

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held in The Hall Annexe at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 1st February 2016.

Present: Councillors Peter Williams (Chairman), Sue Abel, Diane Brown, Paul Eden, Jill Howe, Alyson Jewson, Keith Shakespeare and Dean Smith.

In attendance: D/Cllrs Mike Thompson and Malcolm Glass and Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk) together with 5 members of the public.

Public Question Time:

Residents from Redditch Road expressed their concerns about the actions of Highways England diverting traffic throughout the night off the M5 to allow works to be carried out. The main diversion route being the A38 Redditch Road. They asked whether the Parish Council had been made aware of this action to which the Chairman and the Clerk assured them that they had not received any prior notification.

After a lengthy discussion on this matter, the Parish Council agreed to raise the matter with Sajid Javed, MP for Bromsgrove, the District Police Commander and Worcestershire County Council expressing their concerns about the impact that this work was having on the residents of Redditch Road and to request that Highways England be asked to look at this problem with a view to finding an alternative solution to the benefit of local residents.

017/16 Apologies

An apology was accepted from John Ellis.

018/16 Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensation

Alyson Jewson declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda item 6.

019/16 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11 January 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11 January 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

020/16 Urgent Decisions since the Council's last Meeting

None.

021/16 District and County Councillors' Reports

The Chairman made both District Councillors aware that he only wished to see reports relating to the parish and without any political statements.

The written report by D/Cllr Mike Thompson was then noted although some concern was expressed regarding the future maintenance of the proposed hedging along Wheatridge Road. D/Cllr Thompson assured the meeting that this would be the responsibility of the District Council.

D/Cllr Malcolm Glass expressed his support for the residents of Redditch Road regarding the traffic issues arising from the M5 roadworks and that he had already contacted BBC Midlands to try and highlight the issue and would also take the opportunity to raise the matter with Sajid Javed.

022/16 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 February 2016

This was noted.

(3) Council's Budget and Precept for 2016/17

After a lengthy discussion on the proposed budget and precept for 2016/17 as presented by the Parish Clerk with particular emphasis on the proposed arrangements to support St Michael's Church, Peter Williams, seconded by Keith Shakespeare, moved as follows:-

That the Parish Council –

- (i) confirms the donation of £1,000 to St Michael's Church Tower Fund and to an annual contribution of £1,250 towards the maintenance of the churchyard at St Michael's Church. The latter to be reviewed annually.
- (ii) approves the proposed budget for 2016/17 as set out in the Clerk's report.
- (iii) approves a precept for 2016/17 of £53,097.00.

On being put to a vote, the motion was carried by 7 votes to 1.

023/16 External Audit Arrangements

Having considered the Clerk's report, the Council agreed to proceed with the external audit arrangements being put in place by Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd.

024/16 Progress Reports by the Chairman and the Clerk

None.

025/16 Parish Fete 2016 Update

The Chairman opened this item by putting forward a proposal to purchase 2 easy ups (3m square) for use at the fete and other outdoor functions. After discussion about where they would be stored and whether there were sufficient people able to assemble them etc, it was agreed that he should confirm the price and report back to the Council's next meeting.

During further discussion on the plans for the fete, the following points were made:-

- D/Cllr Malcolm Glass offered to donate 2 gazebos to the Parish Council. He also agreed to enquire whether the District Council would have any surplus industrial gazebos when they change market managers in the near future.
- Keith Shakespeare confirmed that several of the entertainers from last year had been booked again but he needed a volunteer to organise and manage the bands.

- Portable toilets and first aid cover had been arranged.
- Agreed to include a 5-a-side football tournament on the day
- Evening entertainment – It was agreed to go ahead with this event in the Main Hall and to use the singer proposed by Keith Shakespeare at a cost of £150. It was suggested that a sausage and mash meal be provided. Keith Shakespeare would organise the setting up arrangements etc.

026/16 Project Updates

Diane Brown reported that she now had the required maps of the parish showing identified parcels of land which could be used for the development of social housing. Together with Sue Abel, she would now arrange a meeting with a planning officer at Bromsgrove District Council to discuss these possible options.

027/16 Diary Commitments

None.

028/16 Correspondence

None.

029/16 Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

The following items were raised:-

- Diane Brown reminded the Council that had previously agreed to install a parking sign on the lay-by for the Shaw Lane Recreation Area and also remove the plantings from the site. The Clerk stated that this work had been forgotten but it would be sorted out in the near future.
- Paul Eden asked that the problems of the overhanging hedges along Shaw Lane adjacent to the industrial estate be dealt with they were becoming a safety hazard.
- Alyson Jewson asked that the District Council be asked to clear the rubbish etc at the top of Buntsford Hill near the entrance to Avoncroft Museum.
- Dean Smith asked if there had been any progress with the development of the Polymer Latex site and also reminded the Council that Barratts had given a commitment to employ 5 local apprentices on the development. The Clerk agreed to check the current position.

030/16 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 8 March 2016 commencing at 7.30pm at the Hall Annexe, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Chairman