

STOKE FERRY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on
Wednesday 9 January 2019 at 7.00pm in Stoke Ferry Village Hall

In attendance:

Cllr Sue Lintern (Chair)

Cllr Jim McNeill (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Daphne Clements

Cllr Grant Hopkins

Cllr Mandy Leamon

Cllr Trudy Mann

Cllr Gail Reeve

(Vacancy – 1)

Helen Richardson (Parish Clerk and Financial Responsible Person)

Public: 12

Also, in attendance:

Cllr Colin Sampson, Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk

Mr Chris Philpott, Footpath Warden

01/19 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Kit Hesketh-Harvey (illness).

02/19 Declarations of Interest on Agenda Items and Dispensation Requests

Cllr Mandy Leamon declared an interest on item 15/19 in relation to the budget item regarding the Playing Field Committee.

03/19 Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on 5 December 2018

The Parish Council approved the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 5 December 2018 as a true record, there was two abstentions in relation to non-attendance at that meeting, the minutes were proposed for approval by Cllr Trudy Mann, seconded by Cllr Mandy Leamon, in favour were five.

04/19 Clerk's Report (Inc Matters Arising)

The Clerk read out the following:

- 1) **Dukes Head** – Planning Enforcement Team Mick Bates advised 'that the owners were written to in the summer and a request made to carry out works to the property. This has not happened. It has now been referred to CNC Building Control who are responsible for inspecting and overseeing potentially dangerous buildings. This referral was made last week so hopefully they will inspect soon'. Emailed dated 18 December 2018.
- 2) A thank you communication was sent to the resident for the work that they had completed on the cemetery hedging.
- 3) The Parish Partnership Fund application was acknowledged by Norfolk County Council, and the result would be known in the spring.
- 4) The Clerk was liaising with Norfolk County Council Highways on extra signage for Furlong Road.
- 5) **Planning Decisions to note:** 18/01888/F Stoke Ferry Poppyseed High Street Stoke Ferry Norfolk PE33 9SF - Retrospective consent for construction of a carport Application Permitted. 5 December 2018. Delegated Decision

6) Planning Decisions to note: 18/01847/RM Stoke Ferry Land SE of The Willows and S of Lambsdale View Greatmans Way Stoke Ferry Norfolk – RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATION: Construction of two dwellings Application Permitted 11 December 2018 Delegated Decision

05/19 To Discuss Parish Council Co-option and an Application Received

Parish Council had received an application from a resident who had waived their rights for GDPR. The applicant was interviewed prior to the meeting. Those in favour of accepting the application was zero and those against accepting the application was 7.

06/19 To Approve: Cemetery, Gardens Area Village Improvements – Trees/Tree Guards/Hedging/Bulb Planting

The Parish Council wished to discuss potential improvements in these areas. Cllr Jim McNeill suggested the purchase of bulb and spring flowers seeds to go within the garden areas at a total cost of £120, which he agreed to purchase on behalf of the Parish Council for reimbursement. Cllr Grant Tomkins proposed the purchase of bulbs and spring flowers seeds at £120, seconded by Cllr Gail Reeve, all in favour. Further purchases of wood chip will be considered at the February meeting.

07/19 To Approve: Refurbishment Costs of WI Bench for Gardens Area

The Parish Council were awaiting quotes and agreed to defer to the February agenda.

08/19 To Approve/Discuss: Community Asset Application and Other Locations

Asset of Community Value Nomination Form had been completed by Cllr Jim McNeill in relation to the Bluebell pub, Lynn Road. Cllr Jim McNeill advised that he had liaised with the Crown Inn at Northwold and The King's Arms at Shouldham, who had supplied some good suggestions for the application, thanks to them. Cllr Jim McNeill following a query advised that once the application was approved the Parish Council could consider possible options. Cllr Cllr Sue Lintern proposed the approval of the application presented, seconded by Cllr Daphne Clements, all were in favour. The Parish Council agreed there were no other areas for Community Asset applications within the Parish of Stoke Ferry they felt needed to be applied for.

