

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

MINUTES

Friday 3rd July 2020

Virtual Meeting ~ 7.30 pm

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

Members of the public: 1

PUBLIC SESSION ~ NOT PART OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Part A. Public Discussions

The Parish Council received two complaints from one member of the public surrounding the loud, reverberating noises that were coming from Malmaynes Hall Farm and the temporary Amazon warehouse road signs.

It was acknowledged that in February 2018, Medway Council had permitted a change of use application to allow for the agricultural land in Upper Stoke to produce hydraulically bound materials.

The Parishioner advised that he was disappointed that the opinions of the local residents was not sought by either Medway Council or by Stoke Parish Council when it appeared that the original application was submitted in October 2017.

He also advised that upon speaking further to many of the neighbouring properties that he understood that only a limited number of residents had received written notification of this application from Medway Council, of which he had not included.

He advised that the loud noises coming from this plant were starting from 6.00am each morning and that these sounds would run continuously until late evening, he also advised that this plant would work over 5.5 days per week, allowing the residents only a day and a half reprieve. He expressed his concerns over the possible effects this factory was having on local wildlife, where he mentioned that Upper Stoke was a known habitat for the endangered grey crested newt.

He also complained that the Amazon Warehouse road signs appeared to be only temporary in stature and asked the members if the proprietor of building only had a temporary contract with Amazon?

The members collectively discussed the complaints in further detail where it was established that the correct channels surrounding the planning application had been sought. It was also understood that Medway Council were meant to be installing more permanent road signs, however none of the members knew when this would be.

The Parishioner advised that he was not satisfied with the Parish Council's surrounding the noise pollution at Upper Stoke, and that he intended to take this matter further. He closed his report by advising the members that the road surfaces being used by the Amazon lorries, were being totally destroyed, by the constant steam of heavy goods or transport vehicles.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

Part B. Public Discussions on any agenda items

None.

The Parishoner was invited to stay for the duration of the Parish Council meeting, however he declined the members invitation and left the meeting at 7.53 pm.

The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone opened the meeting directly afterwards and thanked the members for attending.

1. Apologies for absence

Min 1857:20 None.

2. To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Min 1858:20 None.

3. Disclosure of any other business of an urgent nature

Min 1859:20 None.

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

Min 1860:20 The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting, held on Wednesday 4th March 2020, already circulated via the Clerk, were submitted.

The members identified at least one small correction, where it was agreed that the Clerk Mrs J. Allen would make the relevant amendments and submit the revised documentation back to the Parish Council for approval at the next meeting.

5. Information arising from the minutes not on the agenda

Min 1861:20 None.

6. Planning

a). Applications

Min 1862:20 The members acknowledged receipt of three (3) new planning applications since the last meeting and accordingly they discussed each one in turn:

• **MC/20/0931 – 5 Anchorage Close**

It was agreed that the members would not submit an objection to the aforementioned application, owing to the fact that the plans related to the construct a single storey extension to side of the property.

• **MC/20/0796 – Court Lodge Farm**

It was agreed that the members would not submit an objection to the aforementioned application owing to the fact that this application was solely to build a detached garage.

• **MC/20/1327 – Land Adjacent To 1 Parsonage Cottages**

It was agreed that the members would not submit an objection to this planning application, as it was acknowledged that this application had been previously approved in 2019, and that the owners were only making a non-material amendment.

b). Decisions

Min 1863:20 The members acknowledged that there had been three (3) new planning applications acceptances since the last meeting, and that two (2) of these applications had already discussed above ref: Min 1862:20 .

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

- MC/20/0796 – Court Lodge Farm
- MC/20/0931 – 5 Anchorage Close
- MC/20/0339 - CLH Stoke Grain Road Near Lower Stoke

c). Appeals and Other Matters.

Min 1864:20 None.

7. Finance – Appendix B

a). To agree financial performance against the budget for April, May & June 2020

Min 1865:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, presented the members with the financial performance figures (that included the recommended budgets proposed by the Clerk at the beginning of the financial year as a comparison) these budgets ranged from April 2020 through to June 2020.

The Councillors evaluated these figures and after careful consideration they were deemed as acceptable.

b). Update of account(s) for 2020/21 including payments received.

Min 1866:20 The Councillors carefully reviewed the bank balances provided in Appendix B and deemed the figures as acceptable.

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

Min 1867:20 It was proposed by Cllr J. Wallace and seconded by Cllr G. Barron that the tables below, as previously circulated, be noted and the payments confirmed. This motion was unanimously agreed.

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
June 2020				
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£474.41	May 2020 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – April 2020
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	-	DIRECT DEBIT	£32.68	Broadband & Phone line rental for May 2020
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£41.63	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for May 2020
Mrs J. Wallace	Min 1770:20	BACS	£159.00	Domain Purchase for .gov.uk webpage
TOTAL			£742.72	
May 2020				
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£474.41	April 2020 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – April 2020
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	-	DIRECT DEBIT	£32.68	Broadband & Phone line rental for April 2020
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£41.63	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for April 2020
Medway Council	-	BACS	£225.00	Quarterly Car Park Rent
TOTAL			£808.72	
April 2020				
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£969.01	March 2020 wages

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

				(Including tax rebate)
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – January 2020
Colyn Property Services	Min 1449:18	BACS	£88.00	March 2020 Payment INV 2855
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	-	DIRECT DEBIT	£35.57	Broadband & Phone line rental for March 2020
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£41.63	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for March 2020
KALC	-	BACS	£375.79	2020/2021 Annual Subscription
Rialtas Business Solutions	Min 1829:20	BACS	£830.40	Purchase of new accounting soft- ware for up to 5 users including training
Tesco	-	CARD	£8.85	3 x reems of white paper
TOTAL			£2,384.25	
GRAND TOTAL			£3,935.69	

Creditor	Reference	Payment Method Rec'd	Amount	Notes
June 2020				
High Halstow Parish Council	-	Credit - BACS	£16.34	50% contribution from High Hal- stow PC towards the Vodafone Communications package
Natwest	-	Credit – BACS	£1.65	Interest – May 2020 (Business Reserve)
Natwest	-	Credit – BACS	£1.71	Interest – April 2020 (Business Reserve)
TOTAL			£19.70	
May 2020				
High Halstow Parish Council	-	Credit - BACS	£16.34	50% contribution from High Hal- stow PC towards the Vodafone Communications package
Medway Council	-	Credit – BACS	£26,045.00	Precept for 2020/2021 plus grants
TOTAL			£26,061.34	
April 2020				
Mrs J. Allen	-	Credit - BACS	£20.00	Repayment of pension balance
High Halstow Parish Council	-	Credit - BACS	£17.79	50% contribution from High Hal- stow PC towards the Vodafone Communications package
TOTAL			£37.79	
GRAND TOTAL			£26,118.83	

d). Accounts for payment.

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

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

Min 1888:20 It was proposed by Cllr R. Morrad and seconded by Cllr J. Wallace that the table below, as previously circulated, be noted, the payments confirmed and any outstanding payments authorised and issued. This motion was unanimously agreed.

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£474.41	June 2020 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – June 2020
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	-	DIRECT DEBIT	£32.68	Broadband & Phone line rental for June 2020
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£41.63	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for June 2020
Came & Co	Min 1571:19	BACS	£966.38	Insurance Policy Renewal
The Play Inspection Company	-	BACS	£282.60	Annual Play Inspection INV: STO18345
Mrs J. Wallace	Min 1770:20	BACS	£55.00	Purchase of domain Emails x 10
TOTAL			£1,887.70	
High Halstow Parish Council	-	Credit - BACS	£16.34	50% contribution from High Halstow PC towards the Vodafone Communications package
TOTAL			£16.34	

f). To oversee the 2019/2020 AGAR Figures

Min 1889:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, made reference to the 2019/2020 AGAR figures that she had prepared to submit to the internal auditor.

Cllr R. Morrad spoke to remind the Clerk that she still needed to compile a list variance from year before and to prepare the end of year bank reconciliation for the auditor.

Cllr B. Stone spoke to advise that in light of the extraordinary circumstances following the COVID-19 outbreak, that he was happy for the Clerk to submit the figures to the internal auditor in order for him to conduct a full review.

It was acknowledged that the deadline to submit the documents to the district auditor currently stood at Friday 31st July 2020.

g). To appoint Mr M. Fielder-White as the 2019 / 2020 Internal Auditor

Min 1890:20 Cllr R. Morrad spoke to enquire in regards to Mr M. Fielder-White's employment background, before he agreed to appoint him as the internal auditor for Stoke Parish Council.

Mrs J. Allen, spoke in response to advise as per Mr M. Fielder-White's extensive history with finance and that she had been passed his details by her KALC mentor, Mrs R. Brammer, who had personally recommended his work.

It was unanimously agreed by the members that they were happy for the Clerk to appoint Mr M. Fielder-White as the internal auditor, to complete the AGAR for the year ending 2019/2020.

h). Update on the Rialtas Business Solutions Multi user licence

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

Min 1890:20 Cllr R. Morrad spoke to enquire what had happened with the multi-user licence for the Rialtas accounting software, as agreed at the last meeting ref: Min 1829:20.

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke in response to advise that owing to the COVID-19 outbreak that a large proportion of the Rialtas staff had either been furloughed or were working home. She advised that she also understood that until the pandemic had passed, that the company were not offering any face to face training.

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, assured Cllr R. Morrad that she would chase Rialtas to remind them of the multi-user licence agreement and ask them to make contact him as soon as possible to able to enable him to download the software to his personal computer.

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

a). Playparks

i Allhallows Road Playpark - to include an update on the required tree surgery

Min 1891:20 It was acknowledged that owing to the Coronavirus pandemic, and following instructions from the Government, that the play parks throughout Stoke (and nationwide) remained closed.

The members discussed however the large, wild, limb that was reported to be overhanging the play park in Allhallows Road. Where it was acknowledged in a previous arboriculture report, the Parish Council had been strongly recommended to remove the offending item as soon as possible.

It was recognised that despite the Clerk submitting the details to various local tree surgeons over the lockdown period, to ask them to provide a quote, that she had received very little communication from them in return.

Fortuitously, Cllr G. Barron spoke to advise that owing to the disruption this tree had caused to the adjacent power lines, that he had been contacted by UK Power who had now arranged for mutually agreeable day to come and cut the wayward branches.

Cllr G. Barron advised that the work hes had been scheduled to take place by UK Power on Wednesday 22nd July and that he would liaise independently with the Clerk for the padlock keys to allow the workmen access.

ii Heron Way Playpark

iii Upper Stoke Playpark

Min 1892:20 The members understood that following the latest Government announcement that play parks throughout the country were now permitted to reopen, as from Saturday 4th July.

The members discussed the regulations and conditions attached to the reopening of the parks, which appeared to be listed on the Government webpage. A few of the members aired their concerns regarding the following topics:

- A COVID-19 Risk Assessment
- A warden to oversee the use of the use of equipment and to restrict the number of children using it
- Continued enforcements on the social distancing regulations
- A regular cleaning routine of all the equipment

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

- An enforcement of personal hygiene, including a regular hand washing routine and the prohibition of eating or drinking on site

It was felt by five (5) of the six (6) Councillors present that Parish Council would not be able to meet the recommended regulations, especially as it had been identified that the Parish of Stoke had three (3) separate play parks to manage.

Both Cllr R. Morrad and Cllr R. Bridge spoke to express their concerns in regards to Parish Council's legal liabilities. They recommended that the members should only consider re-opening the play parks once the Clerk had checked the exact requirements, ensured that the correct precautions had been taken and that the members had the appropriate level of insurance cover in place.

In view of this discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would continue to keep the play parks closed, until such point as the members were able to make informed decision based on receipt of all the above.

iv To discuss the submission of a grant application to apply for funding to refurbish / replace the existing play equipment.

Min 1893:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred the members to their meeting packs where she had incorporated the details of various companies who were currently accepting grant applications to replace existing play equipment for Parish Councils.

The Chairman, Cllrs B. Stone spoke to advise that if the members were unsuccessful in obtaining a grant, that he thought the Parish Council should budget to replace an item or two of play equipment each year.

Cllr R. Morrad spoke in agreement. He advised that throughout his time as Clerk it had been universally accepted that the play equipment both in Button Drive and Heron Way was elderly and would eventually need replacing. He advised that underneath the various coats of paint, that it was clear to see that the equipment was going rusty, which he noted was highlighted in the independent play inspectors report.

It was agreed that the Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, would look further into seeking a possible grant(s) and report back to the members with her findings in due course.

9. Highways & Transportation

a). Footpaths

Min 1894:20 Cllr G. Barron spoke to report that the RS36 footpath in Upper Stoke was not posing an issue presently, mainly because the weather had dried out the mud and that the footpath was not being used as frequently, with only a limited number of children attending the school.

b). Lighting

Min 1895:20 Nothing to report.

c). Highways and verges

Min 1896:20 The Vice-chair, Cllr G. Blackman, spoke to advise that Medway Council were in the process of cutting the verges.

d). Pot holes

Min 1897:20 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke to advise that he had noted that Medway Council had been filling in various potholes, throughout the roads on Peninsula.

e). Fly tipping

Min 1898:20

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

Min 1898:20 Nothing to report.

f). School Warning Signs

Min 1899:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, advised the members that she understood that neither Medway Council or the Leigh Academies Trust knew where the keys were to reinstate the use of the pre-lite 'School' warning road signs. She advised that she was still pursuing this matter with both parties and would keep the Parish Council updated on any progress.

10. Communications

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

Min 1900:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to advise that she had had no communications from the Medway Council team that managed the Parish Council's website. She therefore presumed that the staff were on furlough leave following the COVID-19 outbreak.

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

Min 1901:20 Cllr J. Wallace spoke to inform the members that the new Parish Council's webpage had been up and running for a week. She advised the members that she had had a nightmare with both the domain and the website hosts, who did not appear to want to communicate with each other, she had therefore been left as their go between.

She confirmed to the members that the full address for the Parish Council's new webpage was: **www.stokekent-pc.gov.uk** and that she was now in the process of setting up the members new email addresses.

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

Min 1902:20 Cllr J. Wallace advised that as per the website address that she hoped the Councillors email addresses would follow the same format of: **firstname.surname@stokekent-pc.gov.uk**

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to propose a vote of thanks to Cllr J. Wallace for all her hard work and offered her assistance in the event of any teething issues.

It was recognised that whilst Cllr J. Wallace was providing her report that a couple of the Councillors were not able to load the new webpage. Cllr J. Wallace apologised for this and assured the members that she would look into this, as everything, appeared to work fine on her computer.

11. External Contractors

a). J R Brickwork

Min 1903:20 No further requests for works were discussed.

b). Eastborough Landscapes

Min 1904:20 No further requests for works were discussed.

12. Village Voice Publication

Min 1905:20 It was agreed that should the next edition of the Village Voices magazine be published (as it was established that owing to the COVID-19 outbreak that the tabloid had been temporarily stopped) that the Clerk would write a short article in regards to the situation with reopening of the parish council's play parks.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

13. Correspondence

a). To discuss the recent suspension of St Werburgh Medical Practice at Stoke Village Hall for a period of 3 months

Min 1906:20 It was acknowledged that in light of the Quality Care Commissions recent visit to the Hoo St Werburgh Medical practice, that they had decided to suspended two of the DMC's surgeries for a temporarily period of 3 months.

It was noted that these two surgeries included both the Hoo St Werburgh Medical Practice and the sister medical practice located in Stoke, within the confines of the Village Hal.

The members agreed that whilst this matter was very concerning, that it would appear that the practices were not suffering financially, therefore there would be no need for Stoke Parish Council to intervene presently.

14. Reports and Circulars

Min 1907:20 None.

15. Date of next meeting

Min 1908:20 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke to confirm that the date of the next Parish Council meeting would be confirmed in due course, as it was depended on the Clerk receiving the internal auditors report.

He thanked the members for attending and closed the meeting at 09.15 pm