

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

MINUTES

Wednesday 8th January 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 1743:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, confirmed that she had not received an apology for absence from Cllr J. Cole, despite this being his fifth consecutive meeting he had missed.

2. To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Min 1744:20 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 1745:20 The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 4th December 2019, already circulated via the Clerk, were submitted.

Despite a couple of small manual amendments, it was proposed by the Vice-Chair Cllr G. Blackman and seconded by the Chairman Cllr B. Stone, 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 1746:20 None.

5. Disclosure of other business

Min 1747:20 Cllr R. Morrad spoke to request an update on the internal audit arrangements at the next meeting, he also suggested the Clerk upload future meeting dates onto Facebook, to allow Parishioners ample notice to attend.

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke in response to Cllr R. Morrad to advise that she had requested a meeting with Mr C. Fribbins in connection to the upcoming audit, the Chairman spoke to in response to the Clerk to express his interests in attending this meeting once arranged.

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A discussion ensued between the members in relation to the best way to promote Parish Council meetings on Facebook. It was recommended by Cllr R. Bridge that the Clerk set up a new business ID, under the name of Stoke Parish Council, to promote meetings via this persona.

6. Planning

a). Applications

Min 1748:20 None.

b). Decisions

Min 1749:20 The members acknowledged receipt of the following four (4) planning decisions since the last meeting.

- MC/19/2831 2 And 3 Denison Mews Lower Stoke Rochester Medway ME3 9LG
- MC/19/1246 Land Adjacent to Parsonage Cottages, The Street Stoke Rochester Medway ME3 9RT
- TPA/19/2656 Ashlea Vicarage Close Stoke Rochester Medway ME3 9SD
- TPA/19/2655 The Cottage Vicarage Lane Stoke Rochester Medway ME3 9SB

c). Appeals and Other Matters.

Min 1750:20 None.

7. Finance – Appendix B

a). To agree financial performance against the budget for December 2019

Min 1751:20 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 December 2019. 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 1752:20 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.

d). Accounts for payment.

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

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
HMRC	-	BACS	£260.21	Income Tax from December 2019 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£260.22	December 2019 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – December 2019
Royal British Legion	-	BACS	£50.00	Poppy Appeal Donation
Stoke Methodist Church	-	BACS	£100.00	Annual Donation
St Peter & St Paul's Church	-	BACS	£100.00	Annual Donation
Eastborough Landscapes	Min 1737:19	BACS	£571.20	Clearing of brambles at Button Drive

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				INV 262704
Colyn Property Services	Min 1449:18	BACS	£88.00	December 2019 Payment INV 2798
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	-	DIRECT DEBIT	£38.60	Broadband & Phone line rental for December 2019
The People's Pension	-	DIRECT DEBIT	£600.00	Admin Fee to join the People's Pension (agreed by the Chairman)
TOTAL			£2,103.23	
Natwest	-	Credit - BACS	£1.82	Interest on savings account
TOTAL			£1.82	

Min 1753:20 It was proposed by Cllr R. Morrad and seconded by the Vice-chair Cllr G. Blackman 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 discuss the proposed 2020/2021 Precept figures.

Min 1754:20 The Clerk Mrs J. Allen presented the members with the estimated predictions for overall expenditure for the financial year 2019/2020, along with her suggested budgets for the financial year 2020/2021.

She recommended the members considered keeping the Precept at the same level as last year, equating to £21,000.

A brief discussion ensued between the members where Cllr R. Morrad spoke to propose the members proceed with the Clerk's recommendation to keep the precept at the same level of £21,000, this proposal was seconded by Cllr G. Barron and unanimously agreed.

8. Grant Applications

Min 1755:20 None.

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

a). Playparks

i Allhallows Road Playpark

Min 1756:20 The Play Parks inspection from the month of December confirmed that the equipment appeared to be in good order.

