

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 6th February 2023.

Present: Councillors Peter Williams (Chair), Sue Abel, Liz Eden, Malcolm Gulliver, Jill Howe, Jean Jackson, Alyson Jewson, Chris Jewson and Liz Miller.

In attendance: Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk), Chris Cooke (Parish Lengthsman) and 1 member of the public.

016/23 Apologies

Apologies were received from Diane Brown, John Ellis and Paul Pittaway.

017/23 Declarations of Interest

018/23 Requests for Dispensation

None.

019/23 Adjournment of Meeting for Public Question Time

1) Members of the Public

The member of the public present did not have any issues to raise.

2) County Councillor Kyle Daisley

3) District Councillors Malcolm Glass and Harrison Rone-Clarke

There were no County or District Councillors present.

020/23 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 9 January 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9 January 2023 were approved and signed by the Chair.

021/23 Planning Applications

1) 22/01634/ADV - 18A Buntsford Drive, Bromsgrove - Proposed freestanding totem sign

The Parish Council had no comments to make on this application.

2) 22/01640/LBC - Aldham House, Fish House Lane, Stoke Prior - Roof alterations to include the insertion of 2 conservation rooflights. Partial removal of internal wall

The Parish Council had no issues with this application.

3) 22/01525/FUL - Lokrum Fields, Copyholt Lane, Stoke Pound - Proposed 4 parking spaces and new/supplemental planting

The Parish Council supported this application.

022/23 Urgent Decisions taken since the Council's last meeting

None.

023/23 Finance

(1) Invoices for Payment for January 2023

The payments totalling £3,891.61 were unanimously agreed as follows:-

	Cost £	Method
Direct Debits Payment		
<i>Cartridge World – Copier Rental</i>	23.79	-
Sub total	23.79	-
Payments made since the last Parish Council Meeting		
Webbs	60.00,	Online
Clerk's net salary for January 2023	XXXX	Online
Assistant Clerk's net salary for January 2023	XXXX	Online
Sub total	1509.53	-
Cheques/Payments to be authorised at the Parish Council Meeting		
Clerk's Expenses & other Parish Council Expenditure for January 2023	161.33	Online
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax/NI on Clerks & Asst Clerks salary – January 2023	487.01	Chq No.1210
Community Heartbeat	162.00.	Online
Worcestershire County Council	545.75.	Online
IDG Garden Services	320.00.	Online
Chris Cooke	682.20.	Online
Sub Total	2358.29	-
Total Value of Payments for January 2023	3891.61	-

(2) Financial Management Statement for January 2023

The Parish Council noted the report.

024/23 Review of Quotes for the Refurbishment of Shaw Lane Recreation Area

The Chairman reminded Councillors that they had had an opportunity to consider the quotes from the three companies under consideration for this project. The Clerk then pointed out that of the three, Wicksteed were the only one to come within the £40,000 budget and provide the type of equipment the Parish Council were looking to provide on this site.

During discussion, it was unanimously agreed to proceed with Wicksteed for this project but that a further site meeting should take place between the Chair and Clerk with the representative from Wicksteed as Councillors had identified equipment on both options submitted which they would like to see as part of the project. It was also agreed that the Clerk would report back to the Parish Council's next meeting on the final design and costings which would then be put out for public consultation in line with the requirements laid down by the District Council.

025/23 Renewal of Grounds Maintenance and Parish Lengthsman Contracts

(1) Parish Lengthsman's Contract

The Clerk reminded Councillors Chris Cooke's existing contract was due to expire on the 31 March 2023. In recognition of the excellent service provided by Chris Cooke over a number of years, he recommended that Chris Cooke's contract should be amended to be a rolling contract rather having to renew it every 2 years.

It was unanimously agreed to amend the contract with Chris Cooke as Parish Lengthsman to a rolling contract commencing from the 1 April 2023.

(2) Grounds Maintenance Contract

The Clerk also reminded Councillors that this contract was currently held by IDG Garden Services

and was also due to expire on the 31 March 2023.

IDG had performed well over the past two years and maintained the recreation areas to a high standard as well as looking after the numerous waste and dog bins and the flower boxes across the Parish. The Clerk recommended that the contract with IDG Garden Services be extended for a further 2 years.

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to extend the contract with IDG Garden Services until the 31 March 2025.

026/23 Parish Lengthsman's Report

Chris Cooke reported the following issues:-

- The white lines at the entrance to Henbrook Gardens had now been installed.
- He would raise the problem of the wall outside Corbett Business Park again with the Highways Liaison Officer. The Clerk would also write to the owner of the site.
- Cty/Cllr Kyle Daisley was attempting to resolve the issues with the parking areas outside the shops in Ryefields Road.
- It was intended that the footpath between the Ewe and Lamb and Shaw Lane would be cleared.
- The County Council were unable to install any additional signage on Needle Mill Lane as the road was unadopted.
- The problems with the vehicle height signage remain unresolved.
- He was still awaiting progress on the possible installation of HGV signage.
- Bromsgrove District Council had installed additional signage in Astwood Lane to try to stop the dumping of cat litter.
- Work was ongoing to resolve the problem of dog poo bags being dumped in Woodgate Road.

At this juncture Chris Jewson and Sue Abel joined the meeting and the former reported that the planning application in relation to the proposed new houses at the Little Intall Fields Farm had been refused by the District Council's Planning Committee meeting earlier in the evening.

027/23 Action Summary

The Action Summary was noted.

028/23 Correspondence

The Clerk reported a letter from the Chairman of the Heritage Friends Group thanking the Parish Council for allowing them to raise funds at the Carols in the Park event.

He also reported that he had received an email asking the Parish Council to repair the boundary fence at the Ryefields Road Recreation Area as they were afraid the damaged fence would lead to their animals escaping. Chris Cooke was asked to look at the problem.

029/23 Councillors Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

Jill Howe stated that the temporary barriers on the bend in Shaw Lane which had been installed following an road accident had fallen down and asked if more permananet structures could be put in place. Chris Cooke agreed to refer it to the Highways Liaison Officer.

Liz Miller commented that the hedgerow near the Rectory in Fish House Lane needed cutting back. Chris Cooke pointed out that it may be that the bank was actually moving rather than the hedgerow overgrowing but agreed to check.

Alyson Jewson commented that a number of vehicles were parking on the footpath outside

Appletrees in Hanbury Road and blocking its use by pedestrians. It was believed that they were contractors vehicles and the Clerk was asked to write to the property owners.

Sue Abl asked if flower boxes could be installed alongside the bench on the Hanbury Road. The Clerk agreed to arrange this.

030/23 Exclusion of the Press and Public

It was unanimously agreed to exclude any members of the press and public from the meeting to allow the Parish Council to discuss the next item.

031/23 Staffing Matters

The Parish Council considered in detail the most appropriate arrangements for the future clerking of the Parish Council.

032/23 Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 6 March 2023 commencing at 7.30pm at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Chairman