



# Stoke by Clare

## Parish Council

### Minutes of a Meeting of Stoke by Clare Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at The Barn, Ashen Lane, Stoke by Clare

#### Present

##### Parish Councillors:

G Dadd (Chairman)	K Nichols
J Blake James (Vice Chairman)	E Smith
J Kiddy	P Vincent
R McKenny	

##### Also present:

Councillor N Clarke	West Suffolk Council
Councillor M Rushbrook	West Suffolk Council
Judith Dignum	Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

**Apologies for absence:** Councillor K Richardson (West Suffolk Council)

#### 1. Chairman's Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chairman welcomed those present and apologies for absence were accepted.

#### Suspension of Standing Orders (7.32pm)

Upon the motion of the Chairman, duly carried, Standing Orders were suspended to allow public questions and the receipt of reports.

#### 2. Receipt of Reports and Consideration of Issues Raised by Members of the Public

##### Reports

The Council received with thanks a verbal update from the West Suffolk Councillors in attendance and a written update from Suffolk County Councillor Bobby Bennett.

- It was agreed to include a summary of the first item of Cllr Bennett's July report (Help for Suffolk Pre-payment Meter Customers) in the next edition of The Record, and to display the text on the noticeboard.
- Noting that West Suffolk Council was undertaking a review of its grass cutting services, the Parish Council expressed support for the service provided currently, noting that alternative contractors were not readily available.

#### Standing Orders re-applied (7.35pm)

#### 3. Declarations of Interest

None.

#### 4. Minutes: 24 July 2023

Upon the motion of Cllr Blake James, seconded by Cllr McKenny and duly carried, it was:

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 24 July 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The following matters arose from consideration of the minutes:

- **Minute 2** (Consideration of Issues Raised by Members of the Public)  
The Council expressed thanks to the new tenants of The Lion and the many volunteers from Stoke and beyond who had worked so hard (with impressive results) to prepare the pub for its re-opening on 8 September.
- **Minute 4** (Minutes: 19 June 2023)
  - i. The Chairman on behalf of the Council thanked Cllr Paul Vincent for restoring the Village sign to such an excellent standard. Cllr McKenny updated members on the arrangements to install the sign, and it was agreed to prepare an article for The Record.
  - ii. The Clerk undertook to contact Cllr Bobby Bennett concerning the current position on implementation of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) on the A1092.
- **Minute 10** (Correspondence – Appointment of Parish Council Representative to The Barn Committee)  
Upon the motion of Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Blake James and subsequently carried, it was:

**Resolved:**

That Cllr Jane Kiddy be appointed as the Parish Council's representative on The Barn Committee (Village Hall Committee), the position having been held previously by Cllr Karen Kennair until the Parish Council elections in May 2023.

**5. Finance and Audit**

The Cashbook was available for inspection.

**i. Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)**

The Clerk updated the Council on the latest position regarding the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2022/23. The report of the Internal Auditor having just been received, it was agreed that this should be circulated to all members for consideration and formal approval at a special meeting of the Council later in September.

**ii. Budget Monitoring Statement to 31 July 2023**

The Council received the Budget Monitoring Statement to 31 July 2023, noting that payment of VAT reclaims for the years 2021/22 and 22/23, in the total sum of £9118.59, had now been made by HMRC.

**Resolved**

To receive and note the Budget Monitoring Statement to 31 July 2023, subject to correction of a typographical error on the first page where a figure was wrongly stated as £9118.92 instead of £9118.59.

**iii. Bank Reconciliation**

The Bank Reconciliation for the period 1 July to 1 August inclusive (date of the latest bank statement), indicating a net bank balance of £37,810.26 was noted by the Council and signed by Cllr Dadd as Chairman of the Finance Committee: Cllr Dadd also signed the associated bank statement.

**iv. Accounts for Payment**

Accounts for payment in the sum of £4,806.37 were authorised (as set out in an appendix to these minutes), and cheques signed accordingly.

