

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL

A Meeting of Stoke Parish Council was held at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath on the 7th March 2022.

Present: Councillors Peter Williams (Chairman), John Ellis (Vice Chairman), Sue Abel, Liz Eden, Jill Howe, Jean Jackson, Alyson Jewson, Liz Miller and Paul Pittaway.

In attendance: Neil Gulliver (Parish Clerk), Chris Cooke (Parish Lengthsman) and 2 members of the public. Roz Bewsher and Barry Spence from Bentley Paucefoot Parish Council joined the meeting for Agenda item 6.

030/22 Apologies

Apologies were received from Diane Brown and Chris Jewson.

031/22 Declarations of Interest

032/22 Requests for Dispensation

None.

033/22 Adjournment of Meeting for Public Question Time

1) Members of the Public

A member of the public explained the problems with the footpath leading off Needlemill Lane which was becoming dangerous and also the increased use of the lane itself by speeding traffic partly caused by Satnavs directing drivers along the road rather than down the B4095 and also traffic visiting a business which was being operated from a private house. The Chairman agreed to ensure that these issues were drawn to the attention of the highways officers at the County Council.

2) County Councillor Kyle Daisley

3) District Councillors Malcolm Glass and Harrison Rone-Clarke

There were no County or District Councillors present.

034/22 Minutes of the Meeting held on the 7 February 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on the 7 February 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

035/22 Speed Limit Reduction on Copyholt Lane

The Chairman welcomed Roz Bewsher and Barry Spence to the meeting and invited them to briefly explain the background to the problems of speeding along Copyholt Lane and the progress of discussions with the County Council and the Police.

Roz Bewsher explained that Copyholt Lane was used by not just vehicles but also walkers, horse riders and cyclists and that speeding was now becoming a serious safety issue. Support had originally been received from a Highways Officer at the County Council but his recommendations to reduce the speed limit to 40mph had been overruled by senior managers who felt unable to support the cost of installing the necessary signage despite the road conforming to the national guidelines. The proposal already had the support of the

County Councillor for the area and Cty/Cllr Kyle Daisley had also indicated that he would support the proposal. The problems along this lane are exacerbated by it being used as a 'rat run' particularly since 200 new homes had been built at Webheath.

She then asked the Parish Council to write to the County Council supporting the request for a 40mph limit to be imposed on Copyholt Lane.

The Chairman thanked them both for attending the meeting and confirmed that the Parish Council would write to the County Council as requested.

036/22 Possible Skate Park in Ryefields Road Recreation Area

The Chairman expressed the view that he did not want the Parish Council to have any connection with the provision of a skate park on this site and this view was supported by the rest of the Council. The Clerk pointed out that the Recreation Area was in the ownership of the Parish Council and they would be liable for insuring the site etc. The Chairman agreed to talk to Cty/Cllr Kyle Daisley who was supporting the project to make him aware of the Council's position and to see where the project went from there.

037/22 Urgent Decisions taken since the Council's last meeting

The Chairman stated that Ian Gerard had been asked to replace the damaged flower box on the bridge on Hanbury Road (close to the junction with Shaw Lane).

038/22 Finance

(1) Invoices for Payment for February 2022

The payments totalling £3,843.52 were unanimously agreed as follows:-

	Cost £	Method
Direct Debits Payment		
<i>Cartridge World – Copier Rental</i>	23.79	-
Sub total	23.79	-
Payments made since the last Parish Council Meeting		
Clerk's net salary for February 2022	XXXX	Online
Assistant Clerk's net salary for February 2022	XXXX	Online
Sub total	XXXX	-
Cheques/Payments to be authorised at the Parish Council Meeting		
Clerk's Expenses & other Parish Council Expenditure for February 2022	178.93	Online
HM Revenue & Customs – Tax/NI on Clerks & Asst Clerks salary – February 2022	447.11	Cheque No.1193
United Church of Stoke Prior, Wychbold & Upton Warren	80.00	Online
Earth Anchors Ltd	500.34	Online
Avoncroft Arts Society	105.00	Online
IDG Garden Services	496.00	Online
Chris Cooke	634.50	Online

Sub Total	2,441.88	-
Total Value of Payments for February 2022	3,843.52	-

(2) Financial Management Statement for February 2022

The Parish Council noted the report.

