



Stoke by Clare

Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting of Stoke by Clare Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 11th September 2024 at The Barn, Ashen Road, Stoke by Clare

Present

Parish Councillors:

J Blake James

J Kiddy

R McKenny

K Nichols

P Vincent – chair of meeting

Also present:

Julia Burge (JB)

Marion Rushbrook

Deputy Clerk

Councillor, West Suffolk Council (WSC)

1. Apologies and declarations of interest

1.1 It was agreed that Cllr Vincent would chair the meeting in the absence of Cllr Dadd.

Apologies had been received from Cllr Dadd, whose absence was approved.

1.2 No interests were declared.

2. Public Participation

2.1 There were no questions from members of the public.

2.2 Written reports in August and September 2024 from Cllr Bennett (Suffolk CC) were noted and are contained in the correspondence report.

2.3 No written reports had been received from the WSC councillors. Cllr Rushbrook reported that councillors were receiving limited information from West Suffolk Council, and that any relevant information would be forwarded as and when received. Some funds were available from the locality budget and applications were invited for suitable parish projects.

3. To approve minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 July 2024

Approved as a correct record of the meeting, to be signed by Cllr Dadd.

4. To consider items of correspondence for decision/response

Noted. **Action:** JB to advise WSC that the council did not produce food waste or dry recyclable materials and did not wish to participate in the scheme for thermal imaging of heat loss.

5. To review items for decision

5.1 The Standing Orders, Financial Regulation Orders and Councillor Code of Conduct circulated prior to the meeting were reviewed and adopted with immediate effect.

Action: clerk to add these documents to the website.

5.2 JB reported that she had met with a representative of the allotments. It appeared that invoices for 2024-25 were outstanding and some allotment holders needed agreements. It was agreed that those allotment holders who were failing to maintain

their plots should be contacted and given a timescale within which to improve their allotments if they wished to keep them.

Action: JB to bring the allotment administration up to date and report to councillors within 2 weeks. A councillor to then liaise with allotment representatives to put proposals forward to the next meeting. Cllr Rushbrook to ascertain whether locality budget funding would be available to help with clearance costs.

5.3 Cllr Vincent reported that he and Cllr Dadd had reviewed all points raised in the recent inspection reports by WSC. Some were small tasks that can be carried out by volunteers, but others will need to be done by contractors. **Action:** Cllr Dadd to circulate a list of tasks and obtain quotes from contractors.

5.4 It was reported that the war memorial needed maintenance, for which there was no provision in the budget currently. **Action:** Cllr Kiddy to contact the War Memorial Trust to see if any grant funding is available.

5.5 It was noted that Cllr Bennett had contacted affected parishes earlier in the day, regarding the proposed ETRO for the A1092. Essex County Council were refusing to allow signage on their side of the border. Since this only impacted the proposals for traffic travelling from west to east, she proposed that the project was progressed in an east to west direction initially, with the eventual aim of having restrictions in both directions, and as a TRO rather than an ETRO. Some councillors expressed concerns regarding the enforceability of any restrictions, and it was agreed to discuss the matter further at the next meeting.

5.6 The terms of appointment of the temporary clerk and deputy clerk were noted and agreed.

5.7 It was agreed that adverts for a permanent clerk would be placed within Stoke by Clare and as a free ad on Indeed, since the ongoing advert with SALC and a previous advert with Suffolk Jobs Direct had been unsuccessful. **Action:** JB to place adverts as agreed.

5.8 It had been proposed some time ago that 4 new benches were installed in the village, at the Red House, The Street, The Cottage and the allotments. The benches cost £500 each and were to be donated as memorial benches, other than the bench at The Street, which the council was to fund. It didn't appear that the donors had been contacted previously. JB had contacted the donor of the bench at the Red House, who had confirmed that she was still willing to pay the cost of a bench. The email address for the donor of the bench at The Cottage was invalid and alternative contact details were needed. The donor of the bench at the allotments would need to be contacted by phone. The costs to the council would be £500 for the bench at The Street, £40 per bench for an anchoring kit plus the costs of a contractor laying paving slabs below the benches at both the allotments and The Cottage. Subject to the latter cost not exceeding £200, and to payment from the donors for the £500 cost of their memorial benches, it was agreed to proceed with the purchase and installation. **Action:** Cllr Smith to provide contact details for donor of The Cottage bench and obtain quotes for installing paving slabs. JB to arrange payment by donors and purchase of benches.

6. Finance

6.1 The monthly accounts, cash flow, bank reconciliation and statements were received.

- 6.2 No grant applications had been received.
- 6.3 The precept timetable was agreed. **Action:** clerk/JB to send out precept grant application to parish church.
- 6.4 Accounts for payment were agreed and expense forms approved. **Action:** JB to arrange payment online of the agreed accounts.
- 6.5 The 2021/2022 AGAR and governance statements were approved. **Action:** clerk to submit to WSC and add to website.
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- 6.7 The 2023/2024 AGAR and governance statements were approved. **Action:** clerk to submit to WSC and add to website.
- 6.8 It was reported that online banking had now been set up for the acting clerk and deputy and for Cllr Dadd, and was being set up for a second councillor. It was agreed that future payments would be made online in accordance with the Financial Regulation Orders. It was further agreed that funds would be held in Lloyds' instant access account and that £10,000 would be placed on 6 months deposit with Lloyds bank. **Action:** JB to invest funds as agreed.

7. Planning

- 7.1 DC/24/1230/TCA Trees in a conservation area notification - one Cherry fell LOCATION Silverbirches The Street Stoke By Clare: no objection. **Action:** clerk to submit this response on the planning portal.
- 7.2 DC/24/1195/HH Householder planning application - single storey rear extension with internal alterations Location 5 Lower Green Stoke By Clare: some concerns were expressed as to whether the glass pyramid element of the proposals would be in keeping with the character of the local area. The council did not however object to the application. **Action:** Clerk to submit the council's comments on the planning portal.

It was noted that a further application had been received after publication of the agenda and that an extension of time had been sought. **Action:** JB to chase the planning officer for a response and notify councillors.

8. To receive agenda items for the next meeting

The following are to be included in the next agenda:

Asset register review
Adequacy of insurance review
Review of committee structures/governance
Appointment of internal auditor
Precept
Allotments
War memorial
Play area
TRO

9. Date of Next Meeting

This was confirmed as Wednesday 23 October at **7pm**.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Signed.....

Chairman