

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



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

MINUTES

Wednesday 2nd November 2022

Parish Council Meeting

Village Hall ~ 7.00 pm

Attendees: Cllr B. Stone ~ Chairman Cllr G. Blackman
Cllr K. Mansell Cllr P. Egan
Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk

Members of the public: Four (4)

PUBLIC SESSION ~ NOT PART OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Part A. Public Discussions

A member from the Stoke Community Project spoke to provide a report surrounding their most recent events, where the Parish Councillors learnt that their Halloween disco, that taken place on Saturday 29th October in the Nags Head public house garden, had been a great success. She spoke further to provide an itinerary of their next planned events before closing her report in asking permission to decorate the Parish Council's Christmas tree and for sponsorship for their 'Over 60's Complimentary Tea', which had been booked to take place in the Stoke Village Hall on Saturday 19th November.

A discussion ensued concerning the Stoke Community Project's sponsorship request, where the members agreed to discuss this matter in further detail later in the meeting. They also addressed ideas for a celebratory event to mark the King's Coronation next year, where the Clerk was asked to ensure this item was added to the members next agenda.

A member of the public spoke to complain about the recent vandalism that had taken place in the Lower Stoke High Street, where several cars had been damaged from a key being dragged across their paintwork.

A further Parishioner spoke to complain about the speed several vehicles had been witness travelling through Middle Stoke and finally the members discussed the upgrades to the pumping station, located nearby.

Part B. Public Discussions on any agenda items

None.

The Chair, Cllr B. Stone opened the meeting at 7.20pm and thanked both the Councillors and the members of the public for attending.

1. Apologies for absence

Min 7372:22 Two apologies for absence were received.

The first was from Cllr J. Wallace, who was absent following a bereavement and the second was from Cllr K. Copping, who had prior commitments.

2. To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

Min 7373:22 None.

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3. Disclosure of any other business of an urgent nature

Min 7374:22 Cllr G. Blackman spoke to express his disappointment that KALC had not been included as an item on the agenda.

4. Vacancies

a). To discuss any applications received relating to the Parish Council's outstanding vacancy.

Min 7375:22 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen spoke to inform the members that she had received no further interest concerning their current outstanding vacancy.

5. Minutes from the previous Parish Council Meeting

a). To receive and approve the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th October 2022.

Min 7376:22 The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 5th October 2022, were circulated.

Following the amendment of a couple of spelling errors, it was proposed by Cllr K. Mansell and seconded by Cllr P. Egan, that the minutes be approved as a correct record. This motion was unanimously agreed.

6. Information arising from the minutes not on the agenda

Min 7377:22 None.

7. Planning

a). Applications

Min 7378:22 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone spoke to inform the members that there had been no new planning applications received since the last meeting.

Cllr G. Blackman also spoke to advise that he had recently received a letter from Medway Council concerning the construction of a new 2-bedroom chalet bungalow in Middle Stoke, where he was surprised that this item had not been showing on the Council's planning portal yet.

b). Decisions

Min 7379:22 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone spoke to acknowledge there had been no new planning decisions made since the member's last Parish Council meeting either.

c). Appeals and Other Matters.

Min 7380:22 None.

8. Finance

a). To agree financial performance against the budget for the month October 2022.

b). Update of account(s) for 2022/23 including payments received.

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

Min 7381:22 The members reviewed the budget reports provided in their meeting packs.

Cllr P. Egan spoke to address the member's financial performance at the 6-month mark, where he asked the Clerk to send him a copy of her excel spreadsheet for further evaluation.

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d). Accounts for payment.

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

Min 7382:22 Cllr P. Egan spoke further to propose that points a, b,d & e be approved en bloc, this proposal was seconded by Cllr G. Blackman and was unanimously agreed.

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£535.92	October 2022 Wages
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£35.00	Use of home office – October 2022
HMRC	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£1.80	Payment of Tax & NI for October 2022 Payroll
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	Min 1451:18	DIRECT DEBIT	£36.61	ESTIMATED (VODAFONE WEBSITE DOWN) Broadband & Telephone line rental for October 2022
Colin Davis	Min 1992:20	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£128.00	October 2022 Payment Inspections & Cleaning INV:3618
Ebay	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	PAID BY CARD	£36.99	Sandwich display board
Treeventures	Min 7302:22	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£440.00	Arboricultural report for Button Drive, Mallard Way and The Steet. INV: 1715
Handar Paving Ltd	Min 7266:22	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£2,690.40	Replacement of damaged fencing at Button Drive and removal of tree stump INV: 2060
Village Hall	Min 7315:22	PAID BY BACS	£1,000.00	Annual Maintenance Payment.
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£43.16	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for October 2022
TOTAL			£4,947.88	

9. Management of the Council's land and property

a). To review the play park inspections for:

- i Allhallows Playparks Road Playpark
- ii Heron Way Playpark
- iii Upper Stoke Playpark

b). To receive an update on the long-term upkeep of the Button Drive, Heron Way & Upper Stoke Playparks.