Cllr G. Barron spoke to express his concerns that Eastborough Landscapes had not cleared the vegetation surrounding the outside of the playpark. The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke in response to admit responsibility for a miscommunication error. He advised that the contractors had been instructed to come back to spray the area with weed killer before the summer, so he hoped this would resolve the matter moving forward.

ii Heron Way Playpark

Min 1757:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred the members to the notes to advise that a large amount of small silver gas canisters had been found jettisoned within the skate park area. Apart from this the equipment appeared to be in good order.

iii Upper Stoke Playpark

Min 1758:20 The Play Parks inspection from the month of December confirmed that the equipment appeared to be in good order.

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Despite the comments in relation to the Heron Way playpark, all three reports were unanimously approved, as the equipment was deemed to be in an acceptable condition.

10. Highways & Transportation

a). Footpaths

Min 1759:20 Cllr G. Barron spoke to advise that despite communications with the footpaths officer (Mr A. Taylor of Medway Council) that the RS36 footpath still remained in poor condition.

A discussion ensued between Cllr G. Barron and the Chairman in relation to this footpath, where Cllr B. Stone offered to speak to George, the Manager of the Lettuce Company who owned the adjoining field, to ask for his assistance.

b). Lighting

Min 1760:20 Nothing to report.

c). Highways and verges

Min 1761:20 The Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, spoke to advise the wayward brambles obstructing the view of the Grain Road in Middle Stoke had been cut back to an acceptable level.

d). Pot holes

Min 1762:20 Cllr G. Barron spoke to report a pot hole located on Cuckolds Green Road, between telephone poles 4 & 5.

e). Fly tipping

Min 1763:20 Cllr G. Barron spoke to advised the discarded fridge and green tyre, located at New Hall Farm Lane, had still not been collected by the Council.

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, advised that she had lodged a report of fly tipping twice via the Medway Council website but she would speak directly to the Council to lodge a further complaint.

f). Litter Signs

Min 1764:20 The Parish Council acknowledged receipt of a quote from Medway Council for no litter signage, however following a discussion at the last meeting Min 1728:19 the members unanimously agreed not to proceed.

The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke to express his concerns that the pre-lite 'School' warning road signs were no longer being used. He asked the Clerk to write to the School to report this matter and to ask the Leigh Academies Trust to reinstate their usage, under serious concerns for the children's safety.

He also asked the Clerk to write to Medway Council to request an extension to the length of the yellow lines near to the school, to bring the lines 4/5 metres towards the Village Hall, in a bid to prevent the parents from parking on the corner obstructing the view of oncoming traffic. Cllr G. Barron seconded Cllr B. Stone's request, expressing his own concerns that emergency service vehicles would struggle to get past with the cars parked close to this corner.

11. Representatives Reports

a). KALC

Min 1765:20 No report.

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b). Rural Liaison

Min 1766:20 Cllr J. Wallace reported the next Rural Liaison committee meeting was scheduled to take place the next week.

c). Village Hall Committee

Min 1767:20 Cllr R. Bridge reported that there had not been no further meetings of the Village Hall Committee since the last Parish Council meeting.

12. Communications – Appendix D

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

Min 1768:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to confirm receipt of the December 2019 website usage report, which she had circulated to all members prior to the meeting. This report was evaluated by the members and deemed acceptable.

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

Min 1769:20 Cllr R. Morrad spoke to advise that he understood the deadline set by the Government for all websites to be GDPR compliant, stood at the 01/09/2020.

A discussion ensued between the Chairman and Cllr R. Morrad surrounding this date, following the construction of a new webpage.

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

Min 1770:20 Cllr J. Wallace spoke to inform the members that had been speaking to Linda Atkinson and was in the midst of arranging a date to meet with her, where Ms Atkinson had kindly agreed to show her how to create a new webpage and how to maintain the website. She advised that initial costs to create individual emails addresses for the Councillors could equate up to £200, but she hoped she would know more once the Parish Council had been allocated a ‘.gov’ account, which she had applied for and was now waiting to hear back.

d). To review items that could be used in the next edition of the Village Voices publication

Min 1771:20 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, asked the Clerk to move this item towards the end of the meeting as both he and the members were undecided what article they would like to submit. He also asked for this matter to be listed individually on the agenda moving forward.

