

# STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

## MINUTES

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Face to Face Parish Council Meeting

Village Hall ~ 7.00 pm

Attendees: Cllr J. Wallace ~ Vice-chair Cllr G. Blackman  
Cllr K. Copping Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk

Members of the public: 3 (three)

### **PUBLIC SESSION ~ NOT PART OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

#### **Part A. Public Discussions**

Several questions from the three members of the public were raised, which included :

- Concerns regarding the large influx of litter and weeds, where a request for a dedicated 'Street Cleaner' for the village was made.
- Concerns regarding the speed of cars travelling through the village, made worse due to recent road works and diversions.
- Requests for an update on the soon to be derelict primary school building.
- Request for an update on the situation with the flooding, ahead of the forthcoming winter months.

It was agreed that the Parish Council would look further into the points raised, to enable the the members to respond inline before the next meeting.

#### **Part B. Public Discussions on any agenda items**

None.

In the Chairman's absence, the Vice-chair Cllr J. Wallace opened the meeting at 7.32pm and thanked all the Councillors and the members of the public for present for attending.

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

Min 5015:21 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R. Morrad, Cllr R. Bridge and the Chairman Cllr B. Stone.

It was acknowledged that Cllr R. Morrad had given his apologies owing to the fact that he did not feel comfortable in attending face to face meetings yet, following the COVID-19 pandemic.

That Cllr R. Bridge was self-isolating, following close contact with someone who was waiting a confirmed diagnosis for the Coronavirus and that Cllr B. Stone was away on annual leave.

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

Min 5016:21 None.

#### **3. Disclosure of any other business of an urgent nature**

Min 5017:21 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to advise the members that she had been asked to promote the outstanding Parish Councillor Vacancy on the members social media page.

A short discussion ensued surrounding the use of the members' social media platform where they unanimously agreed to grant the Clerk permission.

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## 4. Ward Councillor report

### a). A report by Ward Councillor Mick Pendergast.

**Min 5018:21** Cllr J. Wallace spoke to advise that she had no report from Ward Cllr Mick Pendergast as there had been no further updates or developments since his last address.

## 5. Vacancies

### a). To discuss any applications received relating to the Parish Council's outstanding vacancy.

**Min 5019:21** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to advise that despite the advertisement for the outstanding Parish Councillor vacancy on the village notice boards and on the members' webpage, that she had received no new applications to date.

## 6. Minutes from previous Parish Council Meeting

### a). To receive and approve the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021.

**Min 5020:21** The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting, held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021, as already circulated by the Clerk, were submitted.

It was proposed by Cllr K. Copping and seconded by Cllr G. Blackman, that they be approved as a correct record. This motion was unanimously agreed.

## 7. Information arising from the minutes not on the agenda

**Min 5021:21** None.

## 8. Planning

### a). Applications

**Min 5022:21** The members acknowledged that owing to an error on the Medway Council Planning Portal whilst the meeting packs were being produced, that the Clerk had been unable to verify the receipt of any new planning applications.

A short interlude occurred whilst the Clerk checked the Medway Council Planning Portal using her mobile device, where she eventually confirmed there had been no new planning applications submitted since the members' last meeting.

### b). Decisions

**Min 5023:21** As above, it acknowledged that owing to an error on the Medway Council's Planning Portal, that the Clerk Mrs J. Allen had been unable to verify if Medway Council had made any new planning decisions since the members last meeting.

A short interlude occurred whilst the Clerk checked the Medway Council Planning Portal using her mobile device.

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to confirm there had been one (1) new planning decision made which looked as though the application had been accepted subject to conditions.

- **MC/21/1065 -1 Elm Tree Cottages**

### c). Appeals and Other Matters.

**Min 5024:21** None.

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## 9. Finance

- a). To agree financial performance against the budget for the month of June 2021.
- b). Update of account(s) for 2021/22 including payments received.
- c). Accounts paid since the last meeting to be ratified.
- d). Accounts for payment.
- e). Payment requests to be discussed for approval and payment.