09/19 To Approve/Discuss: Citizens Advice Bureau Donation Request

The Parish Council had received correspondence from the Citizens Advice Bureau regarding request for donation. The Parish Council felt that they didn't wish to donate.

10/19 To Discuss/Plan: Streetlighting Village Inspection

In order to inspect Streetlighting provision in Stoke Ferry it was agreed to walk the village in street by street and agree a date at the February meeting for it to be undertaken in February. Cllr Sue Lintern agreed to share with Councillors data on the location of the Parish owned streetlights for the purpose of the inspection. The data had been created following a previous review.

11/19 To Discuss: Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Chair advised that Cllr Kit Hesketh-Harvey had sent an update from the Neighbourhood Plan Group. The Chair advised that there was an article in the Village Pump which was published regarding the Neighbourhood Plan. The Chair advised that the article did not reflect the views of the Stoke Ferry Parish Council, and which did not agree with sentiments made regarding neighbouring parishes.

The Chair shared that the Parish Council needed to put some structures in place to move the plan forward.

The update contained the following points:

- The Neighbourhood Plan working group shared that they needed the Parish Council to approve and submit a grant funding application they would complete for around £9k.
- Local Parishes had been contacted for interest in a shared parish plan.
- The working group felt that a website might be useful
- The main contact for the project had resigned in December.

The Clerk advised that the Neighbourhood Plan was that of the Parish Council as the authority body, and any decisions in relation to the formation of the plan needed to come before the Parish Council for decision at every stage. Any funding applied for needed to be in the Parish Council name and would be in the bank of the Parish Council, the Parish Council would be responsible for the funds.

The Chair advised that there had been no prior communications with the Parish Council about a Cross-Parish Plan and it needed to come before the Parish Council for discussion and approval. However, the Neighbourhood Plan Group had consulted with neighbouring parishes.

The Chair shared that there was no doubt that the Neighbourhood Plan was the correct way forward for the village, but the operation of the project needed to be run correctly, and a formal procedure would allow for this to happen and under the oversight and control of the Parish Council.

It was believed that the Committee had changed significantly since March 2018.

The Chair summarised points to be addressed:

- 1) The structure of the working group needed to be understood and agreed;
- 2) When the meetings were being held by the Neighbourhood Plan Group needed to be known as well as advertised so that the public know and can get involved if they wish to.
- 3) The Parish Council need to create and approve a communications protocol for information shared with the public and between itself and the Neighbourhood Plan Group. The Chair and the Clerk agreed to draft a document for approval at the February meeting.

12/19 To Discuss: Handyman/NCC Rangers or Public Rights of Way (Footpaths/Bridleway) Issues

- The Clerk agreed to ask the Handyman to collect the leaves and debris gathered in heap at the village gardens by the village sign and dispose of them;
- The Clerk agreed to ask the Handyman to do a good litter pick within hedges whilst they were bare;
- The Clerk agreed to write to residents to ask they ensure any signage near their properties along Furlong Road and keep clear, lorries etc.
- Public Right of Way booklet is now finalised and awaiting the village sign to be created to go on the front cover. The Village Sign whilst being made was coming along nicely and looked fantastic. Bonnets were sharing photos as they make them so that we can show development of the sign and place on our website.

13/19 For Consideration: 18/02274/F First floor extension to rear of dwelling at Furlong Cottage 2 Furlong Road Stoke Ferry King's Lynn PE33 9SU

The Parish Council had no comments and were in support of the application.

