

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

50 Pepys Way, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3LL



MINUTES

Annual Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 22nd May 2019

The Village Hall ~ 8.00 pm

Attendees: Cllr B. Stone Cllr G. Barron
Cllr G. Blackman Cllr J. Wallace (following co-option)
Cllr R. Bridge (following co-option) Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk

Members of the public: 22

PUBLIC SESSION ~ NOT PART OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Part A. Public Discussions

Concerns were raised surrounding the potential closure of Stoke Primary Academy following a letter that had been circulated to parents a couple of weeks prior.

Queries were also raised in regards to the disappearance of the 'Ship' sign, access to the sea wall in Middle Stoke via a non-maintained unregistered 'right of way' and the cutting of the grass verges in close proximity to the Village Hall.

Part B. Public Discussions on any agenda items

None

Before the meeting commenced all three (3) members of the 'New Council' signed their 'Declarations of Acceptance of Office' before the Proper Officer.

The meeting commenced at 7.45 pm

1. To elect the Chair for the ensuing year

Min 1550:19 Cllr B. Stone called for nominations for the position of Chair.

Cllr G. Blackman spoke and nominated Cllr B. Stone, this proposal was seconded via Cllr G. Barron and with no objections or competition Cllr B. Stone duly signed the 'Declaration of acceptance of office'.

2. Apologies for absence

Min 1551:19 None.

3. To elect the Vice-Chair for the ensuing year

Min 1552:19 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

Cllr G. Barron spoke and nominated Cllr G. Blackman, this proposal with seconded via the Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, and no objections or competition Cllr G. Blackman accepted his new role as the Vice-Chair.

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4. **Disclosure of any other business**

Min 1553:19 None.

5. **Declarations of any Pecuniary or Personal Interests**

Min 1554:19 None.

6. **To elect the Committee Portfolio Holders for the ensuing year**

Min 1555:19 Owing to the recent uncontested Parish Council election it was unanimously agreed to postpone this item until the next meeting, when it was hoped there would be more members co-opted onto the Council.

7. **To appoint Members of the Committees and representatives to other bodies**

Min 1556:19 Owing to the recent uncontested Parish Council election it was unanimously agreed to postpone this item until the next meeting, when it was hoped there would be more members co-opted onto the Council.

8. **Minutes from previous Parish Council Meeting** 1532:19 to 1549:19

Min 1557:19 The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 3rd April 2019, already circulated via the Clerk, Mrs. J Allen, were submitted and it was proposed by Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman and seconded by the Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, that they be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. This motion was unanimously agreed.

9. **Information arising from the minutes not on the agenda**

Min 1558:19 None.

10. **Vacancies**

Min 1559:19 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, invited the two candidates present to talk about themselves and their associated connections with the village of Stoke to be considered for co-option, following receipt of their credentials prior to the meeting.

Mr R. Bridge stood up and spoke about himself explaining that prior to Parish elections he had been a member of the Parish Council however he did not reapply during the election process due to work commitments and fears of a contested result. He advised that being a retired solicitor via trade that he thought his expertise would be of great benefit to the Council and that he would still very much like to be given the opportunity to continue to serve the village in which he lives.

After consideration the Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, proposed to co-opt Mr R. Bridge onto the Council, this proposal was seconded via the Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, with Cllr G. Barron voting in favour. Mr R. Bridge was invited to sit at the table with the other members and duly signed the 'Declarations of Acceptance of Office' before the Proper Officer.

Ms J. Wallace stood up and spoke about herself explaining that she too was a Stoke Parishioner and had lived in the village for past 5 years. She confirmed that she was currently residing in the local public house and very much enjoyed being part of the centre of the community. She spoke to confirm how much she had appreciated the recent village events including the 'Big Lunch' 2018 and the seasonal carol singers, and volunteered her services to the Parish Council to aid with the continuation of community spirit.

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After consideration the Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, proposed to co-opt Ms J. Wallace onto the Council, this proposal was seconded via Cllr G. Barron with the Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, voting in favour. Ms J. Wallace was invited to sit at the table with the other members and duly signed the 'Declarations of Acceptance of Office' before the Proper Officer.

11. Planning Applications

Min 1560:19 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to confirm there had been no new planning applications received since the last meeting.

