

Minutes of the meeting of Stoke by Clare Parish Council held on Wednesday 11th December 2024 at The Barn, Ashden Road, Stoke by Clare at 19.30.

Present:

Chair	Cllr Dadd
Vice Chair:	Cllr Kiddy
Councillors	Cllr Smith, Cllr Blake James, Cllr Sullivan, Cllr Nichols

In Attendance:

Clerk to the Council	Matthew Price – Clerk to the Council
	Cllr Bobby Bennett – Suffolk County Council
	Cllr Karen Richardson - West Suffolk Council

1 Apologies for absence and declaration of interest

- None

2 Declarations of interest

- None

3 Public participation

- None

4 Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd October 2024 – Confirmed and signed by Cllr Dadd.

5 Reports

a) Suffolk County Councillors – Cllr Bennett

Cllr Bennet opened the discussion up with the good news that the pothole repairs and maintenance in the parish is working and holding up and more money is being invested to stay ahead of the repair curve. The new government removed the current devolution agreement and Cllrs are awaiting any updates following a white paper that is due out later in the week that will tell them what local government will look like.

Cllr Bennett gave members an update on Baythorne Bridge and discussions that are ongoing, the issue around flooding on that corner is deeply frustrating as there are thousands of issues like this around the county and Baythorne isn't in the top 10, the bridge has been re surveyed for weight constraints and the findings were that HGV's are ok using it and the bridge is capable of handling them, however Cllr Bennett informed members she will keep pushing and fighting for local parishes.

The TRO was addressed and members were informed that currently there is a lorry watch scheme in place via the Trading standards office and that is ongoing and by December there may be some powers of enforcement possible, members will be informed, Cllr Bennett asked the Council for its ongoing support into the project, Cllr Dadd suggested the support would be there but it would need to be a enforcement solution or it would be a waste of money and effort.

The TRO will need further support, decisions and input from all Parishes, and this will be forth coming early in 2025, members asked various questions in relation to Lorry watch and how it worked and then traffic solutions on Baythorne bridge, non were needing resolution but noted by Cllr Bennett.

Cllr Bennett also asked if she could be included on the agenda posting e mail – The Clerk will action this for January meeting.

b) West Suffolk Councillors report – Cllr Richardson

Cllr Richardson updated members on the Bin collection update that is planned for 2025 and asked to be added to the agenda list – Clerk to add Cllr Richardson (e mail provided)

c) 2025 Meeting dates – Noted and Approved

d) Clerks report - Noted

6 Members items and questions (not included elsewhere)

- a) Village communication methods – Cllr Sullivan & Cllr Nichols informed members of the current process of posting social media details on the Parish Facebook page, members agreed to ensure governance and compliance that they continue to hold the admin responsibilities and also 1 outside member the ability to post but not submit until Council admin had approved, the Clerk also wished that any posts that require approval for legislation and governance be approved by him prior to admin posting, members were in agreement and voted unanimously with detail
- b) Management of the Allotments – Cllr Dadd informed members of on going conversations with the Allotment association and gave various options to carry forward following on from their correspondence, it was agreed that Cllr Dadd contact the Association with 3 plans going forward, 1, To remove all wire fencing around plots in question, 2, Cllr Blake James to provide and support the cutting of the plots in question and 3, Cllr Dadd to inform Association that the Council will actively but controlled, spray off the main brambles with corrective methods and products, none of the works will be carried out without full agreement between the Council and Association

- c) Redevelopment of Pond area – It was agreed by members that Cllr Nichols report back to council at a later date, costings and plans for the re development
- d) Update of funding for fence and bench's renewal – Cllr Smith informed members that a funding application had been sent on to cover costs for the proposed work, Cllr Smith will keep Council updated on progress and report back.
- e) A1902 Traffic conditions – Cllr Bennett included this matter within her report – Noted
- f) Receive an update on War Memorial cleaning – Cllrs Dadd & Kiddy meticulously cleaned the memorial, and it is now looking at lot better, there will need to be some ongoing cleaning, but members thanked Cllrs Dadd & Kiddy for all their hard work in tackling this task

7 Finance

- a) The Months accounts and payment list are to follow when the Clerk has completed the change of names and authorisation for the bank account – Noted
- b) To review Bowls Club finances – Accepted & noted
- c) To note Pay award from NALC for 2025/26 – Accepted and noted
- d) Consider the quotation for grounds maintenance – It was agreed by members to award the grass cutting contract for 2025 to West Suffolk Council – Accepted and noted
- e) To consider the Playgrounds quotation for repairs – Cllr Dadd informed members of the remedial works that need to be carried out in the play park following a recent inspection, and the costs were presented, however the Chair has submitted a grant funding application to cover the costs associated, and when decisions are made, Cllr Dadd will report to council.
- f) To consider the Precept and Budget for 2025/26 – The Finance committee produced a draft consideration to council for approval, the main expenditure was agreed with one element needing discussion, Grant funding, members gave reasons why Grant funding requires a step reduction and tighter grant application processes in the future, Cllr Blake James informed members of some charities or other bodies are really struggling financially at present and to reduce funding will have an impact on them and all residents of the parish – it was agreed and voted to reduce Grant donations to £1000 for 25/26 and further reductions thereafter- Proposed Cllr Dadd – 2nd Cllr Nichols – Voted for - with 1 abstention

Meeting closed: 21.30pm.