

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held in The Hall Annexe at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 6th March 2017.

Present: Councillors Peter Williams (Chairman), John Ellis (Vice Chairman), Sue Abel, Diane Brown, Liz Eden, Jill Howe, Alyson Jewson, Chris Jewson, Liz Miller and Dean Smith.

In attendance: Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk). D/Cllrs Karen May and Malcolm Glass plus six members of the public attended for public question time. One member of the public attended for the whole meeting.

Public Question Time:

D/Cllr Karen May read out a statement relating to the appeal against the enforcement notice served on the owners of Intall Fields Farm and the impending public inquiry which would be held in the summer of 2017. She then responded to a number of questions from the Parish Council and the public.

Several members of the public expressed their concerns about the effect that the operations at the site and also their concerns about the lack of support that they were receiving from Worcestershire Regulatory Services to monitor the air quality etc. D/Cllr May agreed to take this up with the Head of that Service and the Chief Executive of the District Council.

The Chair reassured the audience that the Parish Council remained in full support of the local residents and would look to send a strong case to reject the appeal to the Planning Inspector. Sue Abel added that it was important to get the full support of the whole village.

Dean Smith then raised the following items on behalf of members of the public:-

“Can we have an update on the excessive speeding through Stoke Prior especially along Shaw Lane at both ends of the village. There has been a speed gun in use on one or two occasions but more is required. Could the idea of a handheld camera used by local residents be considered..”

“Rubbish and dog mess still seems to be a major problem which is disgusting and a health hazard and unsightly for the village.”

“Thank you to whoever cut back the hedge at the Shaw Lane Industrial Units – they did a brilliant job. Better visibility when pulling out and so much safer to be able to walk on the footpath instead of crossing or walking in the road.”

026/17 Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Paul Eden and Keith Shakespeare.

027/17 Declarations of Interest

None.

028/17 Requests for Dispensation

None.

029/17 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 6 February 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on the 6 February 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

030/17 Urgent Decisions since the Council's last Meeting

None.

031/17 District and County Councillors' Reports

There were no Councillors in attendance.

032/17 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 Management Statement for February 2017

This was noted.

033/17 Progress Reports by the Chairman and the Clerk

The Chairman referred to the idea of holding a 'film night' at the Stoke Heath Recreation Area possibly at the August Bank Holiday weekend. He stressed that the Parish Council needed to make a decision whether to go ahead with this idea. The total cost of such event was likely to be in the region of £1700.

A lengthy discussion then ensued on whether the event should go ahead and, if so, on what date. It was then unanimously agreed that to proceed with the event on Saturday 15 July.

It was also agreed that there should be a leaflet 'shot' to residents in the immediate vicinity of the site and that the Clerk should also check that there would not be any objections from the Bournville Village Trust. Or any licensing issues with the District Council.

034/17 Increasing Public Interest/Involvement in the work of the Parish Council

The Chairman explained that, following a meeting with Claire Felton at Bromsgrove District Council, it seemed an appropriate time to look at ways of improving or increasing public interest and involvement in the work of the Parish Council.

After discussion, it was agreed that a Working Group should be set up comprising the Chairman, Liz Eden, Chris Jewson and Dean Smith with Diane Brown as observer.

035/17 Community Link Magazine/Parish Council Newsletter

The Clerk explained that the Magazine was struggling financially and was looking for financial support to cover a number of debts. The Parish Council unanimously agreed that they were not prepared to help the magazine to pay off existing debts. However they were happy to ask the Working Group established under the previous minute to look at whether combining the Link Magazine with the Parish Council's own magazine and to produce it on a monthly basis might be an option for the future. It was noted that any such proposal would

need to be discussed with the Parochial Church Council.

036/17 Potential Open Space Project in Shaw Lane

Chris Jewson introduced the item and briefly explained the proposal to improve this area in Shaw Lane, Stoke Prior. The Parish Council agreed in principle that this could be a good use of derelict space within the village but it was agreed that ownership of the land needed to be established before further consideration could be given to the proposal. Chris Jewson and the Clerk agreed to establish ownership. And to report back to the Council.

037/17 Arrangements for Emptying of Waste and Dog Bins in the Parish

The Clerk reported that Bob Hollick, Brookfield Contract Services had confirmed that he was retiring at the end of March 2017. However he had agreed that the Eurobin provided by the District Council could remain on his site at Aston Fields for at least six months beyond his retirement. He went on to explain that IDG Garden Services had agreed to take on the contract at a weekly charge of £45.00 which was an increase on the charge made by Brookfield Contract Services. IDG Garden Services had also been employed by Alvechurch and Belbroughton Parish Councils to carry out the same work. This meant that the cost of the 'Eurobin' would continue to be shared between the three Parish Councils.

It was unanimously agreed that the contract for emptying the waste and dog bins in the parish should be given to IDG Garden Services with effect from 1 April 2017.

It was also agreed that Bob Hollick should be invited to the Parish Council's next meeting to thank him for his work over the years.

038/17 Diary Commitments

John Ellis and Diane Brown confirmed that they would be attending the CALC meeting on Wednesday 8 March 2017.

039/17 Correspondence

None.

040/17 Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

Following comments by Sue Abel, It was agreed that the arrangements for the Parish Council's involvement in the Salt Fest 2000 event would be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

Jill Howe reported that she attended the recent meeting of the Village Hall Management Committee and highlighted the repair which was currently ongoing or would be required in the near future. It was noted that their Annual General Meeting would take place on the 11 May 2017. It was agreed that the Parish Council should be well represented at that meeting.

Chris Jewson asked that more signs asking dog owners to be more responsible with dog waste should be displayed in the Wheatridge Road area. The Clerk agreed to liaise with the District Council.

Dean Smith then made a personal statement that, if he had personally offended any member of the Parish Council, then he apologised.

Dean Smith suggested that the Parish Council should consider introducing a 'local hero'

award. He was reminded that this had been tried before without success but might be worth a further look.

Diane Brown and Sue Abel highlighted the continuing problems caused by HGVs using the B4095 and asked that the Clerk to write again to the County Council requesting better signage to and from the industrial estates and the motorways.

041/17 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 3 April 2017 commencing at 7.30pm at the Annexe, Avoncroft Arts Centre.

The meeting closed at 9.17pm

Chairman