

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A virtual meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held via Zoom on the 6th July 2020.

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

In attendance: Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk) and Chris Cooke (Parish Lengthsman).

061/20 Apologies

Apologies were received from Jill Howe and Cty/Cllr Kyle Daisley.

062/20 Declarations of Interest

063/20 Requests for Dispensation

None.

064/20 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 1 June 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on the 1 June 2020 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

065/20 Audit 2019/20

(1) Internal Auditor's Report

After the Clerk had confirmed that he had auctioned the points raised by the Internal Auditor, it was agreed to note the report.

(2) Summary of Receipts and Payments at at 31 March 2020

The Parish Council approved the summary of receipts and payments for 2019/20 and agreed that they could be signed off by the Chairman and the Clerk.

(3) Annual Return and Governance Statement

The Parish Council gave their unanimous approval to the Chairman and the Clerk being given authority to sign off the Annual Audit Return and approval was also given to the Annual Governance Statement contained therein.

066/20 Finance

(1) Payment made since the Parish Council's June 2020 Meeting and Invoices for Payment for June 2020

The following payments totalling £3,411.59 were agreed unanimously:-

	Cost £	Cheque No.
Direct Debits		
<i>Cartridge World – Office Printer</i>	23.79	-
<i>TalkTalk – Telephone/Broadband</i>	32.34	-
Sub total	56.13	-

Cheque signed and issued since the last Parish Council meeting		
DM Payroll Services Ltd	100.00	1151
Sub Total	100.00	-
Cheques approved at July 2020 Parish Council meeting		
Clerk's net salary for June 2020	XXXX	1152
Clerk's Expenses & other Parish Council Expenditure for June 2020	163.76	"
Assistant Clerk's net salary for June 2020 plus 3 months home working allowance	XXXX	1153
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax on Clerks' salary plus NI & Asst Clerk's salary for June 2020	502.83	1154
Seiretto Ltd	213.60	1155
Chris Cooke – Lengthsman duties & Litter Picking for June 2020	534.36	1156
IDG Garden Services – Emptying of dog/waste bins and maintenance of play areas – June 2020	577.50	1157
Sub Total	3,255.46	-
Total Value of Payments	3,411.59	-

(2) Financial Management Statement for July 2020

This was noted.

067/20 Bus Shelter, Ryefields Road, Stoke Prior

The Chairman reminded the Parish Council that a proposal had been put forward by Cty Cllr Daisley to move the bus shelter and install double yellow lines in Ryefields Road. He had since spoken to Cllr Daisley regarding the Parish Council's concerns about moving the shelter and it had been agreed that it would remain in its current position. The alternative proposal was for the Parish Council purchase and install a new shelter and take responsibility for its maintenance. The Clerk added that the cost of a similar style would be in the region of £2,500 plus VAT or a wooden structure would cost in the region of £6,000 plus VAT. Installation costs would have to be added to those costs.

After discussion, it was agreed that the Parish Council should take over responsibility for the maintenance of the existing bus shelter and to carry out the necessary repairs needed to improve it. The Clerk was asked to inform Cllr Daisley and the County Council of this decision.

068/20 Planning Application

20/00684/REM – Stoke Works Pumping Station, Westonhall Road, Stoke Prior – Reserved matters application for the erection of 14 dwellings following outline planning permission 18/00119/OUT (Matters for approval: access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale).

The Parish Council acknowledged the application but agreed that they had no comment on the matters for approval. They did however agree that a plaque should be installed on the site in memory of the former Pumping Station which was on the site and its link with the Salt Works.

John Ellis abstained the consideration of this item.

069/20 Clerk's Report

(1) Home Working Allowance for Assistant Clerk

After discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the Assistant Clerk should be paid a home working

allowance of £7.00 per month. The allowance would be paid quarterly.

(2) Smartwater Update and Clerk's Hours

The Clerk briefly explained the work which had been going on with West Mercia Police to resolve the problems which had been highlighted with the delivery of Smartwater kits. He stressed that he had worked closely with Estelle Stock at West Mercia Police who had been extremely supportive in resolving the problems and had ensured that 180 additional kits had been purchased and distributed at no cost to the Parish Council. He also explained that he had also distributed another 160 kits across the parish. All of these kits had been registered on the Smartwater system by the Assistant Clerk. He added that it had been difficult to accurately determine how many additional hours were involved but he felt that 8 additional overtime.