13. External Contractors

a). J R Brickwork

Min 1772:20 No further requests for works were discussed or requested.

b). Eastborough Landscapes

Min 1773:20 No further requests for works were discussed or requested.

14. VE Day Celebrations

Min 1774:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to refer to an email she had sent, dated Thursday 2nd January, reminding the members that the first bank holiday in May had been moved back four (4) days to Friday 8th May, to co-inside with the 75th Anniversary of VE Day. She wondered if the Parish Council would consider either participating or hosting any VE celebrations of their own.

A short discussion ensued between the members, where both Cllr R. Morrad and the Chairman spoke in favour of this idea. The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone asked the Councillor members if they knew of any organisations that were already participating in VE celebrations that the Parish Council could aid with financial support. As the members knew of none, he instructed Cllr R. Morrad to look

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further into this matter and suggested placing an advert in the local publication asking for any interested parties to get in touch.

15. Pension Scheme

Min 1775:20 Upon the Chairman's request and coinciding with a letter from the Pensions Regulator referring to a possible financial penalty. The Clerk informed the members that the Chairman had given her permission to pay the People's Pension a £600 set up fee (including VAT) to join the provider.

She spoke further to advise that following a discussion at the last meeting **Min 1739:19** that she had rung the supplier to clarify the correct joining fee. She advised that whilst the usual administration fee was charged was £500 plus VAT, that the team had promised to listen to her original call, and if the incorrect fee had been quoted, then the provider would honour this and refund the Council the difference.

A discussion ensued between the members in relation to the back payments, where it was agreed the Parish Council would pay the total balance of £504.77 to fully update the Clerk's account.

It was also agreed that the Council should set up a financial arrangement with Mrs J Allen to claw the employee back payments back over a period of time, where Cllr R. Morrad suggested an amount of £20 per month.

The above recommendations were proposed by Cllr R. Morrad, seconded by the Chairman Cllr B. Stone and unanimously agreed.

16. 2020 Parish Council Meeting Dates

Min 1776:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to refer an email she had sent, dated Thursday 2nd January, with her recommendation of meeting dates for the year 2020.

After careful consideration these dates were deemed acceptable and a proposal to authorise publication of these dates in the public domain which was issued by Cllr R. Morrad, seconded by Cllr J. Wallace and unanimously agreed.

Date	Time	Location	Type of meeting
Wednesday 5th February 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	Monthly Meeting
Wednesday 4th March 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	Monthly Meeting
Wednesday 1st April 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	Monthly Meeting
Wednesday 6th May 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	APM followed by Annual Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 3rd June 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	Monthly Meeting
Wednesday 1st July 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	Monthly Meeting
Wednesday 2nd September 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	Monthly Meeting
Wednesday 7th October 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	Monthly Meeting
Wednesday 4th November 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	Monthly Meeting
Wednesday 2nd December 2020	7.00 pm	Stoke Village Hall	Monthly Meeting

Cllr R. Bridge spoke in response to the meeting date in May to provide his apologies in advance due to existing family commitments.

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17. Correspondence

Min 1777:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to report, like the last meeting, that she had received very little postal correspondence, the only items she had received included a copy of the most recent bank statement(s) and a couple of Viking Direct stationery flyers.

18. Reports and Circulars

Min 1778:20 Cllr G. Blackman spoke to advise that he was monitoring the situation with the drainage of sewage on the main road in Middle Stoke, after he noted it had been pumped out recently.

19. Date of next meeting

Min 1779:20 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke to confirm the date of the next meeting to be held at Stoke Village Hall on Wednesday 5th February 2020 at 7.00pm.

He thanked the members again for attending and closed the meeting at 8.21pm.