12. Correspondence

Min 1561:19 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to inform members that all three (3) of the parish boards had been fully updated with a full-page advertisement promoting the Annual Parish meeting along with copies of both agendas for that evening. She advised that the 'Village Voices' publication had included both the advert for the Annual Parish meeting and an article publicizing the recruitment of new Parish Councillors (owing to the recent parish elections), as previously agreed via the Chairman. She confirmed that the Stoke Parish Council website had also been updated and that she had been in receipt of some hand delivered information in regards to the Peninsular Police force and their responsibilities – details of which she handed to the Vice-chair, Cllr G. Blackman.

Alongside the paper correspondence mentioned above Mrs J Allen also spoke to advise of receipt of an email from Reverend Kan Yu surrounding the potential closure of Stoke Primary Academy and advised that she had been liaising with Colin Davis, of Colyn Property Services in relation to the swing and fixings at Heron / Mallard Way which appeared show signs of damage and also in regards to the damaged notice boards.

13. Finance

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
Mrs J. Allen	-	CHQ ~ 0521	£9.05	Purchase of Stationery from Wilkos
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£520.43	April 2019 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – April 2019
Colyn Property Services	Min 1449:18	BACS	£88.00	April 2019 payment
Colyn Property Services	Min 1541:19	BACS	£60.00	Removal of bird droppings
Colyn Property Services	Min 1523:19	BACS	£360.00	Repairs to toddler bridge at Heron Way
Colyn Property Services	Min 1449:18	BACS	£88.00	May 2019 payment
Medway Council	-	DD	£225.00	Car Park Rent
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	-	DD	£34.00	Broadband & Phone line rental for April 2019
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	-	DD	£34.00	Broadband & Phone line rental for May 2019
TOTAL			£1453.48	

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Medway Council	-	Credit - BACS	£25,862.00	Precept, Rural Liaison Grant & CTRS Grant
Natwest	-	Credit - BACS	£1.82	Interest on Reserve Account
TOTAL			£25,863.82	

Min 1562:19 It was proposed via the Vice-chair, Cllr G. Blackman, and seconded via Cllr R. Bridge that the table above, as previously circulated, be noted, the payments confirmed and any outstanding cheques authorised and issued. This motion was unanimously agreed.

14. Representative Reports on outside bodies

Min 1563:19 The Vice-chair, Cllr G. Blackman, spoke to advise the members that he had attended a local Peninsular PACT meeting. Despite telephoning in advance to invite a local sergeant / PCSO, he reported that he had subsequently been informed that this meeting no longer met their criteria (despite this group being in existence for almost 19 years!) and he understood the police were no longer obligated to attend. Cllr G. Blackman confirmed he would continue to be persistent in generating interest from the Police, however this task was proving more difficult than previous years as most of the PCSO /sergeant's telephone numbers were now being registered as withheld. He advised the members that he had also asked the senior police sergeant at the last KALC meeting for a contact telephone number but again had been unsuccessful in obtaining this information.

Cllr R. Bridge spoke to recommend Stoke Parish Council perhaps consider writing directly to the Police at Medway to ask for details of their criteria and for a contact telephone number/email address for the local officers.

With permission from the Chairman a member of the public also spoke to advise that the Allhallow's PACT use a twitter account to voice any concerns they have. She advised that once these posts are made public this usual generates a fast response from the Police for fear of embarrassment if these queries are not answered promptly.

15. Play Parks Contract

Min 1564:19 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, presented the members with the Play Parks inspections from the month of April, these reports confirmed that the equipment appeared to be in good order and were unanimously approved.

Cllr G. Barron spoke to confirm, after seeking advice, that he understood that the current bird deterrents in place would need to be adjusted and cut shorter as they were now starting to spinning around in the opposite direction and were no longer hindering the birds from perching there.

Min 1565:19 The quote for the repairs to the swing at Heron, as previously circulated via the Clerk prior to the meeting, were also discussed. It was proposed by the Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, seconded via Vice-chair, Cllr G. Blackman and unanimously agreed that the repairs be authorised to take place as soon as possible at a cost of £100.

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16. Website / IT

Min 1566:19 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to confirm receipt of the April 2019 website usage report, which she had circulated to all members prior to the meeting. This report was evaluated by the members and deemed acceptable.

17. Highways & Transportation

Min 1567:19 The Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, spoke to confirm that although Medway Council had attended to cut the verges in Middle Stoke, alongside the lower exit at the bank, that they had in fact failed to go as far back as they should and subsequently the vegetation had now grown too high to see oncoming traffic from the right.

