to ensure that even as non-Members, they are held to the same standards as their elected counterparts.

## 4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (Period not exceeding 20 minutes)

In accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders, members of the public are able to ask a question of the Parish Council or make a statement.

In view of Covid restrictions which limits the number of persons permitted in the Community Hall, these should be submitted in writing to the Clerk by noon on 15 November 2021. These will be read out at the meeting, and the questioner will be provided with a response after the meeting.

### GUIDE TIME: 7.50 PM

## 5 REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLORS

To receive a report from Borough Councillors Peter Groves and Andrew Martin in respect of Cheshire East Council matters of interest.

## 6 COMMUNITY HALL

### 6.1 Capacity

The Parish Council is asked to review the maximum number of persons allowed in the hall at any one time. This is currently set at 40, but Members have agreed to review this at each meeting, taking into account the prevailing Covid-19 situation.

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## 6.2 Water Plus

Arising out of discussion under the budget item at the previous meeting, the Clerk has now contacted Water Plus to ask for a site review and has provided them with the enclosed documents. ✂

- Application form for site area concessionary scheme. (October 2021)
- Site banding application submitted to Water Plus in August 2019.
- Copy invoice from 2018.

There is an issue with access to the Parish Council's account. Although the Clerk has registered in the name of the Parish Council, with the account number, Water Plus has set it up in the name of another Parish Council, using that Parish Council's account number and providing access to the Clerk.

The Clerk is in contact with Water Plus to try to resolve this and to ensure that all the bills paid by Stapeley & District Parish Council relate to the Community Hall and not to the other Parish Council.

## 6.3 Schedule of Regular Activities

To receive for information an up-to-date schedule of the regular activities at the Community Hall. ✂

## 6.4 Review of Energy Usage

**Decision Required: To consider if Utility Aid should be allowed to try to seek competitive quotes for energy supplies at the Community Hall.**

Utility Aid has made contact and states that it is now in partnership with The National Association of Local Councils to support 10,000 councils in the UK with all energy related matters, and suggests that the Council views the website for further information about the partnership. <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/about/our-partners#utility-aid>

The company specialises in energy for street lighting, public conveniences, council offices, sports pavilions, cemeteries, town halls and other council- run buildings as one of the sponsors for the Society of Local Council Clerks and manages the energy for hundreds of town and parish councils in the UK. It also offers the option of collective purchasing for town and parish councils to reduce costs by bulk buying and can even support the Council on its journey to 'net zero' with qualified assessors and access to a large variety of green energy suppliers.

## **GUIDE TIME: 8.10 PM**

## 7 PLANNING

There are no planning applications for consultation at the date of publishing the agenda.

## 8 AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS

The Parish Council is asked to authorise the following payments:

£432.00	Crystal Clean South Cheshire Ltd. (£360.00 net and £72.00 VAT)
£714.00	Starboard Systems (t/a Scribe) – setting up of Community Hall On-line bookings system (£348.00 annual subscription @ £29 per month; set-up fee £247.00 and £119.00 VAT)
£160.00	ASB Electrical – supply and fit two new LED bulkhead commercial External lights to car park area
£255.35	Water Plus – water and wastewater – 12 July 2021-31 October 2021

**9 DRAFT BUDGET – 2022-2023**

**Decision required: To consider the second draft Budget document; decision not required until the December 2021 meeting.**

To give consideration to the following documents:

- Clerk's report on budget proposals.
- Second draft of the detailed proposals. Cells highlighted yellow are where changes have been made to the schedule presented on 25 October 2021.

The Council will be asked to approve budget proposals at its meeting on 20 December 2021.

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**GUIDE TIME: 8.40 PM**

**10 CHESHIRE EAST COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE – DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Decision Required: To submit comments to CEC by 28 November 2021**

This item was listed on the agenda for the September and October meetings but was deferred on each occasion.

This is the final opportunity to make comments on the draft recommendations which must be submitted by midnight on 28 November 2021. The [Community Governance Review draft recommendations report](#) and maps showing proposed changes can be found via [this link](#).

To ensure accurate recording of observations, Members are asked to submit them to the Clerk prior to the meeting.

The review, which follows central government and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England guidance, is to ensure community governance arrangements continue to reflect local identities and facilitate convenient and effective local government.

The following is a summary of the proposals for the parishes of Stapeley and Batherton as identified in the document (pages 173-174).

