

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held in The Hall Annexe at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 4th December 2017.

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

In attendance: Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk), D/Cllr Malcolm Glass, Chris Cooke (Parish Lengthsman) and 2 members of the public.

141/17 Apologies

Apologies were received from Liz Eden, Liz Miller and D/Cllr Mike Thompson.

142/17 Declarations of Interest

143/17 Requests for Dispensation

None.

144/17 Adjournment of Meeting Public Question Time:

1) Members of the Public

There were no issues raised by members of the public.

2) County Councillor Chris Bloore and District Councillors Malcolm Glass and Mike Thompson

The Clerk circulated a report by D/Cllr Malcolm Glass giving a brief update on a number of issues including an update on the planning permission for the development of the former Polymer Latex site, and Intall Fields Farm.

145/17 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 23 October 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on the 23 October 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

146/17 Urgent Decisions since the Council's last Meeting

The Chairman stated that there had been no urgent decisions since the last meeting.

147/17 Finance

(1) Invoices for Payment

It was unanimously agreed to approve the list of payments circulated at the meeting.

(2) Financial Management Statement for November 2017

This was noted.

(3) Estimated Expenditure for 2017/18 and Draft Budget for 2018/19

The Clerk stated that these two documents were for information at this stage and were an opportunity for Councillors to give some consideration to next year's budget. It was

proposed to consider the budget and the precept for 2018/19 at the Council's January 2018 meeting.

148/17 Storage Facility for the Parish Council

The Chairman explained that he had been looking at the possibility of the Parish Council acquiring a storage container which could be used to store the various items of equipment owned by the Parish Council. A site had been identified for the container which would be secure. He added that it might be necessary to obtain planning permission for the container.

The Chairman, seconded by John Ellis, moved and it was unanimously agreed to purchase a storage container for the Parish Council. It was also agreed that the shed at Avoncroft should be handed to Avoncroft Arts Society once it had been emptied.

149/17 Appointment of an Assistant Clerk

After discussion, it was agreed to support the idea of appointing an Assistant Clerk in principle and that the Clerk should draw up a draft job description for consideration. It was agreed that if the Council were happy to proceed with this appointment it would be dealt with by a small working group who would, in turn, seek any approval required from the Council.

John Ellis, seconded by the Chairman, then moved and it was unanimously agreed to give a vote of confidence in the Parish Clerk. The Clerk thanked the Council for their support.

150/17 Provision of Defibrillator

The Clerk reported that he had received 2 quotes for the provision of a defibrillator. He pointed out that there was a significant difference between the cost of the 2 quotes but he had talked to other Parish Councils and done his own research and it was clear that the level of service and aftercare support from Community Heartbeat was of a much higher standard. The cost of a defibrillator provided by Community Heartbeat was £2220.00 plus VAT. He added that there were sufficient funds in the budget to meet the cost of the equipment which would be installed outside the Parish Council office and that a further amount had been earmarked in next year's budget for a second defibrillator in the Stoke Heath area.

It was then unanimously agreed to go ahead with the purchase and installation of a defibrillator from Community Heartbeat at a cost of £2220.00 plus VAT. The Clerk was asked to make the necessary arrangements.

151/17 Dates of Meetings 2018/19

In approving the dates of meetings for 2018/19, it was noted that the date of the Annual Parish Council and Parish Assembly should read Wednesday 16 May 2018. The Clerk agreed to circulate a revised list.

152/17 Carols in the Park – 9 December 2017

The Chairman confirmed that this event would take place at Stoke Heath Recreation Area on Saturday 9 December commencing at 5.00pm.

The Council then confirmed the arrangements for the event and unanimously agreed the following:-

- A budget of £100 should be made available to cover the cost of refreshments for the event.

- John Ellis to provide a PA system
- The Clerk had purchased some new lights.
- John Ellis to organise the catering.
- The Chairman would bring the new generator.
- The Parish Council's gazebos to be used.
- IDG Garden Services had supplied a suitable Christmas Tree at a cost of approximately £100.
- It was agreed that the Clerk should purchase a new water boiler and gas bottle for the event.

153/17 Diary Commitments

It was noted that the next Area CALC meeting would be held on the 13 December. However it was unlikely that the Council would be represented at that meeting.

154/17 Correspondence

The Clerk reported that he had received an email from the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments to confirm that PKF Littlejohn LLP had been appointed as the Council's external auditors for 2017 to 2022.

155/17 Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

The Clerk stated that due to accumulation of litter around the Parish, he felt it was necessary to ask the Parish Lengthsman to carry out a major litter pick. He explained that whilst this was effectively a matter for the District Council they had indicated that they did not have the resources. Whilst some Councillors were unhappy that the Parish Council was being required to carry out this work, the Chairman, seconded by John Ellis, moved and it was agreed that a budget of £700 be set initially and asked the Clerk and the Parish Lengthsman to keep them informed of progress. The Clerk was also asked to approach one of the major businesses in the area to help with the cost.

Keith Shakespeare expressed his concern about the flying of drones on the Council's recreation areas and the possible danger to overhead power cables. It was agreed that the Clerk should look into providing public notices at the recreation areas.

Sue Abel commented on the ongoing traffic problems in Stoke Pound Lane. Several Councillors commented that they were unhappy with the lack of communication with the County Highways and it was agreed that the Clerk should write to the Highways Liaison Officer inviting him to a meeting of the Parish Council.

Chris Jewson commented that he had been contacted by John Kemm regarding the Parish Council submitting an article for the Parish Magazine. The Clerk agreed to try and submit reports whenever possible.

Jill Howe stated that the local Parochial Church Council were concerned about the condition of the footpath from the lychgate to the war memorial. It was noted that this was actually part of the John Corbett way and was a public footpath. It was suggested that the County Council should be approached to see whether they would be prepared to assist with resurfacing works.

Malcolm Glass reported that the District Council had put Tree Preservation Orders on all trees on the Harris Brush Works site.

156/17 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday 8th January 2018 commencing at 7.30pm at the Hall Annexe, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Chairman