The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, advised he would personally speak to Medway Council in relation to this matter to ensure this was issue was addressed urgently. He also confirmed that if Medway Council were not willing to re-attend he would ask the Parish Council's local contractor (J R Brickwork) to arrange for the relevant works to take place.

Cllr G. Barron also spoke to advise of several black bin bags that had been fly tipped along New Hall Farm Lane and reports of further rubbish at Hoppers Lane.

With permission from the Chairman a member of the public also spoke to advise that there were reports of an abandoned motorbike on Facebook, in what appeared to be one of Chairman's fields.

Cllr R. Bridge also raised concerns for the general level of litter being dropped in the village asking if the Parish Council could consider addressing this matter somehow.

18. J R Brickwork

Min 1568:19 No further requests for works were discussed / requested.

19. Village Hall Report

Min 1569:19 Owing to the recent uncontested Parish Council election it was noted that there was no Village Hall report for the month of April extending into May due to subsequent withdrawal of Stoke Parish Council's Village Hall Committee member.

As discussed in item 7 **Min 1556:19** it was unanimously agreed to postpone the 'appointment of members of the committees and representatives to other bodies' until the next meeting when it was hoped there would be more members of the Council co-opted by then.

20. Accounts 2018 / 2019

Min 1570:19 The Clerk presented the members with an in-depth report of the Accounts for 2018/2019, which she had previously circulated to prior to the meeting.

It was proposed by the Cllr G. Barron, seconded via Cllr R. Bridge and unanimously agreed that the Accounts for 2018 / 2019 be approved and sent onto the internal auditor for analysis as soon as possible.

21. Insurance Renewal

Min 1571:19 The Clerk presented the members with details of the latest insurance renewal quote she had received from Came & Company earlier that month, details of which she had previously circulated prior to the meeting.

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It was proposed by the Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, seconded via Cllr J. Wallace and unanimously agreed that to accept Came & Company's recommendation of insurance with a three (3) year guaranteed premium of £931.31.

Min 1572:19 The Clerk, Mrs J Allen, was accordingly instructed to arrange for the immediate payment of the relevant insurance cover to provide continuous protection.

22. Notice Board Repairs

Min 1573:19 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, provided the members with details of a quote she had received and previously circulated for repairs to the damaged notice board in Upper Stoke from contractor Colin Davis of Colyn Property Services.

It was noted via the members that due to the poor design of the large notice board in Upper Stoke that the relevant repairs to the damaged perspex were not going to completely tackle the issue with the opening mechanism to the front door. It was therefore proposed via the Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, and unanimously agreed via all members that the Clerk should seek an alternative quote to replace this notice board with a more suitable design.

The Parish Council also recognised an email sent via the Clerk, upon the update of the notice boards with the agendas, highlighting some new damage to the perspex to the front of the notice board at Middle Stoke, again the members requested that the Clerk seek a quote to arrange for its repair.

23. Sponsorship for The Big Lunch in Stoke

Min 1574:19 With permission from the Chairman a representative of the Stoke Methodist Church stood up presented the members with the relevant insurance policy documents and risk assessments for the proposed 'Big Lunch in Stoke' event, which was tentatively planned to take place on Sunday 9th June within the Heron Way recreation ground.

Following a proposal emailed via Reverend Kan Yu earlier that month, and circulated to all members prior to the meeting, it was noted that the Stoke Methodist Church had written to the Parish Council not only to ask for consent to use the Heron Way play park but also for permission to use the toilet facilities at the school opposite and also for £250 sponsorship money.

After careful consideration of the presented documentation it was proposed via Cllr G. Barron, seconded via the Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, and unanimously agreed to allow the Stoke Methodist Church permission to use the Heron Way recreation park, to grant them access to the use of the toilets facilities and to provide them with £250 sponsorship money towards this event.

Min 1575:19 Cllr J. Wallace also spoke to offer Stoke Methodist Church an additional £200 sponsorship money from the weekly meat raffle run every weekend from her business at the public house.

24. Village Voices Article

Min 1576:19 The Clerk presented members with ideas of two (2) potential articles for the latest edition of the Village Voices publication.

The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, advised the Clerk he would notify her independently of the article he would like to be included, once he had had time to think about this matter in more detail after the end of the meeting.

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25. **Any other business (no votes may be taken)**

Min 1577:19 None.

26. **Date of next meeting**

Min 1578:19 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke to confirm the date of the next meeting to be held at Stoke Village Hall on Wednesday 12st June 2019 at 7.00pm, following a meeting at the School surrounding its closure the night before.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm