

# STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

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



## MINUTES

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2019

The Village Hall ~ 7.00 pm

Attendees: Cllr B. Stone ~ Chairman Cllr G. Blackman ~ Vice-chair  
Cllr G. Barron Cllr J. Wallace  
Cllr R. Bridge Cllr R. Morrad (following co-option)  
Mrs L. Atkinson ~ Acting Clerk

Members of the public: 1

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

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

Nothing to report.

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

A member of the public requested permission to discuss Co-option on to the Parish Council which was listed as item 6 on the Agenda. He understood he was allowed to speak and therefore support his application and answer any questions any Councillors had on his application.

In submitting his application for co-option he confirmed that he had represented Stoke since 1984, one way or another right up until January of this year (2019), both representing Stoke in Rochester Upon Medway City Council and then Medway Council. Both he and his wife had been Governors of Stoke School for many years, only retiring when it became an Academy.

He expressed that he would like to rejoin the Parish Council as a Member, rather than a Clerk because having been involved with the proposed closure of Stoke School, he enjoyed the involvement with the school, the local community and the discussions with the Member of Parliament for Medway.

He also expressed that because of his involvement it would be to the betterment of the Parish Council if he was co-opted. He confirmed that as he had a qualification for local government and general administrative duties, which took him a year to achieve. He asked if any members had any questions or concerns.

There followed a general discussion with a Councillor.

The public session was then closed and the meeting began at 7.45 pm.

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

Min 1641:19 Cllr J. Cole sent his apologies for non-attendance due to a personal commitment.

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## 2. Declarations of any Pecuniary or Personal Interests

Min 1642:19 None.

## 3. Minutes from the previous Parish Council Meeting

Min 1643:19 All Councillors confirmed that they had read the minutes and confirmed they were a true account of the meetings of Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2019 and Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

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

Min 1644:19 None.

## 5. Disclosure of other business

Min 1645:19 There was discussion on whether Cllr J. Cole had submitted a report regarding the car park but it was understood that this had not been the case.

Further discussion on proposing additional disabled spaces in the car park. Cllr B. Stone also suggested the possibility of Medway Council marking out the car park in the correct manner. All Councillors agreed that this should be added to the Agenda for the next meeting.

Cllr R. Bridge confirmed that he would encourage Cllr J. Cole to prepare a report regarding the disabled parking issue.

## 6. Vacancies

Min 1646:19 Cllr B. Stone invited proposals to co-opt the single applicant to the Parish Council. Cllr G. Barron proposed that Mr Rodney Morrad be co-opted on to the Parish Council and Cllr R. Bridge seconded the proposal.

There was a closed paper vote on the proposal. The application was successful but the voting was not unanimous.

The applicant was provided with a new Councillor pack which included a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was signed and hand to the Acting Clerk.

Cllr R. Morrad then took his seat at the meeting.

## 7. Planning Applications

Min 1647:19 There had been no new applications.

There was a general discussion on the decisions since last month.

Mrs D. Macdonald's application at the Land at the rear of Walnut Tree Farm, Grain road, Lower Stoke, Rochester was approved. Permission had been granted for 3 three-bedroomed bungalows with associated parking/car ports with demolition of existing buildings.

There was nothing new to report on the full change of use application from residential to dog breeding business.

## 8. Clerks Report (including correspondence)

Min 1648:19 As the Clerk was on Maternity Leave, her report would be presented at the October meeting.

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## 9. **Finance**

**Min 1649:19** There was a general discussion on the cost of clearing the brambles along the fence line at Stoke road park, as carried out by JR Brickwork. It was felt that the charge out rate was excessive but in any event the payment had to be approved.

It was proposed by Cllr J. Wallace and seconded by Cllr B. Stone that the payments to be made or having been made were accepted.

It was pointed out by Cllr R. Bridge that the cost of the black plastic bags was extremely high and suggested that, in future, they are purchased in bulk from either Bookers in Rochester or eBay at a great saving to the Parish Council. It was requested that the Clerk look into this cost saving.

## 10. **Representative Reports on outside bodies**

**Min 1650:19** Cllr J. Wallace reported that she had attended the Rural Liaison quarterly meeting which had been interesting. The meeting had been held to introduce all new members and to explain why the quarterly meetings are held. Ward Councillor Ron Sands was elected Chairman of the Rural Liaison Committee.

In general, everyone gives an account on their own community and if there are any particular problems, then this is fed back to Medway Council whereby any issue will be dealt with as required.

There is an issue with the moat at Cooling. The Council has refused to adopt the adjoining land for temporary highway.

The next meeting should be held in October whereby Cllr J. Wallace will attend and report back. Cllr G. Blackman confirmed that he had attended the Police Liaison Committee. That meeting had consisted of four members, including the Council representative, who is only scheduled to stay for 30 minutes. It is understood that he is not paid for his attendance but provided with time in lieu. There were no any Police Representatives in attendance.

Cllr G. Blackman confirmed that he has now resigned from the Committee as he felt that it was no longer worthwhile or viable.

Cllr R, Bridge confirmed that as far as he knew, there had not been a Village Hall Committee meeting.

## 11. **Play Parks Contract**

**Min 1651:19** There was general discussion on the general condition of the play park.

Councillors were concerned that children may be hurt. Cllr B. Stone confirmed that he would liaise with the Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, as to a way forward for definite repairs to the play park equipment. Cllr B. Stone to report back in the October meeting.

## 12. **Website & IT**

**Min 1652:19** Medway Council are contracted to update the Stoke Parish Council website but as there has been a change in staff, the updates have not been carried out.

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The possibility of creating a new site with Cllr J. Wallace having responsibility of updating the site was suggested. Cllr B. Stone requested that this idea be placed on the agenda for discussion in the October meeting.

## 13. Highways & Transportation

**Min 1653:19** Cllr G. Blackman confirmed that the sight lines were still obscured coming out of Middle Stoke.

Coming down from the Isle of Grain, the first entry into Lower Stoke on the right-hand side of the road.

The hedges that were planted in Middle Stoke by Medway Council also need cutting back.

It was decided that the Clerk was to write to Medway Council to request them to cut hedge back.

There is also dumping of rubbish at Newall Farm Road and Cuckolds Green Road, and Hoppers Lane.

Clerk to discuss this with Medway Council and report back at the October meeting.

## 14. J R Brickwork

**Min 1654:19** There was a long discussion on the cost of the works carried out by J R Brickwork and the reliability of the firm.

Clerk to look into the possibility of other firms within the area that could provide a more cost effective and efficient service. Clerk to report back at the October meeting.

## 15. Village Hall report

**Min 1655:19** Nothing to report.

## 16. Standing Orders

**Min 1656:19** There was a discussion on the most up to date preferred and statutory Standing Orders agreed and provided by NALC (National Association of Local Councils). It was agreed that Cllr R. Bridge would work through the new document and update where necessary from the previous Standing Orders that had been adopted by the Council.

Cllr R. Bridge would report back with draft document for approval for the October meeting.

## 17. Upper and Middle Stoke Notice Boards

**Min 1657:19** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, is to meet with relevant bodies regarding the Notice Boards and will therefore report back to the Council on the outcome.

## 18. Disabled Parking

**Min 1658:19** There was only a short discussion on the Disabled Parking as Cllr J. Cole was absent. Cllr R. Bridge would liaise with Cllr J. Cole on this and both would report back to the Council in the October meeting.

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19. **Weed Control at Heron Way**

Min 1659:19 Cllr J. Wallace had received several text messages from a resident who had been concerned at the weed control at Heron Way. Cllr J. Wallace requested that the resident attend the meeting to voice her concerns but unfortunately the resident had not arrived at the meeting to discuss the issue. It was suggested that the resident may have had child care issues.

It was decided to request a contractor to spray the weeds ASAP. An annual weed killing programme will be in place next year to stop any more issues.

Cllr J. Wallace to text the resident to request that she email the Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, and once the email is received, we can confirm what is being scheduled going forward.

20. **Village Voice article**

Min 1660:19 There was not an article available.

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

Min 1661:19 Cllr R. Morrad made a request to the Acting Clerk, Mrs L. Atkinson for a DP form link. Mrs L. Atkinson confirmed that the existing Clerk would be requested to send an electronic link.

Cllr R. Morrad also requested his own copy of the new NALC Standing Orders in order to help Cllr R. Bridge with any updates necessary. Mrs L. Atkinson handed Cllr R. Morrad a copy of the NALC Standing Orders.

22. **Date of next meeting**

Min 1662:19 The next meeting to take place at 7.00 pm on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2019

**The meeting ended at 8.12 pm.**