

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held in The Hall Annexe at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 7th September 2015.

Present: Councillors Peter Williams (Chairman), John Ellis (Vice Chairman), Diane Brown, Jill Howe, Alyson Jewson and Keith Shakespeare.

In attendance: Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk), D/Cllrs Malcolm Glass & Mike Thompson plus 1 member of the public.

128/15 Speeding/Traffic Issues in the Parish

PC Gregor Moorman attended for this item and gave the Parish Council an update on the action that the Force had taken to deal with speeding traffic along Shaw Lane and the B4091. He added that monitoring had also taken place along the A38 near the Hanbury Turn and he understood that further work would take place in the coming weeks.

It was apparent from the discussions with PC Moorman that many of the issues concerning the Parish Council such as speed reduction measures were matters for the County Council and it was agreed that the Clerk should write to the appropriate officer and the local County Councillor inviting them to a future meeting of the Parish Council.

The Clerk also made the Parish Council aware that the County Council were no longer funding repairs etc to the VAS signs and this matter also needed to be discussed at the meeting with the County Council's representatives.

Public Question Time: The Parish Council were asked to look at the problem of overgrown hedges along Shaw Lane and to also consider what action could be taken regarding the parking problems along the same road.

129/15 Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Paul Eden and Dean Smith.

130/15 Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensation

None.

131/15 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 6 July 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6 July 2015 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

132/15 Urgent Decisions since the Council's last Meeting

None.

133/15 District and County Councillors' Reports

D/Cllr Malcolm Glass referred to the problems facing residents of Foley Gardens in relation to HGVs using the road to turn etc and that he was looking to arrange a meeting with the appropriate highways officers. He also stated that he was not having too much success in

resolving the problem of the unadopted road at Greenside which continued to cause long term problems for residents. He had also got involved with the problems over the SHAC in Stoke Prior and was pursuing the matter with BDHT.

D/Cllr Mike Thompson confirmed that the fine for dog fouling remained fixed at £75. He was concerned about the condition of the fences along Wheatridge Road and was pusing the District Council to plant a hawthorn hedge in front of them as originally proposed when the house were first built. The Chairman agreed to look at the possibility of the Parish Council providing flower boxes in the area to improve the situation.

134/15 Co-Option of Councillors

After a brief discussion, the Parish Council unanimously agreed to co-opt Alyson Jewson with immediate effect.

Alyson Jewson was then invited to join the meeting.

135/15 Finance

(1) Invoices for Payment

Alyson Jewson declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as an employee of Avoncroft Arts Society.

It was unanimously agreed to approve the payments as set out on the list circulated at the meeting together with the additional payment to I.D.G. Garden Services.

(2) Financial Position Statement for June 2015

This was noted.

(3) Audit for the Year Ended 31 March 2015

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had received a 'clean bill of health' from the External Auditors.

He added that the External Auditors had pointed out that there was a need to carry out a risk assessment as soon as possible. This was noted.

136/15 Parish Council Website and Management of Facebook Site

The Chairman briefly reported on the discussions which had taken place at the last Communications Committee and proposed that responsibility for the provision of a new website and the management of the Facebook and Twitter accounts should be delegated to that Committee. John Ellis seconded the proposal which was unanimously agreed.

Given his knowledge of It and Facebook, it was also unanimously agreed to add Paul eden to the membership of the Communications Committee.

137/15 Progress Reports by the Chairman and the Clerk

The Clerk reported on the following issues:-

Refurbishment of the Picnic Site – A recent inspection of the site had shown that it was in need of some major refurbishment and the Clerk had asked IDG Garden Services to provide a quote for the necessary work. He had also been trying to find details of the Management

Agreement between Worcestershire County Council and Harris Brush Works but so far had been unsuccessful.

Maintenance of the John & Thomas Corbett Graves – The general maintenance of the graves was now being looked after by the Parish Lenghtsman for a nominal charge. The Clerk added that it would appear that the Parochial Church Council would be amenable to the grant they receive from the Thomas Corbett Trust to maintain the graves being forwarded to the Parish Council. He also added that the Church Council appeared to be looking for a wider discussion with the Parish Council regarding the cost of maintaining the churchyard. It was agreed that the Clerk should look to arrange a meeting between the two Councils in the near future.

The Clerk was also asked to look into providing a small flower box for the graves.

Grass Cutting Contract – The Council acknowledged the improvements with this contract since it was given to IDG Garden Services.

New Pension Regulations – The Clerk reported that, following the introduction of new pension regulations, the Parish Council would be legally required to set up a pension scheme for its employee. He added that it was still early days in introducing the new be part of the new scheme.

Stoke Works Reservoir – The Chairman briefly commented on a potential project he was looking at to develop the reservoir site adjacent to the proposed housing development at the Polymer Latex site into a community facility. He would report further to a future meeting of the Council.

138/15 Project Updates

The Clerk reported that work on the refurbishment of the Ryefields Road Play Area would begin later that week. Diane Brown suggested that it might improve security if some form of lighting could be introduced on the site. The Clerk agreed to look at the options available.

With regard to the Memorial Garden, the Clerk reported that the engraved slabs had been ordered and that the plaques for the benches would be fitted shortly.

It was agreed to look at the options for officially opening the garden at a future meeting. It was noted that any proposals for a 'fly past' by the RAF may have to wait until 2016.

139/15 Diary Commitments

It was noted that John Ellis and Diane Brown together with the Clerk, would be attending the CALC meeting on the 9 September.

The Clerk then stated that the District Council had arranged a meeting for all Parish Council to discuss planning issues and the ways that both parties could improve working relationships. The meeting was scheduled for the 15 September and it was agreed that the Chairman, Sue Abel and Diane Brown would attend.

140/15 Correspondence

None.

141/15 Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

It was agreed that the following items should be included on the agenda for the next meeting:-

- Arrangements for the Parish Fete 2016
- Bulb Planting and Additional Flower Boxes
- Arrangements for 'Carols in the Park 2015'.

In addition, the following item was raised:-

- John Ellis raised the issue of the future of the SHAC in Stoke Prior following a meeting recently with local residents. He felt that the Parish Council should pursue this matter with the Chief Executive of BDHT to look at possible alternative solutions. The Clerk agreed to set up the meeting.
- Jill Howe reminded the Clerk of the need for signs to be erected at the outdoor gym regarding child safety.
- John Ellis reported that the 'Tai Chi in the Park' had been very successful and it was hoped that the scheme would run again next year. It was also intended to put on a demonstration at next year's Parish Fete.

142/15 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 5th October 2015 commencing at 7.30pm at the Hall Annexe, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Chairman