14/19 To Approve: Payments and Accept Accounts

The following payments for approval were received:

Payee	Payment for	Net	VAT	Total
Clerk	Clerks Wages and Ex-penses -Dec 18	275.11	0.00	275.11
HMRC	Dec-18	64.40	0.00	64.40
Veolia	Cemetery Bins	18.08	3.62	21.70
Thomas B Bon-nett	Large Bin Bags	3.90	0.78	4.68
Wave (DD)	Cemetery Water Supply	11.97	0.00	11.97
	Legal Fees	589.20	117.84	707.84
EON (DD)	Streetlights Electricity - Nov 18	63.18	3.16	66.34
SF Village Hall	Village Hall Hire	25.00	0.00	25.00

Total 1050.84 125.40 1177.04

As at 3 January
19

Business Account 30780.52
Community Account 3768.88
34549.40

The payments and accounts were accepted, proposed by Cllr Grant Tomkins, seconded by Cllr Daphne Clements, all were in favour.

15/19 To Approve: Budget and Precept 201920

The Clerk advised the information was the same in December apart from the Council tax band D which the Borough Council had amended. Cllr Trudy Mann proposed a decrease of 10% in the precept at a total of £15,218.21, seconded by Cllr Jim McNeill, all were in favour.

The Parish Council received the budget for 201920, Cllr Trudy Mann proposed its approval, seconded by Cllr Jim McNeill, all agreed.

16/19 Urgent items as agreed by the Chairman

The Chairman advised that there had been a letter published from a resident in the Village Pump, and up until this point the Parish Council had not wished publicly share the issues it had been dealing with up until this point, but it was felt that it now needed to make a statement, as follows:

- The Parish Council were disappointed that they felt obliged to issue the statement in response to a letter from Mr Doug Lawson as published in the December issue of the Village Pump.
- Over the past 12-18 months members of the Parish Council and its Clerk have had to endure unacceptable and persistent communications. These

communications had been persistent, duplicitous and vexatious along with numerous slanderous and emotionally distressing unfounded accusations as to the conduct of its Clerk, your Council members collectively, and individual Councillors which was strongly refuted.

- This has taken up a disproportionate amount of Councillors' voluntary time and energy; time and energy that could have been spent in continuing to improve our village and the quality of life of all our residents. The extra hours our Parish Clerk has had to spend on dealing with the continual stream of questions and accusations raised means there has been an inevitable but unnecessary financial cost to our local taxpayers.
- Despite this, the Parish Council has at all times striven to deal with these issues in a professional manner and in accordance with its policies and procedures. The Parish Council has also dealt with the various matters confidentially to date. However, following the letter from Mr Doug Lawson, published in the December issue of the Village Pump magazine, the matter is now in the public domain and as several accusations have been levelled at your Parish Council, we seek to publicly defend our record and professional conduct.
- Between, 4-yearly elections, the Parish Council has the power to appoint co-opted members onto the Parish Council. The Parish Council is not obliged to appoint every individual who may apply neither are individuals co-opted to the Council purely on account of their CV, knowledge around certain procedural issues or experience. It is the duty of Parish Councillors to also consider, an applicant's attitude, interpersonal skills, their approach towards working in the interest of our community and, developing cordial, close professional working relationships with potential fellow councillors and the Parish Clerk.
- As a Council we are proud of our record of public service over the past 12-18 months during which time we have consistently acted in the interest of our community as follows:
 - We have dealt with a range of issues and concerns that have been raised regarding the safe functioning of the 2Agriculture feed mill in our village. To this end we:
 - (i) had a tour of the entire mill
 - (ii) organised and held an open public meeting where senior staff were available to respond to questions and concerns put by local people
 - (iii) arranged a surgery with our MP, Liz Truss, where our constituents could ask questions and air concerns
 - Further, we have ensured, and continue to monitor, that all the statutory bodies which oversee the mill's operations (Environmental Health, Fire, Health & Safety Executive, Borough Council, Highways, Norfolk Constabulary, etc.) are fulfilling their duties to ensure the safety of both local residents and also those who work at the mill. Through these actions and initiatives, and representation of the Parish Council on the Factory Liaison

Committee, improvements in the procedures and operations at the mill have been made.