**6. Playground Update**

Members noted that the repair to the roundabout was now complete, and the equipment was functioning effectively. However, in the light of dissatisfaction at the level of customer service offered by the supplier, it was agreed to consider trying a different company in future.

Cllr Dadd advised that the swing seats were also in need of repair and quotes had been obtained from two companies. As there was a large cost discrepancy, the Clerk was requested to seek advice from the Council's play area inspection service on the suitability of the cheaper product.

**7. Village Notice Boards**

The Council considered the possibility of installing an additional notice board or boards as an aid to village communication, engagement and cohesion. A site at the entrance to Church Park was identified as a suitable location. Cllr Nicholls undertook to research suitable options (including costings for design and installation) and to liaise with the landowner. Cllr Rushbrook advised that contact be made with the Parish Council in Stradishall where a new noticeboard had been installed recently.

**8. The Barn/Club Committee Minutes**

With a view to encouraging engagement with local clubs and societies, the Council agreed to liaise with the Village Hall Committee and village bowls, football and tennis clubs regarding publication of meeting minutes on the Stoke by Clare website and village noticeboard/s.

**9. Glider Tug-Plane Noise**

Cllr Blake James shared concerns reported to him regarding noise from tug-planes operating at Essex Gliding Club, located close to the village. Members expressed the view that the best course of action would be for the resident to liaise with Essex Gliding Club direct. They would also be welcome to address the Council in person at a future meeting.

**10. Correspondence**

**D-Day 80:** The Council noted that a national programme of activities was being organised to mark the official commemoration of the D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 6 June 2024. This would include a lighting of beacons at 9.15pm on the day. Actions were agreed as follows:

- An entry to be placed in the next edition of The Record, asking residents to make known to the Parish Clerk their views on participation in the official commemoration.
- Cllr Kiddy undertook to liaise with contacts concerning possible plans for events in Long Melford and at Kentwell Hall.

- Cllr Kiddy to liaise with local funeral directors for advice on cleaning the War Memorial and Cllr Smith to liaise with Toby Edwards regarding arrangements made in the past.
- Regarding the identification of suitable contractors for cleaning the War Memorial, Cllr Smith undertook to liaise with Toby Edwards and Cllr Kiddy with local funeral directors.

### **11. Date of Next Meeting**

Noted that the next meeting of the Council would take place at 7.30pm on **Thursday 19 October 2023** at The Barn, Ashen Lane, Stoke by Clare, CO10 8JA: This replaces the previously agreed date of Monday 16 October. In the absence of the Chairman, the meeting would be chaired by the Vice-Chairman, Cllr Blake James

Cllr Blake James agreed to confirm whether it may be helpful for the Council to make a permanent move away from Monday evening meetings to allow The Barn to accept a new regular booking in that slot.

### **12. Urgent Business**

The Chairman agreed to consideration of the following item of urgent business on the grounds that the situation had escalated.

#### **Dog Fouling**

The Council noted that incidents of dog fouling were occurring at various prominent locations within the village. Cllr Rushbrook undertook to provide Cllr Kiddy with information from West Suffolk Council regarding the Dog Warden service, and how to report dog nuisance. Anyone failing to clear up after up after their dog could be fined a maximum of £1,000.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.

Signed.....

**Chairman**  
**19 October 2023**

Appendix

**Stoke by Clare Parish Council  
Accounts for Payment Authorisation, 4 September 2023**

**AUTHORISED**

	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>To Whom</b>	<b>Amount £</b>	<b>Authorised</b>
1.	592	UK Power Networks – connection of supply to Bowls Club*	3,896.40	05/08/23
2.	593	Street Cleaner salary August 2023	116.28	04/09/23
3.	594	<b>Parish Clerk salary</b> a. Salary August '23 b. Reimbursement – printer ink <b>Subtotal</b>	273.50 69.88 <b>343.38</b>	“
4.	595	West Suffolk Council – Parish Elections May '23	81.91	“
5.	596	SALC – Internal Audit 2022/23	368.40	“
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,806.37</b>	

\* For confirmation – approved and paid since last meeting