

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

MINUTES

Wednesday 4th March 2020

The Village Hall ~ 7.00 pm

Attendees: Cllr G. Blackman ~ Vice-chair Cllr G. Barron
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 members received a report from a representative of Stoke Methodist Chapel in connection to a 'Community Connection Event', organised by the RBLI and due to take place on Thursday 12th March. The Methodist Chapel asked for permission to advertise the event on the Parish Council notice boards, after careful consideration permission was granted, where it was agreed that Mr Sturnell would send a copy of the advertisement to the Clerk.

Part B. Public Discussions on any agenda items

None.

The meeting commenced at 7.10 pm and the Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

1. Apologies for absence

Min 1817:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, confirmed that she received an apologies for absence from both the Chairman, Cllr B Stone and from Cllr J. Wallace, who both had prior commitments.

2. To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Min 1818:20 None.

3. Disclosure of any other business of an urgent nature

Min 1819:20 None.

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

Min 1820:20 The minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th February 2020, already circulated via the Clerk, were submitted.

It was proposed by Cllr R. Morrad and seconded by the Cllr R. Bridge, that they be approved as a correct record and signed by the Vice-Chair Cllr G. Blackman. This motion was unanimously agreed.

5. Information arising from the minutes not on the agenda

Min 1821:20 None.

6. Planning

a). Applications

Min 1822:20 The members acknowledged receipt of just one application:

- **MC/20/0339 – CLH Stoke Grain Road**

It was agreed that the address on the application was not very clear.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

Cllr R. Morrad spoke to advise that this new application was only for an amendment to the materials and that the application had been agreed previously. It was therefore agreed that the members could not object on this basis.

The Vice-chair, Cllr G. Blackman also spoke to advise that a neighbouring property frequently had their back garden flooded by sewage, where he understood the pumping station had not used for some time. He also reported that the A228 / Grain Road in Lower Stoke had recently been closed in one direction with temporary traffic lights installed, to allow a vacuum tanker to unblock the drainage system.

b). Decisions

Min 1823:20 None.

c). Appeals and Other Matters.

Min 1824:20 None.

7. Finance – Appendix B

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

Min 1825:20 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 February 2020. The Councillors evaluated these figures and after careful consideration they were deemed as acceptable.

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

Min 1826:20 Cllr R. Morrad spoke to advise that he was abstaining from voting as the paperwork provided in the meeting packs was incomplete.

The Clerk double checked the paperwork she had provided and apologised for the printing error. She advised the members that she would circulate the correct information as soon as possible, to allow the figures to be signed off at the next meeting.

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	£38.80	Income Tax from January 2020 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£425.61	January 2020 wages
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – January 2020
Colyn Property Services	Min 1449:18	BACS	£88.00	February 2020 Payment INV 2825
Cartridge Save	-	BACS	£306.90	Black Toner and Coloured Ink Cartridges for office printer
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	-	DIRECT DEBIT	£32.00	Broadband & Phone line rental for February 2020
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£41.63	Both Employer & Employee

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

				Contributions for February 2020
TOTAL			£967.94	
High Halstow Parish Council	-	Credit - BACS	£31.09	50% contribution from High Halstow PC towards KPS Stationery Supplies order
High Halstow Parish Council	-	Credit - BACS	£15.05	50% contribution from High Halstow PC towards the Vodafone Communications package
TOTAL			£46.14	

Min 1827:20 It was proposed by Cllr R. Morrad and seconded by Cllr R. Bridge 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 receive a copy of the 2019 Financial Regulations

Min 1828:20 The members discussed the 2019 Financial Regulations, as previously circulated by the Clerk with the suggested amendments. It was proposed by Cllr R. Morrad and seconded by Cllr G. Barron that the new regulations be adopted. This motion was unanimously agreed.

g). To receive a quotation for a new accounting software package to aid the Clerk with the 2019/2020 Audit.