- Again, regarding 2Agriculture, we have taken concerns from residents regarding the legality of the factory's use of Lynn Road to deliver materials to the mill. This has involved numerous communications with Highways and the Norfolk Constabulary. These official bodies, while acknowledging the situation is certainly not ideal for many residents, have found no legal grounds for denying vehicles accessing 2Agriculture sites to use Lynn Road Wretton Road and Buckingham Drive
- Your Parish Council has been active and successful in handling two environmental issues of local concern; firstly, dust and odours from the 2Agriculture mill and, secondly, the issue of last summer's outbreak of flies from the local food waste tip.
- We have applied for funding for 'entrance gates' to be installed in our village. This involved a long period of correspondence to overturn Norfolk County Council's purchasing policy so that these 'gates' could be locally constructed of wood rather than, very expensive plastic material.
- Many residents will have noticed that a large section of our cemetery's overgrown hedge has been removed and replanted, there has also been new hedge installation within the cemetery. This planting was carried out voluntarily by local residents' and at next to no cost to our Parish.
- We constantly drive for openness and transparency of our work. To this end we have established a web site (<http://stokeferryparishcouncil.co.uk/>) where all Council minutes and policies are available to members of the public.
- As a Parish Council we have been prudent in our use of public finances. This has allowed us to reduce the Parish Council tax for two years running.

We do hope that this statement sheds a positive light on our work and provides a fair, balanced and accurate account.

As it is stated on our Parish Council website, *'We are proud to be serving our local community'.*"

17/19 Cllr Colin Sampson (BCKLWN) Update

- To continue the spirit of openness he pointed out that his Borough Council register of interest had been incorrect, but when completed in 2015 he had been a Board Member at Freebridge Community Housing which had since finished in September 2017. In around four-months' time the form would be reviewed and updated.
- Grass Cutting – The Borough Council met with the Stoke Ferry Parish Council Clerk recently, and things at the Borough Council were moving forward by officers in order to formulate a joined-up approach to grass cutting in West Norfolk. Depending on the outcomes of the review there may be opportunities for Parish Council's to organise grass cutting within its own parish and there might be an offer of funds to cover the costs.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner was going to be in Downham Market on Friday morning discussing the Police part of the precept next year, which had been advertised in the paper.

18/19 Receive items of concern & matters to be included on the next agenda from the Parish Council and note forward items

There were none and the forward list was noted.

19/19 Public Comments

- The Christmas Tree lights were down and were being stored safely.
- A resident shared that other achievements in the year had also been the Summer Fayre, the footpath walks organised, and they had 100% support the Parish Council for all they do which at times can be a thankless task.
- The Walks and Bridleway sign near the church had been vandalised. Cllr Sue Lintern agreed to have a look at it. The Footpath Warden advised the map was out of date.
- The Chair advised following a query that work on the footpaths was to register all footpaths in the parish boundary which meant the Parish was well ahead of the designation of paths on the definitive map in 2026. And shared that the booklet is for walks that are circular and therefore some of the smaller footpaths were not on the plan. The Chair shared the footpath near the mill was on the definitive map but not on routes of walks.
- A resident advised that the footpath had been registered some time ago when the factory purchased Self's Field. And the Parish Council at that time had registered it as a public footpath at that time.
- The Chair confirmed that 2agriculture had donated to Stoke Ferry's various events over time
- The Footpath Warden advised that on FP2 (Footpath 2) a finger point had been moved by someone, the Chair agreed to ask the Norfolk County Council Right of Way Officer.
- A member of the public asked if the Neighbourhood Plan included the Parish Conservation Area.
- A member of the public advised that it seemed there had been pre-occupation with disagreements, but someone who is co-opted on to the Parish Council must be someone you have to work with and as the Parish Council you have the right to say no. The discussion should be finalised and done with.
- The Chair advised that an SWAEFAS Wassail will be held January 19th at The Community Centre, Campinglands, Swaffham was being held at Camping Lands in Swaffham 4-10 pm.

20/19 Confirm the Date of the Next Meeting – Wednesday 6th February 2019

Closed 8.20 pm

The Parish Council met after the meeting during a closed confidential session.