**Min 5025:21** The Vice-Chair Cllr J. Wallace, spoke to ask the Clerk if Cllr R. Morrad had been in touch with her prior to the meeting, surrounding any queries he might have had regarding the members' Finances? Mrs J. Allen responded to confirm that she had not she had not heard from him.

Accordingly it was proposed by Cllr G. Blackman to approve points a,b,c,d & e, this proposal was seconded by Cllr K. Copping and unanimously agreed.

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£511.78	June 2021 Wages
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£35.00	Use of home office –June 2021
HMRC	Min 1436:18	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£1.80	Tax & NI Payment
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	Min 1451:18	DIRECT DEBIT	£34.28	Broadband & Telephone line rental for June 2021
Colin Davis	Min 1992:20	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£168.00	June 2021 Payment Inspections & Cleaning INV: 3234
KPS Office Supplies	<b>(TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY)</b>	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£8.10	50/50 share of costs towards 1 x box of white paper INV: 7388
KPS Office Supplies	<b>(TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY)</b>	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£2.05	50/50 share of costs towards 1 ream of pink paper INV: 6352
KPS Office Supplies	<b>(STATIONERY TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY) PPE - Min 1892:20</b>	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£37.77	Part share of costs towards stationery & PPE. INV: 6117
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£42.43	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for May 2021
The Noticeboard Company	Min 4081:21	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£2,166.00	Purchase of new notice board for Lower Stoke INV: 6412
Annual Play Inspection	<b>TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY INLINE WITH SPC'S</b>	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£282.60	Annual Play Inspection Report INV: STO18345

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	<b>INSURANCE POLICY</b>			
KALC	<b>(TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY)</b>	PAID BY BACS	£375.79	Annual Subscription for KALC INV: 7789
Stoke Methodist Church	Min 4098:21	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£300.00	Grant towards the 'Big Lunch' Event
Timpson	<b>(TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY)</b>	TO BE PAID BY CARD	£7.00	New key cut for Village Hall Car Park
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£3,972.60</b>	

## f). Update on the progress of the Internal Auditor for the year ending 2020/2021

Min 5026:21 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to confirm that she had not received the internal auditors report back yet from Mr L. Robbins, but as soon as she had she would forward a copy onto the members.

## 10. Management of the Council's land and property

### a). Playparks

#### i Allhallows Road Playpark

#### ii Heron Way Playpark

#### iii Upper Stoke Playpark

Min 5027:21 The Play Park inspections from the month of June were accepted. The report received confirmed that the play equipment in the Heron Way and the Button Drive play parks appeared to be in good order and that all the touch points were being regularly disinfected. It was noted however that the play equipment in the Upper Stoke Playpark required a deep clean, following an influx of bird droppings, and that the members would need to consider ordering a new swing seat as the current seat was showing signs of wear and tear.

Whilst the members were discussing the report for the Upper Stoke play park the Clerk reminded the Parish Council that the COVID-19 restrictions were also meant to be lifted at the end of July. Accordingly, she asked for permission to arrange for the reinstallation of the 'second' swing seats (that had been previously been removed and stored for social distancing purposes). After careful consideration the members agreed that the Clerk should arrange for the re-installation of the 'removed swings' where they also instructed her to order a new swing seat to replace the worn one as soon as possible.

Finally, The Clerk mooted an idea she had had to ask a local contractor, such as either a window cleaner or pressure washer contractor, to check on the play equipment monthly (once the apparatus had been deep cleaned) in order to aid with the removal of any bird droppings as soon as they occurred. The members agreed that this might be a good idea, where the Clerk was deployed to source some quotes.

Finally, Cllr K. Copping spoke to advise that he would ask his window cleaner if he was interested in providing a quote, where he agreed that he would communicate further with the Clerk by email.

### b). To review the annual inspection report from the Play Inspection Company for all three playparks.

Min 5027:21 The members discussed the annual play inspection reports where it had been noted that all of the points identified were either low risk or very low risk observations.

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It was agreed however that the members would review the points listed, as there had been an annual budget allocated for playpark maintenance, which they would look to address later in the year.