Min 1829:20 The Clerk handed the members a copy of the quote she had received from Rialtas Business Solutions, which provided two options for either a single or multi user licence for a new accounting software package.

A discussion ensued between the members in relation to the type of licence that would be required, where Cllr R. Bridge asked the Clerk to confirm if the multi user system was able to be installed on several machines.

After careful consideration it was proposed by Cllr R. Morrad and seconded by Cllr R. Bridge to purchase the new software package with a multi user licence at an initial cost of £520 (including set up charges and training).

8. Grant Applications

Min 1830:20 None.

The Clerk however made reference to a request she had received from Minister Kan Yu of the Stoke Methodist Church, the day prior to the meeting, requesting a grant for the next 'Big Lunch' event (due to take place in June 2020). She advised the members that as this request had not come in before the meeting packs were issued that she would include this request in the next month's edition.

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

a). Playparks

i Allhallows Road Playpark

Min 1831:20 The Play Parks inspection from the month of February confirmed that the equipment appeared to be in good order.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

It was also acknowledged that the contractor had removed a large branch that had fallen from a neighbouring tree, which had been placed outside of the play park along the edge of the recreation ground.

ii Heron Way Playpark

Min 1832:20 The Play Parks inspection from the month of February confirmed that the equipment appeared to be in good order.

It was also noted that several mini silver gas cannisters had been found which had been disposed of accordingly.

iii Upper Stoke Playpark

Min 1833:20 The Play Parks inspection from the month of February confirmed that the equipment appeared to be in good order.

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 report

Min 1834:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred the members to the report received from Treeventures Ltd, dated from 19th February 2020.

The members evaluated the report, where Cllr R. Morrad spoke to express his concerns that any item highlighted in red should be observed and addressed urgently to ensure the preservation of the Parish Council's insurance policy. He spoke further to advise that upon thorough inspection of the report that there appeared to be a large wild limb overhanging the play park at Allhallows Road, which the Parish Council had strongly been recommended by Arboriculture: Technician to remove as soon as possible.

It was proposed by Cllr R. Morrad that Parish Council should instruct a fully qualified tree surgeon, (with the correct insurance credentials and a risk assessment) to carry out the recommended works. This proposal was seconded by Cllr G. Barron and unanimously agreed.

Cllr R. Morrad handed the Clerk details of tree surgeon's he had identified in a local magazine and recommended that the Clerk should go out for tender to obtain more than one quotation.

10. Highways & Transportation

a). Footpaths

Min 1835:20 Cllr G. Barron spoke to report that he had met with Mr A. Taylor at the RS36 footpath, where both parties had agreed that the pass was in very poor condition.

He advised the members that Mr A. Taylor had notified him that he had made contact with the land owner approximately three (3) weeks ago, where the farmer had agreed to level off the ridges caused by the farming machinery. It was understood that these works had not taken place and that Mr A. Taylor was now struggling to get back in contact with the farmer not only in relation to this path but to others as well.

It was alleged that Mr A. Taylor would arrange for his workforce to strim the area in close to the footpath to make an easily accessible diversion in the interim, where his team would also cut back the footpath in Middle Stoke.

b). Lighting

Min 1836:20 Nothing to report.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

c). Highways and verges

Min 1837:20 Nothing to report.

The members acknowledged however that there had been a mini digger on the main road clearing the ditches owing to the recent flood warnings.

d). Pot holes

Min 1838:20 It was reported that there were several pot holes located at various locations along the main road.

e). Fly tipping

Min 1839:20 Cllr G. Barron spoke to advise that there were three (3) discarded mattresses adjacent to the Indian takeaway on the High Street at Lower Stoke.

f). School Warning Signs

Min 1840:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, referred the members to their meeting packs, where she had included the latest update from both Medway Council and the Leigh Academies Trust on the reinstatement of the use of the pre-lite 'School' warning road signs, which she advised was still ongoing.