The parishes of Batherton and Stapeley are grouped under a common parish council (i.e. Stapeley & District Parish Council). The two parishes lie to the south-east of the parish of Nantwich. Some 88 per cent (that is 1,508 out of 1,711) of Batherton and Stapeley's residential properties are within an area that is adjacent to existing residential areas in the parish of Nantwich and could therefore be perceived, on those grounds, to be part of the same community as Nantwich.

Map 27 (Nantwich) and Map 35 (Stapeley) in Appendix 5 show this area of housing development adjacent to Nantwich (orange shaded "potential expansion area" within the parish of Stapeley). At first sight, as Maps 27 and 35 indicate, there would seem to be a case for transferring much of this area into the parish of Nantwich.

Both Batherton and Stapeley are in the Nantwich South and Stapeley borough ward.

The current governance arrangements for the grouped parishes are as shown in the table below. This shows that the distribution of seats is inequitable, with the ratio of electors per councillor being 318.9 in Stapeley, but only 37 in Batherton.

Parish	No. of Councillors	Electors (2018)	Ratio of electors to Councillors
Batherton	1	37	37
Stapeley	9	2,870	318.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2,907</b>	<b>290.7</b>

However, the Borough Council does not consider that the south-eastern boundary of the parish of Nantwich should be altered to take in this expansion area.

Although most of Stapeley's existing housing is adjacent to the Nantwich Town Council urban area and appears on the map as housing overspill from Nantwich town, Stapeley identifies strongly as a distinct community from Nantwich. This was found in the pre-consultation responses, and Stapeley & District Parish Council has stated that it does not wish to be subsumed by Nantwich Town Council.

The table above shows that the electors of the parish of Batherton hold an unsustainable representation on the grouped Parish Council and its electorate will only rise to 44 by 2025. The Borough Council does not consider that a separate election for a parish area of 44 electors represents a viable use of public money. It is therefore proposed that the parishes of Batherton and Stapeley should be merged to create a new parish. The merged parish will have 2,965 electors (2025).

A name for the new parish should be considered, and the Borough Council welcomes proposals on this point. The Borough Council also requests comments on whether the new parish should have the style of 'parish' or one of the alternative styles that the Council may recommend where a new parish is being created, viz. 'community', 'neighbourhood' or 'village'. These styles were introduced following amendments to the Local Government Act 1972 in 2007 which permitted local councils in England to adopt a different style of parish council.

These styles would be adopted where the Parish Council feels that the style of 'parish council' does not fit the nature of the community that it represents. Councillors would then be described as, for example, Community Councillor. On balance, Cheshire East Council considers that, unless there are very clear preferences expressed in the locality during the present consultation process, it will not be applying alternative styles to any new parishes that are formed. That will not prevent any new parish council from adopting one of the three permitted styles at a later date.

The Borough Council does not consider that a warding arrangement is appropriate for the merged parish, as the electorate of Batherton is too low to support a warding arrangement.

It is proposed that the council of the merged parish should have twelve seats, a council size which would reflect the Cheshire East average for a parish of this size, giving a ratio of 247.1 electors per parish councillor.

It is expected that the new arrangements will be introduced in time for the elections in May 2023.

**11 PETER de STAPLEIGH WAY – FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR A CONTROLLED CROSSING**  
**Decision Required: To submit observations to Cheshire East Highways on the proposal**

Cheshire East Highways conducted a feasibility study for consideration of the introduction of a Controlled Crossing (Puffin) on Peter de Stapleigh Way near Footpath No. 1.

The David Wilson Homes development on the former Stapeley Water Gardens site has increased usage of Footpath No. 1 Stapeley, as a means to walk to shops, schools, Nantwich Town Centre, train station etc. Numerous public complaints about the safety of this crossing location were received by the Borough Council and Ward Members. As such, funding was allocated from the 2020/21 STEPS Programme for the installation of a crossing point on Peter de Stapleigh Way in order to reinstate the public right of way. This uncontrolled crossing was installed in July 2020.

Since the crossing was installed, several complaints have been received, including a petition which requested that the crossing be removed and replaced with a controlled crossing.

As part of the petition's request, CEH carried out a PV2 data assessment at the proposed location. The assessment recorded a high PV2 (1.46 x108), value which, if used as part of the current CEC Pedestrian Crossing Policy, would qualify for the installation of a controlled crossing in that location.

