

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held in The Hall Annexe at Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 7th October 2019.

Present: Councillors Peter Williams (Chairman), John Ellis (Vice Chairman), Sue Abel, Alan Bayliss, Diane Brown, Liz Eden, Jill Howe, Jean Jackson, Alyson Jewson, Chris Jewson, Liz Miller and Rory Shannon.

In attendance: Stan Petrovic (Assistant Clerk), Chris Cooke (Parish Lengthsman) and 4 members of the public.

126/19 Apologies

Apologies were received from D/Cllrs Malcolm Glass and Harrison Rone-Clarke.

127/19 Declarations of Interest

128/19 Requests for Dispensation

None.

129/19 Adjournment of Meeting for Public Question Time

1) Members of the Public

No issues raised.

2) District Councillors Malcolm Glass and Harrison Rone-Clarke

The District Councillors were unable to be present but both had sent written reports which had been circulated and noted.

130/19 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 2 September 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on the 2 September 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

131/19 Urgent Decisions taken since the Council's last meeting

The Chairman reported that he had asked Chris Cooke to look at the damaged tunnel on the Stoke Heath Recreation Area and it was necessary to replace the plastic tube. Chris Cooke added that the cost of a replacement tube would be £364.00 plus VAT. The Parish Council unanimously agreed that the repair work should proceed.

The Chairman also reported that he had asked Chris Cooke to purchase and spread wild flower seeds across the parish. The cost of the seed had been £64.00.

132/19 Co-Option of Parish Councillors

The Chairman confirmed that all three candidates were present and invited Councillors to put any questions to them before a vote was taken. It was then agreed that a secret ballot should be held at the end of which the Chairman announced that Liz Eden and Rory Shannon had been elected.

The Chairman then invited Liz Eden and Rory Shannon to join the meeting.

133/19 Bromsgrove Plan Review

After the Clerk had commented on the review currently being carried out by Bromsgrove District

Council, he confirmed that Diane Brown and Sue Abel would be attending the Parish Council briefing on the 9th October which will provide an update on the key Strategic Issues in the Plan.

134/19 Finance

(1) Invoices for Payment – September 2019

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

(2) Financial Management Statement for September 2019

This was noted.

135/19 Smartwater Update

The Chairman reminded Councillors that the next event would be on Sunday 13 October outside the shop in Ryefields Road between 10am and 2pm. Sue Abel, Jill Howe, Alyson Jewson, Chris Jewson, Liz Miller and Rory Shannon all confirmed that they would be available to help. The Chairman confirmed that he would set up the gazebo. The Clerk would confirm whether a representative from Smartwater or the local police would also be in attendance. The Clerk was also asked to set up an advertising board outside the shop.

The Council then discussed the need to find a suitable site in Stoke Heath so that another event could be held there. Councillors were asked to look at suitable options and to report back to the next meeting.

John Ellis agreed to get the Stoke Heath Neighbourhood Watch group involved in the project.

136/19 Carols in the Park 2019

It was agreed that this event would take place at Stoke Heath Recreation Area on Saturday 7 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 organise the catering.
- The Chairman would bring the new generator and the gazebos.
- The Parish Council's gazebos to be used.
- The Chairman agreed to arrange for new promotional banners.
- The Chairman to organise a suitable Christmas Tree.

137/19 Christmas Tree Festival

Jill Howe reminded the Council that took part in last year's Christmas Tree Festival and had been invited to do so again this year. It was agreed that the Parish Council should take part again this year and Jill Howe agreed to help organise this with Liz Miller and Sue Abel. It was noted that under the current rules, the Parish Council would be unable to make the necessary donation. The Chairman agreed to provide the tree and pay the donation of £25.

138/19 Worcestershire Association of Carers

The Clerk reported that he had recently had a meeting with an officer from the Worcestershire Association of Carers, a charity which helped give support to carers in the community. The charity was looking to get support from Parish Councils to help spread the word about the charity and its role in supporting carers in the local community.

The Clerk then explained that he had already approached Sue Abel, Diane Brown, Jill Howe and Liz Miller to talk to the charity because of their particular knowledge of the area. It was agreed that the Clerk should set up a meeting between the Councillors and the charity's officer.

139/19 Diary Commitments

None.

140/19 Correspondence

The Chairman then invited Chris Cooke to give an update on the work he had been doing for the parish. Chris Cooke then made the following comments:-

1. The gravel in the steps at the childrens' play area at Stoke Heath Recreation Area had been replenished but recognised that this may only be a temporary measure. The Clerk confirmed that he was looking at whether it was permissible to replace the gravel with concrete or a similar permanent surface.
2. The litter problem in Buntsford Hill Road was a growing problem particularly from the HGVs who park there overnight. He was collecting a significant amount of empty alcohol containers. He proposed to raise the problem with the District Council. It was also agreed that the local police should be made aware of the alcohol situation.
3. Henbrook Gardens – the gullies in Weston Hall Road still needed cleaning out because of the debris running off the Barratts site. He also commented that the parking on Weston Hall Road was becoming an increasing problem with new home owners parking there because there was insufficient parking on site. It was agreed that the need for double yellow lines should be raised with the County Council.
4. The hedges down Buntsford Hill needed urgent attention and it was agreed that the Clerk should raise this with the County Council. In addition the hedge fronting the Severn Trent site in Stoke Pound Lane also needed urgent attention.
5. Chris Cooke reported that the VAS adjacent to Dark Lane was recorded 2,000 vehicles per day exceeding the speed limit. When the VAS was situated on the A38 during the 30mph speed limit, 6,000 vehicles were exceeding the speed limit. However when the speed limit was increased to 40mph, the figure dropped to 850 vehicles per day.
6. The bus shelters in Shaw Lane opposite Orchard Crescent and further along near the Old Police House were due for repainting. However he had become of a project in Harvington where a bus shelter had been painted by a local artist. It was agreed that the Clerk should talk with his opposite number at Harvington Parish Council to get more information before the shelters are painted.
7. Winter Salt Grit – Chris Cooke suggested that it would be more economical to buy salt from a local contractor at an agreed price of £95 per ton as and when required rather than to buy in bulk from the County Council. This was agreed.

141/19 Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

The Chairman reported that the County Council were planning to install new bus shelters outside the Boat and Railway PH and the Old School on Shaw Lane.

John Ellis reported on the recent Salt Fest event and asked that other Councillors get involved in the background to the John Corbett Trail so that knowledge could be spread over a larger group. The Chairman added that the information on the John Corbett website should be expanded to include more historical information about long standing families in the village etc.

Jill Howe reported that the safety fence around the reservoir next to Henbrook Gardens had been damaged. The Clerk was asked to report this to Barratts.

Sue Abel was asked to organise the poppy wreath for Remembrance Sunday. Sue Abel and John Ellis confirmed that they would be attending the service on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Clerk pointed out that the January 2020 meeting was scheduled for the 6th January and asked if it could be moved to the 13th January subject to the meeting room being available.

The Clerk asked for permission to buy the new version of the Clerks Manual at a cost of £47.50. This was agreed.

Date of Next Meeting – The Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 4th November 2019 commencing at 7.30pm at the Hall Annexe, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath.

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

Chairman