

STRETTON-ON-DUNSMORE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Elections

The untimely death of Cllr Rob Stephens and the retirement of Cllr John Simmonds created two vacancies on the Parish Council. Following several requests from residents to RBC to fill these vacancies by public election (rather than co-option) Stretton may well have a **Parish Council Election on 15th February 2018**. If you wish to stand for one of the Parish Council vacancies please contact the Parish Clerk who can provide you with the relevant 'nominations papers', which you must then complete, and have signed by two Stretton residents (on the electoral register) who are not related to you, or already Parish Councillors. The paperwork must be returned **by hand** (not post) to **The Returning Officer at RBC, Town Hall, Evreux Way, CV21 2RR (not to the Parish Clerk) by 4pm on Friday 19th January 2018**.

If RBC receives just two valid candidate nominations, then this is known as an 'uncontested election' and those two candidates are automatically elected onto the Parish Council. If there are more than two valid candidates, then there will be a formal poll on 15th February 2018 in the Village Hall, with official ballot papers prepared and monitored by RBC staff.

What does a Parish Councillor Do?

Parish Councillors have an opportunity to make a real difference to their community, at a small cost in time and effort. The Parish Council are the elected first layer of local government and, as such, are closest to the electors, the next level are Rugby Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council. The Parish Council is funded by a precept raised as part of the council tax each year, and must review a budget annually and to consider if it has sufficient funds to serve the village. The Parish Council take responsibility for a range of local matters and community needs, such as, allotments, playgrounds and the maintenance of facilities including common land, pavilions and bus shelters. Beyond this, it identifies, supports and manages local project initiatives and can fund grants to local organisations such as the Village Hall and Youth Groups. The Parish Council is consulted by RBC over planning matters.

A Parish Councillor is expected to attend the monthly public meeting, the agenda for which is prepared by the Parish Clerk, who supports the Parish Council and ensures it is acting within its remit. The Clerk is the only member of the Parish Council who is paid, and does not have the right to vote on any matters. A Parish Councillor is also expected to attend the Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual General Meeting, which takes place May every year.

The basic criteria for becoming a Parish Councillor is, that you are over 18 and have been a resident (on the electoral register) in Stretton for the twelve months immediately preceding the election date (15th February 2018), or your principle or only place of work has been within Stretton for the twelve months immediately preceding the election date, or that you own property or land within the village for the twelve months immediately preceding the election date. There are some disqualifications from standing, and these include paid officers (including the Parish Clerk), bankrupts and those subject to recent sentences of imprisonment. If you are unsure if you meet the criteria, then please contact RBC before completing the nomination papers.

Local Plan

As you may be aware Rugby Borough Council have sent their Local Plan to the Secretary of State, with a recommendation to build on two sites in Stretton; Little Orchard (Plott Lane) and the field behind Squires Rd. The Parish Council has opposed the proposed Local Plan on the grounds of infrastructure, traffic, flooding and the release of green belt. It has responded to each public consultation and attended the public meetings at RBC and will continue to do so. It has also corresponded with the Principle Planner at RBC and further raised its concerns to Cllr Howard Roberts. Currently, the plan is just a 'proposal' however if it should become something more definite, the Parish Council would be very keen to have more clarity on the general opinion of villagers. It will endeavour to share any official updates on the Local Plan with the village

either via social media (All Things Stretton), the website, at the monthly public Parish Council meetings or via the Pendulum. Thank you to those who have already contacted the Parish Council regarding this matter, and we look forward to receiving more communications.

Amenities

We are very fortunate to live in a village which has two wonderful pubs, a well-stocked shop with a post office, a beautiful village hall and a bus service. Many villages in the surrounding area no longer have a beating heart, due to the loss of their assets. The Parish Council encourages you to make use of these excellent local amenities whenever you are able.

Allotment Vacancy

There is currently one allotment plot vacant. If you would like further information about this or to rent this plot please contact Cllr Ian Simpson 07760 165198 cmillydog@aol.com.

Meetings

Please note the Parish Council meets publicly on the second Monday of every month (with the exception of August and December) in Knightlow School. The agenda is set 5 days in advance and displayed on the website, as well as the noticeboard. All members of the public are welcome to attend these meetings and raise new items to be considered at a future meeting or comment on items previously discussed. **The next public meeting will be on 8th January 2018.**

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