

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

MINUTES

Wednesday 5th February 2020

The Village Hall ~ 7.00 pm

Attendees: Cllr B. Stone ~ Chairman Cllr G. Blackman ~ Vice-chair
Cllr J. Wallace Cllr G. Barron
Cllr R. Bridge Cllr R. Morrad
Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk

Members of the public: 0

PUBLIC SESSION ~ NOT PART OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Part A. Public Discussions

None.

Part B. Public Discussions on any agenda items

None.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and the Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

1. Apologies for absence

Min 1780:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, confirmed that she had not received an apology for absence from Cllr J. Cole, despite this being his sixth consecutive meeting he had missed.

The Vice-Chair Cllr G. Blackman also spoke to apologise that he would be leaving early, due to personal commitments.

2. To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Min 1781:20 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke to declare an interest in the Village Hall, being both the Chairman to Stoke Parish Council and the Village Hall committee.

3. Minutes from the previous Parish Council Meeting - Appendix A

Min 1782:20 The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 8th January 2020, already circulated via the Clerk, were submitted.

Despite a couple of small manual amendments, it was proposed by Cllr R. Morrad and seconded by Cllr J. Wallace, that they be approved as a correct record and signed. This motion was unanimously agreed.

4. Information arising from the minutes not on the agenda

Min 1783:20 None.

5. Disclosure of other business

Min 1784:20 None.

6. Planning

a). Applications

Min 1785:20 None.

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b). Decisions

Min 1786:20 None.

c). Appeals and Other Matters.

Min 1787:20 None.

7. Finance – Appendix B

a). To agree financial performance against the budget for January 2020

Min 1788:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, presented the members with the financial performance figures (that included the budgets set at the beginning of the year as a comparison) ranging from April 2019 through to January 2020. The Councillors evaluated these figures and after careful consideration they were deemed acceptable.

b). Update of account(s) for 2019/20 including payments received.

Min 1789:20 The Councillors carefully reviewed the bank balances provided in Appendix B and deemed the figures as acceptable.

Cllr R. Bridge queried why the figures did not balance, the Clerk Mrs J. Allen spoke in response to apologise that she had used the wrong formula on the spreadsheet and that she had only discovered this once the meeting packs had been sent out.

c). Accounts paid since the last meeting to be ratified.

d). Accounts for payment.

e). Payment requests to be discussed for approval and payment.

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
HMRC	-	BACS	£175.59	Income Tax from January 2020 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£308.82	January 2020 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – January 2020
Colyn Property Services	Min 1449:18	BACS	£88.00	January 2019 Payment INV 2804
KPS Office Supplies	-	BACS	£62.18	Stationery & White Paper INV: SINNV291657
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	-	DIRECT DEBIT	£30.09	Broadband & Phone line rental for January 2002
Medway Council	-	DIRECT DEBIT	£225.00	Quarterly Car Park Rent
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	CARD	£265.02	Pension Backdated Payment (minus £240 refund received) TO BE PAID
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	CARD	£26.02	Employee Contribution to Pension January 2020 TO BE PAID
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	CARD	£15.61	Employer Contribution to Pension January 2020 TO BE PAID

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AVAST	-	CARD	£35.76	Antivirus Software Update for Parish Clerk Laptop
TOTAL			£1,267.09	
Natwest	-	Credit - BACS	£1.77	Interest on savings account
TOTAL			£1.77	

Min 1790:20 It was proposed by the Vice-Chair Cllr G. Blackman and seconded by Cllr R. Morrad that the tables above, as previously circulated, be noted, the payments confirmed and any outstanding payments authorised and issued. This motion was unanimously agreed.

f). To review the progress of the 2019/2020 Audit

Min 1791:20 The members reviewed the correspondence provided by the Clerk and acknowledged the Stoke Parish Council website needed to be updated, a new finance policy created and a risk assessment adopted.

The Clerk also made reference to an email received from the internal auditor, Mr C. Fribbins, recommending the members considered purchasing an accounting software package to aid with the audit process.