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Min 7383:22 Cllr P. Egan spoke to provide a verbal report, where he confirmed that he and Cllr K. Mansell had been carrying out regular inspections of the play parks.

He spoke of several areas of rust throughout the parks and advised that there were a few metal sections that had warped that he was planning on bringing back into line with a panel beater.

He spoke of plans to rub down some of the equipment in order to prime it, where he requested permission to use the £50 playground budget for the month of November on some heavy duty wire wool.

c). To discuss making part of the Button Drive Playpark into a 'Dog Zone'.

Min 7384:22 Following Cllr P. Egan's suggestion at the October meeting to possibly install a separate dog zone, along the side of the new fencing at the Button Drive recreation ground ref:

Min 7345:22, the members were reminded that they were not permitted to retract their decisions within a 6-month period, according to their own standing orders.

d). To discuss the outcome of the Youth Engagement meeting, held on Saturday 22nd October.

Min 7385:22 Cllr P. Egan spoke to inform the members that the Youth Engagement meeting held on Saturday 22nd October, had gone well. He advised that up to 10 children had been in attendance, where several very good suggestions were put forward which included, but were not limited to:

- A separate graffiti wall,
- A treehouse,
- A basketball net,
- A rope swing,
- A climbing wall,
- A tunnel,

Cllr P. Egan spoke further to advise that the children had suggested making the recreation ground at Button Drive into a ball game friendly park, whilst the Heron Way recreation ground could be used for activities only.

He advised that complaints were aired that the older teenagers were intimidating towards the younger members and mainly used the skate ramp to congregate at. He advised that the children had reported graffiti all over the back of the skate ramp and lots of smashed glass surrounding the bottom end of the Heron Way recreation ground.

Cllr P. Egan closed his report in advising that the children had appealed for a football net to be installed, where they expressed interest in using the recreation ground goal posts.

In order to preserve the football nets life expectancy, Cllr P. Egan proposed that the children could put up the new nets before use and remove afterwards, should the Parish Council agree to purchase them.

e). To receive an update on the installation of three Platinum Jubilee trees.

Min 7386:22 Cllr B. Stone spoke to inform the members that the three (3) Platinum Jubilee trees were on order.

Min 7387:22 Cllr K. Mansell spoke of an idea she had had of installing a memorial plaque in front of the trees, which would not only mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee but also commemorate the King's accession to the throne.

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A discussion ensued and several ideas were batted around, one of which included the renaming of one of the play parks to commemorate the Kings Coronation.

10. Highways & Transportation

a). Footpaths

Min 7388:22 No report.

b). Lighting

Min 7389:22 No report.

c). Highways and verges

Min 7390:22 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone asked the Clerk to report the broken drain outside of Bernie's Cottages.

Min 7391:22 Cllr G. Blackman also advised that the road surface located outside Tudor Farm in Upper Stoke was delaminating and needed completely resurfacing.

Min 7392:22 Finally, Cllr K. Mansell spoke to complain that she had noted there had been a white van parked regularly on the corner of Mallard Way, that was blocking the sight line. Cllr G. Blackman spoke in response to provide the members with a note of the parking team's contact telephone number again, where he urged the members to report incidents such as this.

d). Pot holes

Min 7393:22 Cllr G. Blackman also asked the Clerk to chase the infill of the marked potholes, located along the High Street in Lower Stoke.

e). Fly tipping

Min 7394:22 No report.

f). Grass cutting

Min 7395:22 No report.

11. Communication

a). Update on the Parish Council's new webpage and associated email addresses

b). Parish Council owned tablets

Min 7396:22 No report.

12. Village Hall

a). To receive an update on the status of the Village Hall

Min 7397:22 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone spoke to inform the members that the Village Hall had recently had an electricity inspection, where the contractor had noted several points for improvement.

13. External Contractors

Min 7398:22 Cllr P. Egan spoke to inform the members that he had sprayed the moss covering the floor surfacing in the playparks with vinegar, however the moss still required scraping to completely kill it off.

