

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held in The Hall Annexe at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 7th March 2016.

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

In attendance: D/Cllr Mike Thompson and Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk) together with 2 members of the public.

Public Question Time:

Two residents from Brickhouse Lane expressed their concerns about a proposed event on land in the lane over the weekend of the 1 and 2 May 2016 which would create major traffic and noise problems. The Chairman informed them that there was little that the Parish Council could do about this proposed event and suggested that all residents affected should complain individually to the Police and Worcestershire Regulatory Services. The Parish Council would be making their own objections.

031/16 Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Jill Howe, Alyson Jewson and D/Cllr Malcolm Glass.

032/16 Declarations of Interest/Requests for Dispensation

None.

033/16 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 1 February 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on the 1 February 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

034/16 Urgent Decisions since the Council's last Meeting

None.

035/16 District and County Councillors' Reports

D/Cllr Mike Thompson read out a report from C/Cllr Chris Bloore which included the following points:-

- The County Council would be raising council tax by nearly 4% in the upcoming year. This would in addition to a 2% rise agreed by Bromsgrove District Council.
- The M5 closure and diversion problems had not been resolved. Full closure remains programmed for later in the year. Worcestershire Regulatory Services have been asked to undertake an air pollution and noise investigation to see if Highways England were breaking European law.
- The SHAC in Stoke Prior is due to reopen in March. He had given financial support to the local residents to help with social activities. It was intended to involve the Parish Council in the launch of the new building.

- Two speed cameras would be fitted at the beginning of the next financial year on Austin Road, Stoke Heath. One would be placed at the Morrison's island and the other at the junction of Wheatridge Road and Austin Road.
- The installation of dropped curbs along the roads off Austin Road had been completed.
- Additional bollards had been installed on Buntsford Hill to stop drivers accessing Redditch Road. Yellow lines were also being introduced by Avoncroft Museum to protect local residents from anti-social parking.
- The County Council were looking at putting in posts and grasscrete to protect grass verges in Stoke Prior damaged during the winter.

D/Cllr Thompson added that he was pleased with the laurel hedge which had been planted along the length of Wheatridge Road.

036/16 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 March 2016

This was noted.

037/16 Review of Risk Management Arrangements

Having considered the Clerk's comments, the Parish Council unanimously approved the revised Risk Management Register.

038/16 Renewal of Contracts for Grounds Maintenance and Parish Lengthsman

The Clerk presented his report and also commented on the excellent work of both IDG Garden Services and Chris Cooke on grounds maintenance and lengthsman's duties respectively. It was then unanimously agreed to award the grounds maintenance contract to IDG Garden Services for three years and to award the Parish Lengthsman contract to Chris Cooke also for three year.

It was also unanimously agreed to award the contract for the maintenance of the flower boxes to IDG Garden Services

039/16 Street Lighting – Residential Development, Former Polmer Latex Site, Stoke Prior

Having considered the Clerk's report and discussed the options available to the Parish Council, John Ellis, seconded by Keith Shakespeare, moved and it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council should inform Worcestershire County Council and the developers that they were not prepared to meet any costs relating to the design and installation of street lighting on this development and that this should be the responsibility of the developer. The Parish Council would agree to maintain and pay the electricity charges for any new lights installed under the Street Lighting Initiative.

040/16 Progress Reports by the Chairman and the Clerk

The Chairman reported that he had received an email from a local resident questioning whether One Property Group who owned the former Polymer Latex site had gone into

liquidation. The Clerk confirmed that that was correct but he understood that the land was now in the ownership of Barratt Homes. The Clerk agreed to reply to the local resident.

The Chairman then referred to his idea to give a commemorative medal to every person in the parish who would be ninety in 2016 in recognition of the Queen's 90th birthday. The Clerk added that he was trying to find out who might be eligible.

The Clerk reported on an incident of vandalism at the Stoke Heath Recreation Area in which the tree at the Memorial Garden and the John Corbett Trail Information Board had been damaged. The Parish Council supported the Clerk's suggestion that the tree should be replaced and a metal tree guard also be purchased to protect it.

041/16 Parish Fete 2016 Update

During the discussion on the arrangements for the fete, the following issues were agreed:-

- Arrangements for the catering both during the day and for the evening event were now in place.
- The Boat and Railway and the Charford Chip Shop had agreed to provide prizes.
- The Chairman reported that he had been looking at the various options for purchasing two gazebo-style tents rather than using the existing options. After discussion the Chairman, seconded by John Ellis, moved and it was unanimously agreed to go ahead with the purchase as proposed. The Chairman would liaise with the Clerk before placing the order.
- The Chairman to liaise with Keith Shakespeare regarding the production of the advertising banners.

042/16 Project Updates

None.

043/16 Diary Commitments

Diane Brown and John Ellis confirmed that they would be attending the CALC meeting on the 9 March 2016.

044/16 Correspondence

The Clerk reported that he had received the following correspondence:-

- Letter from Bromsgrove & District Citizens Advice Bureau applying for a grant from the Parish Council. It was agreed to defer consideration until the Council's next meeting at which the Clerk would be putting forward a grants policy.
- Letter from the Campaign to Protect Rural England inviting the Parish Council to renew its membership for 2016/17. It was unanimously agreed to renew the membership and to make gift of £36.00.

The Clerk reminded the Parish Council that the local branch of the organisation met on the second Tuesday of odd numbered months. The Chairman commented that he hoped to attend the meeting in May.

- Letter from Sajid Javid MP acknowledging the problems caused to residents living in the vicinity of the A38 by the major works on the M5 but pointing out that further disruption would occur again later in the year.

045/16 Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

The following items were raised:-

- Diane Brown reported that the Parish Lengthsman had arranged for the manufacturers to check for faults on the VAS near the entrance to Harris Brush Works. The Clerk added that any costs may have to be met by the Parish Council although he was hopeful of recouping the cost from the County Council.
- Keith Shakespeare questioned whether the sign advertising logs for sale positioned at the junction of Brickhouse Lane and the B4091 required planning permission. The Clerk agreed to check with the planning officers.

046/16 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 4 April 2016 commencing at 7.30pm at the Hall Annexe, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Chairman