039/22 Tree Planting

Alyson Jewson reported that arrangements were in hand for a group of pupils from South Bromsgrove School to be involved in the planting of the new trees at Ryefields Road Recreation Area. There would be a site meeting on the 10 March to agree where the trees should be located.

Liz Miller suggested that it would be a good idea to involve Stoke Prior First School. This was agreed and Liz Miller was asked to contact the school to see if they wanted to be involved.

040/22 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

It was noted that there were already a number of events being involved around the parish and it was suggested that, rather than organise another event, the Parish Council would offer any help to those events already planned.

Jill Howe suggested that it might be a good idea to give a commemorative mug or similar item to the children at Stoke Prior First School. The Parish Council agreed to look at the likely cost of going ahead with this suggestion and Liz Miller was asked to confirm the number of children currently attending the school. The Clerk agreed to check what products were available as gifts and to report back to the next meeting.

Jill Howe also suggested that this year's garden competition could be brought forward to early June to find the best garden involving a celebration display.

041/22 New Flower Box at Sharpway Gate

The Parish Council fully supported the request from local residents to install a flower box at Sharpway Gate. The Parish Council would supply the box and compost and the local residents would plant and maintain the box.

042/22 Review of the Parish Council's Risk Register and Assets Register

It was unanimously agreed to endorse the Parish Council's Risk Register and the Assets Register.

With regard to the Assets Register, the Clerk pointed out that there were a couple of new items to be added and he would also take on board the points raised by Paul Pittaway with regard to presentation.

043/22 Correspondence

The Clerk reported 2 items of correspondence as follows:-

1) Diane Malley from DM Payroll Services Ltd had confirmed that she available to act as the Parish Council's Auditor for 2021/22. The Parish Council confirmed that they were happy for her to continue in this role for 2021/22 and beyond.

2) A request had been received from Worcestershire Health Walks to use Stoke Heath Recreation Area and the outdoor gym equipment on the site. The Parish Council fully supported this request.

044/22 Councillors Points of Information and Items for Future Meetings

Chris Cooke raised the following items:-

- There had been 7 instances of fly tipping in the parish mainly tyres and electric cable casing.
- He would be meeting with Patrick White from the County Council to look the problems with the bridle path from the Ewe and Lamb to Shaw Lane and how they might be resolved.
- The John Corbett Notice Board had been renovated and put back on the wall at the entrance to the John Corbett Industrial Estate.
- All the new benches had now been installed. The bench at the Heath Close play area in Stoke Heath had been installed in addition to the existing bench which would be repainted at a later date.
- During February, 14 bags of litter had been collected.

Paul Pittaway asked whether it would be possible for the Parish Council to provide a plaque to be placed at the Pre-Preparatory School which occupies one of John Corbett's former houses currently known as 'The Stoke Grange' but which should be named simply 'The Grange'. The Chairman asked that the school submits this request in writing to the Parish Council although he did not see there being any issue in providing a plaque.

Liz Miller asked if the basketball court at Stoke Heath Recreation Area could be marked out. Chris Cooke confirmed this would be done as soon as the weather permitted.

Additional Item

045/19 Clerk's and Assistant Clerk's National Pay Increase

The Clerk reported that the national pay award for 2021/22 had finally been agreed and took effect from the 1 April 2021 giving a 1.75% increase across the board. The Parish Council noted that they were committed to these increases under the terms of the staff contracts.

046/22 Date of Next Meeting

It was confirmed that the Parish Council's next meeting would be held on Monday 4 April 2022 commencing at 7.30pm at The Forge, Avoncroft Arts Centre, Stoke Heath.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Chairman