Accordingly, Cllr P. Egan reminded the Clerk to source a quote, where he asked her to ensure that the moss was not jet washed away, sharing concerns that this could further damage the surfacing that was nearing the end of its life expectancy.

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14. **Feedback to Public Questions**

a). To receive a response/update on the last public questions raised, following the Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 5th October 2022

Min 7399:22 The members discussed the enquiry made at their last meeting surrounding making one of parks/ part of the Button Drive recreation ground into a 'dog friendly' zone.

Cllr P. Egan spoke to response to remind the members that they were not able to re-vote on decisions made in a period of less than 6 months, according to their standing orders.

Accordingly, the Clerk was asked to place the item back on the agenda for further discussion after the May 2023 elections.

15. **Lower Stoke Car Park Layout**

a). To receive an update on the new layout of the Lower Stoke Car Park

Min 7400:22 Cllr P. Egan advised the members that the quotes he had sourced to paint lines in the Lower Stoke car park through local contractors, had all been extortionately expensive.

Following a prior conversation with the Clerk however, Cllr P. Egan confirmed receipt of the contact details for Medway Norse, where he advised that he was going to contact the them for a further quote.

He closed his report in advising the members that the car park would need resurfacing soon.

16. **Village Events**

a). Christmas 2022.

Min 7401:22 The members collectively spoke of arranging for a Christmas tree 'light switching on ceremony', where they also addressed the Stoke Community Project's request of decorating the tree with memorial decorations and gave it their blessing.

Following a report from Cllr K. Copping, who had sourced a quote for some solar powered fairy lights, the members approved a budget of £150 to include both the lights and the Christmas tree.

Accordingly, the Clerk was asked to order the fairy lights and arrange for them to be transported to directly to the Chairman.

The ceremony was agreed to take place on Sunday 4th December, after dusk.

17. **Emergency Plan**

a). To discuss further the idea of arranging for an emergency plan and to set a date for a meeting with the community concerning its contents.

Min 7402:22 Cllr P. Egan spoke to urge the members to set up an emergency plan meeting, where he spoke of inviting several companies that included, but were not limited to:

- Medway Council
- The Highways Agency
- The Environmental Team
- Emergency Services
- wHoo Cares
- Various Community projects
- Warden of MHS Homes

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Cllr P. Egan spoke further to address several points that needed to be mapped out, where the members collectively spoke of the best day and time to organise this meeting.

After a short discussion took place. The members agreed that the meeting should take place on a Saturday, where the Clerk was asked to organise a meeting on Saturday 10th December from Midday onwards in the Stoke Village Hall.

18. Policies

a). To review the following existing policy for adoption:

- **Standing orders**

Min 7403:22 Cllr P. Egan spoke to advise the members that he had not had an opportunity to review the members standing orders, where he asked the Clerk to carry this agenda item over to the next meeting.

19. Correspondence

Min 7404:22 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen advised the members that she had recently received a letter from the HMRC asking her to get in touch concerning the Parish Council's S126 tax return, which she confirmed she would be actioning as a matter of urgency.

20. Reports and Circulars

Min 7405:22 Cllr G. Blackman spoke to inform the members that he was attending KALC's AGM, which had been scheduled to take place on Saturday 19th November.

He advised that following correspondence from KALC, that he understood that two members from the Parish Council were able to be present, where he urged any other interested parties to get in touch with either he or the Clerk.

He closed his report in confirming that he had also attended the last KALC meeting, where the Monitoring Officer from Medway Council, Bhupinder Gill, had been present and had provided a talk on the regulations of being a Parish Councillor.

21. Any other business

Min 7406:22 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen spoke to address her idea to purchasing some large Armistice Day Poppies to attach to the lampposts throughout the main roads through Lower, Middle & Upper Stoke next November. A discussion ensued, where the members were receptive to her idea.

In the interim the Parish Council gave the Clerk permission to purchase four (4) large poppies to attach the two new commemorative benches, located in Middle Stoke and Upper Stoke for the 2022 Armistice Day commemorations.

Min 7407:22 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen was also reminded to include the 'Over 60's Complimentary Tea' to the next agenda, where the members agreed that they were not able to authorise any sponsorship without this item being listed on the agenda for formal discussion.

22. Date of next meeting

Min 7408:22 The Chairman, Cllr B. Stone, spoke to inform the members that the next meeting would take place in the main Village Hall on Wednesday 7th December 2022.

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23. **Close of meeting**

Min 7409:22 The Chairman, closed the meeting at 8.25pm and thanked everyone for attending.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on:

Wednesday 7 th December 2022	7.00pm	The Village Hall
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