The Clerk went on to explain that there were still streets/roads which had not had any or very few kits. In total this would require an additional 441 kits which we can still purchase at the original reduced price of £8.90 each, giving a total cost of £3,925.00. However West Mercia Police had been asked to limit the number of roadside signs and had agreed to provide a much lower number of signs than originally proposed. If the Parish Council were happy with this arrangement, West Mercia Police would purchase 200 kits for us meaning that we would only have to buy 241 kits at a total cost of £2,136. Collation, distribution and registration of the kits would be dealt with by the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk and may involve some additional hours.

It was then agreed that the Parish Council:-

- 1) Pays the Clerk 8 hours overtime in recognition of the work already carried out on the Smartwater project.
- 2) Acknowledges to support from West Mercia Police in purchasing a further 200 kits.
- 3) Supports the purchase of a further 240 Smartwater kits at a cost of £2,136.00 and the payment of any additional hours required for the Clerk and Assistant Clerk in distributing and registering the 440 kits.

(3) Front Gardens Competition 2020

It was agreed to hold a Front Gardens Competition for 2020. Alyson Jewson and Jean Jackson agreed to judge the gardens in Stoke Heath. The Clerk added that he understood that Jill Howe was willing to be one of the judges for Stoke Prior and Sue Abel agreed to do so as well.

(4) Planning Issues

The Clerk confirmed that he was still waiting to hear the outcome of the letter of complaint sent to Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive of Bromsgrove District Council.

At this point, the Chairman stated that he and the Clerk had been notified about a new planning application relating to the stationing of 90 static residential park homes on the Corbett Business Park in Shaw Lane. It was agreed that the Parish Council would need to respond to this and it was provisionally agreed to hold a special meeting on Wednesday 15 July 2020 to consider the Parish Council's response. In the meantime the Clerk would ensure that all Councillors received details of the planning application.

(5) Picnic Site, Stoke Wharf

The Clerk confirmed that agreement had been reached for the lease of the picnic site initially for 10 years at an annual peppercorn rent of £1. A formal letter of agreement had been drawn up. Arrangements would now have to be made to clear the site of unwanted trees etc, improve the overall appearance of the site and install new picnic benches and litter bins.

(6) John Corbett Trail/Churchyard

The Clerk confirmed he was working with Ian Gerrard to pay him direct to maintain the route of the John Corbett Trail through the churchyard. He had informed the PCC that the Parish Council would pay £800 towards the Conservation Board and he was now waiting to hear from them.

(7) Emptying of Waste/Dog Bins

Ian Gerrard would continue to make extra collections where necessary to avoid litter etc being left on the ground. This would mean having to pay a little extra each month for this extra work but it was a better option than litter and dog mess bags left lying around. This situation was only expected to be temporary.

070/20 Action Summary

The Action Summary was noted.

071/20 Councillors' Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

Chris Cooke raised the following points:-

1. The County Council were claiming that they had cleared 9,000 gullies across the county but he pointed out that very few had been cleared in Stoke Prior despite constant reminders.
2. Wild Meadow, Moorgate Road – The owner had placed boulders on the grass verge outside this property which were a dangerous obstacle. The County Council had been contacted them removed but to date no action had been taken.
3. Litter picking was an ongoing job.

Alan Bayliss reported that he now had enough signatures on a petition to be presented to the District Council requesting a separate Parish Council for Stoke Heath.

John Ellis confirmed that the Tai Chi classes would be starting on the 11 September at Stoke Heath Recreation Area.

The Chairman reported that the play areas had now been opened despite receiving a very late email from the District Council stating that they should remain closed. He added that it appeared that the email only applied to play areas managed by the District Council. The Clerk would be arranging for notices to be put up about how to use the areas safely.

The Clerk reported that he had received a request for a martial arts class to be run at Stoke Heath Recreation Area. The Parish Council had no objection to this.

Date of Next Meeting – The Parish Council's next meeting was scheduled to be held on Monday 7 September 2020 commencing at 7.30pm. This would either be a zoom meeting or held at Stoke Prior Village Hall on that date or on Wednesday 9 September 2020.

Chairman

The meeting closed at 8.20pm