

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held in The Hall Annexe at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 9th January 2017.

Present: Councillors Peter Williams (Chairman), John Ellis (Vice Chairman), Sue Abel, Diane Brown, Liz Eden, Paul Eden, Jill Howe, Alyson Jewson, Chris Jewson, Liz Miller, Keith Shakespeare and Dean Smith.

In attendance: Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk), Chris Cooke (Parish Lengthsman) plus two members of the public.

Public Question Time:

A member of the public raised his ongoing concerns regarding the major roadworks on the M5 and the resulting impact on residents living on the A38 Redditch Road. The Chairman pointed out that, whilst the Parish Council understood the residents' concerns, there was very little that they could do to change the situation. They had already written letters of complaint to the Highways Agency and the local MP without any success.

160/16 Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Paul Eden and Keith Shakespeare.

161/16 Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensation

None.

162/16 Minutes of the Meetings held on the 3 October and the 7 November 2016

The minutes of the meetings held on the 3 October and the 7 November 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

163/16 Urgent Decisions since the Council's last Meeting

The Chairman reported that he had been asked to give a reference for the Clerk who had applied for the post of Clerk to Hartlebury Parish Council. The interviews had taken place that morning and he had been successful in being appointed as their Clerk. The Chairman added that he was happy that this additional role would not impact on his duties with Stoke Parish Council.

Councillors congratulated the Clerk on his appointment.

164/16 District and County Councillors' Reports

There were no Councillors in attendance.

165/16 Finance

(1) Invoices for Payment

It was unanimously agreed to approve the payments as set out on the list circulated at the meeting.

(2) Financial Management Statement for November 2016

This was noted.

166/16 Progress Reports by the Chairman and the Clerk

None.

167/16 Project Updates

The Clerk reported that work on the new website was progressing well and he hoped to release the link to Councillors in the next few days.

The Clerk stated that the notice board at Buntsford Hill required repairing and this would also be a good opportunity to move it closer to the bridge so that it faced Fish House Lane and was more visible. The cost of the work would be in the region of £60/£70. The Council unanimously agreed to proceed with this work.

Chris Jewson reported that the County Council had now installed new gates at either end of the footpath across the Stoke Heath Recreation Area.

The Council thanked Liz Eden for her excellent work in producing the latest Parish Newsletter.

168/16 Diary Commitments

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the next meeting of CALC would take place on Wednesday 14 December. The Chairman and John Ellis confirmed that they would attend.

169/16 Co-Option to Communications Committee

It was unanimously agreed that Liz Eden should join the Communications Committee until the Parish Council's 2017 Annual Meeting at which time all committee memberships would be reviewed.

170/16 Parish Fete or Alternative Event 2017

The Chairman stated that he felt that it was time to 'rest' the Parish Fete and to look at alternative events which could be held in late June/early July. After a lengthy discussion on the possible options to the Parish Council, it was agreed that they should look at the following:-

- 1) Non-animal circus
- 2) Outdoor Film Night
- 3) Community Fun Day

171/16 Arrangements for Emptying of Waste Bins and Dog Bins in the Parish

The Clerk reported that Brookfield Contract Services would be ending the contract to empty the waste and dog bins at the recreation areas and the picnic site at the end of March 2017. He added that, under current arrangements, the Parish Council shared the cost of a 'Eurobin' to collect the waste with Alvechurch and Belbroughton Parish Councils and he was now looking at options for the collection of the waste and the siting of the 'Eurobin' for the next financial year and beyond.

172/16 Reflective Speed Signs for Waste Bins

The Chairman put forward the suggestion that the Parish Council purchase a stock of 30mph warning stickers and issue them to households to stick on their wheelie bins. He felt that this might help to make drivers aware of the need to manage their speed particularly in residential areas.

It was agreed that the Clerk and the Chairman should look at the cost of purchasing the stickers and to check whether the District Council would have any objections to this proposal. It was also agreed to look at the options of doing a trial on the most popular routes.

173/16 Correspondence

None.

174/16 Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

At this juncture, the Chairman invited Chris Cooke, the Parish Lengthsman, to give an update on the work he was currently doing in the parish particularly with regard to dealing with water management issues, ditch clearing etc.

Following on from Chris Cooke's comments, the Clerk stated that he had requested a further 10 vergemaster reflective posts which would cost £250 plus VAT. It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should go ahead and order the posts.

Chris Jewson commented on the footpath signs required in the parish and it was agreed that he should arrange for the County Council to supply the materials and then liaise with Chris Cooke regarding their installation.

The Clerk reported that the woodland on the Harris Brush Works site had been sold but that the new owner had indicated that they did not want the picnic site. He added that he would pursue the matter and ensure that the necessary legal arrangements were put in place to safeguard the site.

Diane Brown commented on the recent incident involving a HGV getting stuck in Weston Hall Road. The Clerk agreed to raise the Council's concerns with the highway authority and Cllr Bloore.

Dean Smith put forward the suggestion that the Parish Council meetings should be recorded and broadcast live via Facebook. Whilst the majority of Councillors were opposed to this idea, the Chairman agreed that it should be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

175/16 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 9 January 2017 commencing at 7.30pm at the Annexe, Avoncroft Arts Centre.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Chairman