A discussion between the members ensued, where the Clerk Mrs J. Allen also gave out handouts from the Rialtus software programme used by an adjoining Parish Council. She advised the members that she understood High Halstow Parish Council were in the process of entering their finances into this software package too and that she would be happy to try to arrange for a brief presentation at the next meeting to show the members how it all worked.

g). To receive a copy of the new 2019 Financial Regulations in advance of the March 2020 meeting

Min 1792:20 The Clerk handed the members a copy of the 2019 NALC Financial Regulations, (which she had only managed to obtain a copy of a few hours beforehand). The members briefly evaluated the regulations and asked the Clerk to review the policy in full, make the necessary amendments and bring the revised document back for approval at March meeting.

8. Grant Applications

Min 1793:20 None.

9. Management of the Council's land and property – Appendix C

a). Playparks

i Allhallows Road Playpark

Min 1794:20 The Play Parks inspection from the month of January confirmed that the equipment appeared to be in good order.

ii Heron Way Playpark

Min 1795:20 The Play Parks inspection from the month of January confirmed that the equipment appeared to be in good order.

iii Upper Stoke Playpark

Min 1796:20 The Play Parks inspection from the month of January confirmed that the equipment appeared to be in good order.

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All three reports were unanimously approved, as the equipment was deemed to be in an acceptable condition.

b). To receive a copy of the play park's tree's insurance inspection details

Min 1797:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred the members to the quotation received from Treeventures Ltd, dated from October 2019 (which had directed to her spam inbox by the firewall). She advised the Parish Council that having spoken to the contractor that she understood his original quotation of £420.00 still stood and that his earliest availability to carry out this report was Wednesday 19th February 2020.

A discussion between the members ensued where it was unanimously agreed to carry out this report as soon as possible to ensure the Parish Council remained compliant with the terms and conditions of their insurance policy.

The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, asked Mrs J. Allen to instruct Mr J. Gillbert to implement his report on Wednesday 19th February or sooner if he was able to.

10. Highways & Transportation

a). Footpaths

Min 1798:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, informed the members that having spoken to Mr A. Taylor of Medway Council in connection to the poor condition of the RS36 footpath, that she understood he was experiencing difficulties in obtaining contact with the landowner.

The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke in response to ask the Clerk to arrange for a site meeting with Mr A. Taylor, to discuss the possibility of arranging for a proper path and posts to prevent further damage by farming equipment. Cllr B. Stone also commented the weather would need to improve first, allowing the ground to dry out enough before laying hard core.

Cllr R. Bridge spoke to recommend the members obtain a definitive map to show the damage in relation to the footpath. Cllr R. Morrad also made reference to the finger post sign installed near to the path, which shows the true line of the path.

b). Lighting

Min 1799:20 Nothing to report.

c). Highways and verges

Min 1800:20 The Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, spoke to express his concerns in relation to the loose manhole covers on the A228, which he thought posed a danger to motorists.

The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, also asked the Clerk to write to Rose's Tea Room of Lower Stoke to ask them to remove their sign, tied to a lamppost on the green area, entering Lower Stoke, promoting their business, which had not been granted the relevant permission.

d). Pot holes

Min 1801:20 Cllr G. Barron reported the pot hole located on Cuckolds Green Road, as discussed at the last meeting reference **Min 1762:20**, had now been filled.

e). Fly tipping

Min 1802:20 Cllr G. Barron spoke to advise that the discarded fridge had been collected from New Hall Farm Lane but the green tyre still remained.

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f). Litter Signs

Min 1803:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, advised the members that she had written to the Leigh Academies Trust to ask the school to reinstate the use of the pre-lite 'School' warning road signs.

She referred the members to the paperwork enclosed in their meeting packs to advise the School claimed to not have access to these signs and that this matter had been referred to Medway Council to investigate further.

11. Representatives Reports

a). KALC

Min 1804:20 The Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, spoke to advise that the KALC meeting had been moved forward to the 04/03/2020.