11. Representatives Reports

a). KALC

Min 1841:20 It was acknowledged that the latest KALC meeting was scheduled for the same evening as this meeting and as such neither representative was able to attend.

b). Rural Liaison

Min 1842:20 It was acknowledged that in Cllr J. Wallace's absence there was no report.

c). Village Hall Committee

Min 1843:20 Cllr R. Bridge reported that there had been no further meetings of the Village Hall Committee since his last report.

12. Communications – Appendix D

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

Min 1844:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to confirm receipt of the January and February website usage reports, which she had circulated to the members prior to the meeting. These reports were evaluated and were deemed as acceptable.

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

Min 1845:20 It was acknowledged that in Cllr J. Wallace's absence there was no report.

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

Min 1846:20 It was acknowledged that in Cllr J. Wallace's absence there was no report.

13. External Contractors

a). J R Brickwork

Min 1847:20 No further requests for works were discussed or requested.

b). Eastborough Landscapes

Min 1848:20 No further requests for works were discussed or requested.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

14. Policies

a). To receive a copy of the proposed 2019/2020 General Risk Assessment

Min 1849:20 The members evaluated the 'General Risk Assessment', composed and circulated via the Clerk prior to the meeting.

After careful consideration it was proposed by Cllr R. Morrad that Parish Council should adopt the risk assessment, which was seconded by the Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, and unanimously agreed.

b). To receive a copy of the revised 2019/2020 Standing Orders

Min 1850:20 The members received a copy of the revised 2019/2020 Standing Orders, that had been conciliated by Cllr R. Bridge and compared against the previous adopted regulations.

After careful consideration the members agreed that the Clerk should seek the advice of NALC in connection to amending some of the mandatory wording (mainly to confirm the compulsory instruction of a Data Protection Officer under the new GDPR legislations as opposed to an optional officer, as listed in the model standing orders).

It was proposed by Cllr G. Barron that under item 2.2 of the Financial Regulations (Accounting and Audit) Cllr R Morrad be appointed, being neither the Chairman or a cheque signatory, to verify bank reconciliations on all accounts. This proposal was seconded by Cllr R. Bridge and unanimously agreed.

Cllr R. Morrad also spoke to suggest that the members should consider arranging for several sub-committees to address certain topics which would allow these areas to be thoroughly investigated before bringing these items back for consideration by the full Council. The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen spoke in response to recommend the instruction of working parties instead of sub-committees, advising that working parties would be able to meet whenever necessary and without having to promote their meetings in the public domain, allowing for the 3 statutory working days' notice.

The members agreed that that there should be a compiled list of the Council's multiple policies, to allow the members to review these items on a regular basis and to adopt/amend them accordingly in time for the end of each financial year.

c). To discuss the introduction of an antiracism policy

Min 1851:20 Cllr R. Bridge spoke to recommend that this item be carried over to the next meeting where this item could be discussed at length by the full Council.

15. Village Hall Car Park

Min 1852:20 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, spoke to advise that following the last meeting that she had noted that new the padlock to secure the chain to Village Hall Car Park gate had been stolen and that presently the car park remained unlocked. She asked the Parish Council to consider arranging for a new padlock which would need to be welded onto the chain to secure the barrier, citing the old padlock attached to this chain was broken and unusable.

After careful consideration the members agreed that Cllr R. Bridge would breach this question at the next Village Hall Committee meeting and report back to the members with his findings in due course.

16. Village Voice Publication

Min 1853:20 It was agreed that the Clerk would write an article for the next edition of the Village Voices publication to promote Stoke's Annual Parish meeting, due to take place in May.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

17. Correspondence

Min 1854:20 None.

18. Reports and Circulars

Min 1855:20 None.

19. Date of next meeting

Min 1856:20 The Vice-Chair, Cllr G. Blackman, spoke to confirm the date of the next meeting to be held at Stoke Village Hall on Wednesday 1st April 2020 at 7.00pm.

He thanked the members for attending and closed the meeting at 8.58 pm