## **c). Update on the replacement apparatus, following the removal of the toddler tunnels at Button Drive & Heron Way**

**Min 5028:21** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, advised the members that following an email from the play equipment specialists that she understood the Parish Council's order was coming from Poland and that the company were now awaiting its delivery, before they could arrange to install the two new climbing frames.

## **d). Tree surgeon update on the pollarding of the trees at Button Drive.**

**Min 5029:21** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to advise the members that she understood the tree surgeons were coming to pollard the trees at Button Drive on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July.

## **e). To review of the 15<sup>th</sup> monthly tree report from Treeventures Ltd.**

**Min 5030:21** The members carefully reviewed the 15<sup>th</sup> monthly tree survey report from Treeventures Ltd, where it was identified that the feedback provided was for maintenance works to the trees only.

A discussion ensued where Cllr K. Copping proposed that the Clerk should get in touch with a couple of local tree surgeons to arrange for a quote to carry out the non-essential works in the autumn. This proposal was seconded by the Vice-chair Cllr J. Wallace and unanimously agreed.

## **f). Update on the purchase of the new notice board for Lower Stoke.**

**Min 5031:21** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to confirm that she had now placed the order for the new notice board for Lower Stoke, and with permission from Ward Cllr M. Pendergast, she had arranged for its delivery to the Nags Head Public House, which was opposite the proposed site.

## **g). To review the three quotes received for the installation of the new notice board in Lower Stoke.**

**Min 5032:21** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred the members to the three quotes she had sourced, concerning the installation of the new notice board in Lower Stoke.

The quotes received varied considerably and consisted of the following details:

- The Noticeboard Company £852.00 (not including disposal of the old board)
- Webb Flint £740.00
- V Sinclair Ltd £1,466.89

A discussion ensued, where Cllr G. Blackman spoke to propose that the members instructed Webb Flint Ltd to install the new notice board at Lower Stoke, at a cost of £740.00. This proposal was seconded by Cllr K. Copping and was unanimously agreed.

## **11. Highways & Transportation**

### **a). Footpaths**

**Min 5034:21** No report.

### **b). Lighting**

**Min 5034:21** No report.

### **c). Highways and verges**

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Min 5035:21 Cllr G. Blackman spoke to raise his concerns over the length of the grass on the verges, which he commented that the sight line coming out of Burrows Lane was obscured by greenery and was very difficult to see.

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen also advised the members that the footpath beside the notice board in Middle Stoke contained a lot of overgrown nettles and brambles, which were now extending onto the pavement.

A discussion ensued where it was agreed that the Clerk should contact Medway Council to complain about the issue in the first instance, where it was acknowledged that the footpath did not belong to the Parish Council.

## **d). Pot holes**

Min 5037:21 It was acknowledged that there were no new pot holes to report.

## **e). Fly tipping**

Min 5038:21 The members discussed the pile of children's toys that had placed on the grass verge beside the on the pavement, close to the village hall. It was acknowledged, that following a post on Facebook, these items had been listed on social media for free collection.

## **f). School Warning Signs**

Min 5039:21 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to advise the members that she was still waiting to hear when the third school warning sign was going to be repaired. Following the Academy's decision to close the school however the members asked the Clerk to remove this item from the next month's agenda.

## **12. Communication**

### **a). Update on the Parish Council's new webpage and associated email addresses**

#### **b). Parish Council owned tablets**

Min 5040:21 Cllr J. Wallace spoke to inform the members that she and the Clerk were working collaboratively to ensure the Parish Council's webpage remained up to date.

She also advised that following additional difficulties with the Parish Council's email addresses that she had gone back to the company she purchased the domain name from who were assisting her.

She closed her report in advising that she understood, from further communications with the IT technician, that he was in the process of setting up an application to enable the members to access their Parish Council emails instantly through a button their tablets. She confirmed that she was in regular contact with the technician and that she would follow this up suggestion to ensure this application was rolled out as quickly as possible.

