

## STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

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**A meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held in The Hall Annexe at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015.**

**Present:** Councillors Peter Williams (Chairman), John Ellis (Vice Chairman), Sue Abel, Diane Brown, Jill Howe, Keith Shakespeare and Dean Smith.

**In attendance:** Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk), D/Cllr Mike Thompson plus 1 member of the public.

**Public Question Time:** There were no questions to be considered.

### **159/15 Apologies**

Apologies were accepted from Paul Eden, Alyson Jewson, D/Cllr Malcolm Glass and C/Cllr Chris Bloore.

### **160/15 Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensation**

None.

### **161/15 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 5 October 2015**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 5 October 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### **161/15 Urgent Decisions since the Council's last Meeting**

None.

### **162/15 District and County Councillors' Reports**

D/Cllr Mike Thompson commented on the following issues affecting the parish:-

- C/Cllr Chris Bloore was finding it difficult to attend Parish Council meetings on Mondays due to personal issues.
- The SHAC – He had met the Chief Executive of BDHT together with C/Cllr Chris Bloore to try and get this building replaced. He added that that had now been achieved which was great news for the community. The Chairman pointed out that he was very angry and disappointed about the way the Parish Council had not been kept informed of developments despite meeting with the Chief Executive, making some of its own funds available and undertaking to get additional finance from outside agencies.
- C/Cllr Bloore was trying to organise weekly briefing meetings between himself, District Councillors and the Parish Council.
- C/Cllr Bloore had arranged for a speed warning sign to be installed in Austin Road as well speeding initiatives in Stoke Pound Lane and Fish House Lane.

### **163/15 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 Position Statement for October 2015**

This was noted.

## **(3) Parish Council's Banking Arrangements**

After the Clerk had explained that the Parish Council were receiving very little income from the deposit account with Nat West, it was agreed to close that account and to move the money into the Council's current account at that bank.

It was also agreed that the Clerk should look at alternative banking arrangements which would better suit the Council's needs.

## **164/15 Progress Reports by the Chairman and the Clerk**

The Chairman and the Clerk confirmed that they had no reports for this meeting.

## **165/15 Digital Inclusion**

The Chairman stated that he had received an email from Rachael Tooth, Digital Inclusion Officer at Bromsgrove District Housing Trust regarding a project to help people gain access to computer facilities and get online. This service would be offered to anyone living within the Bromsgrove District and she was attempting to try and map if the Parish Council had any computer and online facilities available to its residents, was currently working on any projects to help residents get online and/or had any communal computer access points and any awareness sessions for our residents?

After discussion, it was agreed that this project should be supported and that John Ellis should contact Rachael Tooth to see how it could be developed for the parish.

## **166/15 Arrangements for Remembrance Sunday 2015**

Sue Abel confirmed that she had acquired a poppy wreath on behalf of the Council and it was agreed that the Chairman would lay this at St Michael's Church. It was also noted that the Chairman together with John Ellis and Sue Abel would be representing the Council at the Remembrance Service at Hanbury Church.

It was also unanimously agreed to make a donation of £75 to the Royal British Legion.

## **167/15 Bulb Planting and Additional Flower Boxes**

Sue Abel confirmed that she had bought 5 bags of bulbs this year. The Chairman agreed to take responsibility for planting 1 bag and the remaining 4 would be passed to IDG Garden Services to be planted at various locations around the parish.

With regard to additional flower boxes, it was agreed that the Clerk would look at the options for any new boxes in the vicinity of Wheatridge Road. It was also agreed that 1 or 2 new boxes should be placed by the bridge on Shaw Lane (close to the Boat and Railway PH) and 2 new boxes should be placed at the entrance to Ryefields Road.

## **168/15 Project Updates**

Diane Brown stated that she and Sue Abel would be starting later in the week to try and identify any plots of land within the parish which might become available for social housing and would report back to a future meeting of the Council.

### **169/15 Diary Commitments**

The Clerk reminded the Council that the Worcestershire CALC Annual General Meeting would take place on Wednesday 25 November. John Ellis and Diane Brown both agreed that they would endeavour to attend this meeting.

Dean Smith commented that he was having difficulty in attending meetings of the CPRE as they always occurred on a Tuesday which clashed with other commitments. It was agreed to put this matter on the agenda for the next meeting.

### **170/15 Correspondence**

The Clerk reported that the police had taken action regarding the parking problems outside the Stoke Prior First School in Ryefields Road with a view to making it safer for all users.

The Clerk then referred to correspondence he had had with the Treasurer of the Parochial Church Council regarding closer working relationships between the two Councils. After discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk should meet with the Treasurer to get a clearer view on this could be achieved and to report back to a future meeting of the Parish Council.

### **171/15 Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings**

The following items were raised:-

- Sue Abel referred to the voluntary litter picking work done by Dave Franks across the parish and suggested that he should be given some recognition. At John Ellis' suggestion it was agreed that he should be invited to the Parish Council's next meeting. It was also agreed that an article should be included in the Parish Newsletter.
- Diane Brown raised the question of the Parish Council building a leisure facility on the Ryefields Road Recreation Area. She was aware that there were certain covenants in place which might need to be addressed but felt that the Parish Council should give serious consideration to this idea. It was agreed that this item should be included on the agenda for the Parish Council's next meeting.
- Keith Shakespeare put forward the suggestion that the Parish Council should run a best Christmas lights competition with the prize of a hamper for the best display. It was agreed that this item should be included on the agenda for the Parish Council's next meeting.
- John Ellis confirmed that the arrangements were in place for this year's Carols in the Park on the 12 December. The Clerk was asked to write to the school, the Womens Institute and the Youth Club inviting them to this event.

### **172/15 Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 7 December 2015 commencing at 7.00pm at the Hall Annexe, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath. The meeting would be followed by Christmas celebrations.

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm.

Chairman