

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

MINUTES

Wednesday 28th June 2023

Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting

Village Hall ~ 7.00 pm

Attendees: Cllr J. Wallace ~ Chair Cllr P. Dumke ~ Vice-Chair
Cllr K. Mansell Cllr N. Blown
Cllr S. Back Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk

Members of the public: Zero (0)

The previous Chairman, Cllr J. Wallace opened the meeting at 7.00pm and thanked everyone for attending.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Min 7625:23 The members received an apology for absence from Cllr J. Van Niekerk who had prior work commitments.

A vote took place and it was noted that none of the members had any objections.

2. **To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

Min 7626:23 None.

3. **Internal Audit 2022/2023**

a). To review the internal auditors report for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Min 7627:23 The Parish Council confirmed receipt of the internal auditor's report for the financial year ending March 2023.

Although the report was deemed as acceptable, the members noted that the report mentioned concerns that HMRC was holding a balance of funds from an overpayment made previously, which he recommended the Parish Council should ask for the funds to be returned.

In accordance with the internal auditor's recommendations, the Clerk Mrs J. Allen confirmed that she had already spoken to HMRC to request the above.

b). To approve the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Min 7628:23 The Parish Council carefully reviewed the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2023, where the documentation was deemed as acceptable.

c). To approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2022-23, Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2023.

Min 7629:23 The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace, read in turn each of the points from the Annual Governance Statement as per shown below.

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| 1. | We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements. |
| 2. | We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness. |
| 3. | We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a |

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| | significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances. |
| 4. | We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations. |
| 5. | We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external Insurance cover where required. |
| 6. | We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems. |
| 7. | We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit. |
| 8. | We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements. |

After various discussions and careful consideration, the members answered 'Yes' to each section.

Cllr K. Mansell spoke to propose that the Chair, Cllr J. Wallace, signed Section 1 of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2023. This proposal was seconded by Cllr P. Dumke and was unanimously agreed.

Accordingly, Cllr J. Wallace the Clerk signed Section 1, in front of the members of the Parish Council.

d). To approve the Accounting Statements for 2022-23, Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2023 and the supporting Bank Reconciliation as at 31 March 2023 plus the explanation of the significant variations from last year (2021-22) to this year (2022-23) and the explanation of any differences to be sent to the External Auditor.

Min 7630:23 The members carefully evaluated the figures provided in Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ending March 2023, where they deemed the Accounting Statement as acceptable.

Cllr P. Dumke spoke to propose the Chair, Cllr J. Wallace, signed Section 2 of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2023. This proposal was seconded by Cllr K. Mansell and was unanimously agreed.

Accordingly, Cllr J. Wallace signed Section 2 in front of the members of the Parish Council & the Clerk/RFO.

Min 7631:23 Finally, the Councillors carefully studied the supporting documents for the external audit that included the bank reconciliation documents and the explanations of the significant variances from the year before, where these documents were deemed as acceptable.

4. Any other business

Min 7632:23 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen spoke to address the subject of signatories on the members bank account, following the retirement of Cllr B. Stone.

As a result of a brief discussion, the members asked the Clerk to include this item on the next agenda, where they mooted their idea of adding the Vice-Chair, Cllr P. Dumke.

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Min 7633:23 Finally, The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen circulated a grant application document she had located online, which she thought might assist the Parish Council with the refurbishment of at least one (1) of their three (3) play parks.

The members looked in great detail at the criteria and the documentation provided, where again, she was requested to include this item on the next agenda for further discussion.

5. **Date of next meeting**

Min 7634:23 The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace spoke to inform the members that the next meeting would take place in the Village Hall on Wednesday 5th July, starting at 7.00pm.

32. **Close of meeting**

Min 7635:23 The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace closed the meeting at 7.55pm and thanked the Councillors for attending.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on:

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| Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 5th July 2023 | 7.00pm | The Village Hall |
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