## **13. Village Hall**

### **a). To discuss providing the Village Hall with a £1,000 grant.**

Min 5041:21 Following Cllr B. Stone's report at the last meeting concerning the bleak future for the Village Hall, ref [Min 4092:21](#), the Vice-Chair Cllr J. Wallace asked the members to consider providing the Village Hall with a £1,000 grant.

A discussion ensued, where after careful consideration Cllr K. Copping spoke to propose the members paid the Village Hall their annual donation of £1,000 as soon as possible, this proposal was seconded by the Vice-Chair Cllr J. Wallace and was unanimously agreed.

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## 14. Lower Stoke Car Park Lease

### a). Update on the new lease for Medway Council's Lower Stoke Car Park.

Min 5042:21 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, advised the members that following a discussion at the last meeting ref: Min 5011:21 that she was now waiting for Medway Council to supply her with a copy of the revised lease.

## 15. External Contractors

### a). J R Brickwork

Min 5043:21 None.

### b). Eastborough Landscapes

Min 5044:21 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, was instructed to contact Eastborough Landscapes to ask if they would be able to provide a quote for the non-essential works to trees following the 15 monthly tree report Min 5030:21.

### c). Colyn Property Services

Min 5045:21 None.

## 16. Christmas Celebrations

### a). To receive an update on the installation of a Christmas Tree and Christmas lights in Lower Stoke for the month of December 2021.

Min 5046:21 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, was reminded to create a poster for the Christmas Lights competition, which needed to be displayed as soon as possible.

The Clerk also suggested that the members considered getting some banners printed nearer the time, where she advised she would add the posters to the Parish Council's 3 notice boards and on the members social media page.

## 17. Sponsorship for The Big Lunch in Stoke

### a). To receive an update on the 'The Big Lunch in Stoke' event, as hosted by the Methodist Church.

Min 5047:21 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred the members to an email she had received from the 'Stoke Safari's' to confirm that owing to concerns over the COVID-19 restrictions the 'Big Lunch' event had been changed to take place in the Nags Head Public House on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September.

## 18. Village Voice Publication

Min 5048:21 The Vice-Chair, Cllr J. Wallace asked the Clerk to place notification of the village Christmas light competition in the next Village Voices publication.

## 19. Correspondence

### a). To discuss a complaint received from Ms P. Wade concerning the Stoke Garage, located in Lower Stoke.

Min 5049:21 The members acknowledged receipt of a letter from Ms P. Wade concerning the positioning of the cars at the Lower Stoke Garage, located on the corner of Allhallows Road and Cuckolds Green Road.

A discussion ensued where the members spoke of the Highway Code, if the garage needed a planning application to change the use of the business premises to a car sales forecourt and where predominately they agreed with the concerns highlighted.

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With permission from the Vice-chair a member of the public spoke to ask if there was a limit to the number of cars allowed on the forecourt, where Cllr J. Wallace also spoke to raise her own concerns that some of the speeding cars through the village could be associated with customers test driving the cars.

The members spoke further with their own concerns following the positioning of service vans parked on the bend of Allhallows Road and Cuckolds Green Road, where they also spoke of possible contraventions to both the Highway Code and traffic regulations.

Accordingly, the Clerk was instructed to write to the garage to lodge the members concerns, where she agreed to circulate a draft copy of her letter to the Parish Council for their approval beforehand.

## 20. Reports and Circulars

**Min 5050:21** The Vice-chair, Cllr J. Wallace spoke to confirm that she had attended the last Rural Liaison meeting, which had been by Zoom.

She confirmed that the majority of the meeting had been centred around the Medway Local Plan, Where she understood a 6-week consultation period had been scheduled to take place later in the year.

## 21. Date of next meeting

**Min 5051:21** The Vice-Chair, Cllr J. Wallace, spoke to inform the members that the next meeting would take place in the main Village Hall on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021.

## 22. Close of meeting

**Min 5052:21** The Vice-Chair, Cllr J. Wallace closed the meeting at 20.36pm and thanked everyone for attending.

**The next Parish Council meeting will be held on:**

<b>Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>Village Hall</b>
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