Cllr G. Barron spoke to express his concerns that this meeting would clash with the next Parish Council meeting, it was agreed that the Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, would contact the KALC Secretary (Mrs R. Brammer) to make her aware of this clash and to ask if the KALC meeting could be rearranged, if possible.

b). Rural Liaison

Min 1805:20 Cllr J. Wallace reported that she had attended the last Rural Liaison committee meeting and that the members had received a presentation from the Community Lead Housing Project, connected to affordable homes outside of Kent, alongside a further presentation connected to the Local Plan.

She advised that although she had not been provided with any hand outs that she had been shown various slides in relation to the proposed new train station at Sharnal Street, which she understood was being funded by British Rail and a Government Grant. She spoke further to advise that concerns had been raised in relation to the amount of room this new train station would take up, and the volume of traffic it would bring to the Peninsular, making it difficult for the residents to go about their daily activities.

Cllr R. Bridge spoke in response to Cllr J. Wallace to advise that he understood new electric signs would be installed to direct motorists and the exit junctions off the motorway and or bypass were also being reviewed to help accommodate the additional congestion.

** The Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, left the meeting at 7.42pm*

c). Village Hall Committee

Min 1806:20 Cllr R. Bridge reported that he had attended the last Village Hall Committee meeting and handed all the members a copy of the minutes from that meeting.

The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, also spoke to advise that he understood the Peninsular now had been allocated a new Neighbourhood Watch Liaison Officer.

12. Communications – Appendix D

a). Update on the operation and usage of the Parish Council's existing website

Min 1807:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to advise that she had not received a copy of the Parish Council's website usage report from Medway Council for the month of January, and that she was chasing the team for a copy of this correspondence.

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b). Update on the construction of the Parish Council's new webpage

Min 1808:20 Cllr J. Wallace provided the members with a presentation on the new webpage she was in the process of creating, following a meeting with Mrs L. Atkinson.

She extended a vote of thanks to Mrs L. Atkinson for donating over an hour of her time free of charge, to aid with its initial construction.

c). Update on the creation of new Clerk and Parish Councillor email addresses

Min 1809:20 Cllr J. Wallace reported that she was in the process of trying establish and reserve the official '.gov.uk' webpage for Stoke Parish Council (Kent), alongside the associated email addresses, which she understood could take some time due to the strict regulations, something Mrs L. Atkinson was also assisting her with.

She asked the members for feedback on what should be including on the new website, where Cllr R. Morrad spoke to ask a policy tab be incorporated.

13. External Contractors

a). J R Brickwork

Min 1810:20 No further requests for works were discussed or requested.

b). Eastborough Landscapes

Min 1811:20 No further requests for works were discussed or requested.

14. Pension Scheme

Min 1812:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to advise the members that following her last update, reference Min 1775:20, that she had received a refund from the People's Pension for £240. She advised that she had asked the provider to credit this money back onto the pension account, which in turn would then reduce the backdated payment balance.

The Clerk agreed to provide the members with an annual Pension report to monitor payments credited to this account.

15. Village Voice Publication

Min 1813:20 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke to request the Clerk include an article in the next edition of the Village Voices publication to advise the Parishioners that the poor condition of the RS36 footpath was being addressed.

16. Correspondence

Min 1814:20 Cllr R. Morrad spoke to remind the Clerk to address the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders and to circulate these documents for approval prior to the meeting. Cllr R. Bridge spoke in agreement with Cllr R. Morrad, to advise the Clerk that she only needed to amend the variable items on the Financial Regulations, which Cllr R. Morrad advised were usually placed in brackets.

Cllr R. Morrad also asked the Clerk to check when the next record archiving was due, as he felt this was due to be actioned fairly soon.

17. Reports and Circulars

Min 1815:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, informed the members that following the last meeting, reference Min 1747:20, that she had now set up the new Stoke Parish Council Facebook page and had requested to join the local forums to promote the upcoming Parish Council meeting dates.

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18. Date of next meeting

Min 1816:20 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke to confirm the date of the next meeting to be held at Stoke Village Hall on Wednesday 4th March 2020 at 7.00pm.

He provided his apologies in advance for this meeting due to prior commitments.

He thanked the members again for attending and closed the meeting at 8.20 pm