The Parish Council is being consulted on the proposal and is invited to forward comments to Cheshire East Highways.

Two reports are enclosed; (1) Report dated August 2021; and (2) Location plan for the proposed crossing.

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**GUIDE TIME: 9.00 PM**

**12 CONSERVATION AREA**

**Decision Required: To agree the next steps in securing the services of an appropriately qualified contractor.**

No progress has been made following Dr Martin Page's attendance at the September 2021 meeting.

At the meeting held on 25 October 2021, the Parish Council received a fee note from Dr Page to cover the cost of a survey for the conservation area, which would then allow the Parish Council to make a decision about the work required, before seeking quotations again for a new contractor for the site. No decision was made.

The area is currently overgrown, but the growing season has ceased. In the meantime, Jof's Mowing has been asked to cut back the hedge which is currently over-hanging the footway and impeding pedestrian access.

**13 INFORMATION ITEMS**

**13.1 Victorian Orchard Project**

The Working Group met on 10 November 2021, and Councillor J Gibbs and his colleagues will report progress in respect of the Victorian Orchard project.

**13.2 Casual Vacancy - Batherton**

A Notice has been displayed in the Notice-Board and on the website, inviting appropriately qualified persons to contact the Clerk if they are interested in becoming a councillor.

**13.3 Site Visit with Resident**

The Clerk to report in respect of a proposed site visit with Councillor Peter Groves and a resident who has asked for an overgrown tree to be cut back. The location of the tree is unclear, and it is likely that it is on land owned/managed by Cheshire East Council.

**13.4 Speed Limit – London Road**

Early in October 2021, a resident raised an issue about the process for setting speed limits and wanted the 40 mph speed limit on the A51 (London Road) reduced to 30 mph.

The Clerk informed the resident of the process and copied into the email Councillors Groves and Martin. The resident was also advised to write to direct to the two Borough Councillors.

The resident has raised the issue again and Borough Councillor Peter Groves has undertaken to raise the matter with Cheshire East Highways with a view to reducing the speed limit.

**13.5 Christmas Tree for Community Hall**

To report that the Clerk has placed an order for a Christmas tree for the Community Hall. Arrangements for delivery will be similar to those in 2020 and Councillor Hillman has agreed to meet the contractor on site when delivery is made.

**13.6 ChALC Survey Report – Impact of Covid Pandemic**

To receive a copy of a report following ChALC's survey across councils in the ChALC area to assess the impact of the pandemic on local council business. Please note that this covers the whole of Cheshire.

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14 **QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE – 2-5 JUNE 2022**

**Decision Required: To consider if the Parish Council should participate in the lighting of a beacon in June 2022.**

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To receive a letter from The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons, inviting local councils to take part in lighting a beacon on 2 June 2022.

15 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**20 DECEMBER 2021**

16 **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Council is invited to RESOLVE that in accordance with Paragraph 1 (2) of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items owing to the confidential nature of the business to transacted and the public interest would not be served in disclosing that information.

The following information has been withheld from the public agenda with only a brief synopsis provided for each item.

**GUIDE TIME: 9.15 PM**

17 **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

**Decision Required: To decide if efforts should be made to seek quotations from other contractors, given that the article in the Summer newsletter did not attract local interest.**

As part of the Parish Council's commitment to review all current contracts with the aim of seeking local providers, an advertisement was placed in the Summer newsletter for quotations from grounds maintenance contractors to undertake regular mowing, strimming, litter-picking, weed spraying, and generally tidying the garden area on Talbot Way and the Community Hall.

The Parish Council is asked to consider the next steps.

18 **UPDATE: WEBSITE – SPECIFICATION FOR ENHANCEMENT/RE-DESIGN OF THE WEBSITE**

(Reason for exclusion: identification of potential bidders for the contract)

**Decision required: To consider if a private meeting should be arranged to interview contractors.**

At the previous meeting, the Parish Council agreed that the deadline dates for receipt of quotations should be revised to allow more time for quotations to be received. Subsequent to that decision, the Clerk received six quotations which were emailed to Members on 2 November 2021. A further two quotations have been received and these are enclosed with this agenda.

Members are asked to consider the six quotations already received and emailed to Members on 2 November 2021, and to shortlist the companies with a view to interviewing all or some.