

STOKE FERRY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on
Wednesday 4 September 2019 at 7.00pm in Stoke Ferry Village Hall

Present:

Cllr Sue Lintern (Chair)

Cllr Daphne Clements

Cllr Kit Hesketh-Harvey

Cllr Mandy Leamon

Cllr Trudy Mann

Cllr Gail Reeve

Cllr Janet Taylor

Helen Richardson (Parish Clerk and Financial Responsible Person)

Public: 3

Also, in attendance:

Cllr Colin Sampson, BCKLWN

Cllr Martin Storey, NCC

Chris Philpott, Footpath Warden

204/19 Emergency Evacuation Procedures was read by the Chair.

205/19 Openness and Transparency Notice - The Parish Council record the meeting. The Chair notified the public of this. The Chair also advised that any aggressive or abusive behaviour towards members of the Parish Council, staff or members of the public will not be tolerated. If this happens you will be asked to leave and if necessary, the meeting will be suspended.

206/19 Apologies for Absence Apologies were accepted for Cllr Jim McNeill (Vice Chair) (Personal Reasons) and Cllr Donna Stocking (Personal Reasons).

206/19 To receive Declarations of Interest from Members on any item to be discussed
There were none.

207/19 To approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting 7 August 2019 and Extraordinary Meeting 21 August 2019

The minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 7 August 2019 were proposed for approval by Cllr Janet Taylor, seconded by Cllr Daphne Clements, one abstained and six were in favour. The minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 21 August 2019 were proposed for approval by Cllr Mandy Leamon, seconded by Cllr Daphne Clements, one abstained (as absent) and six were in favour.

208/19 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Last Meeting (And Clerks Report)

7 August – Matters Arising

Christmas Arrangements – Cllr Janet Taylor was progressing getting a tree. Cllr Daphne Clements was checking if the Church will be doing anything and on which date. Cllr Mandy Leamon agreed to ask the school about involvement in the event.

Website – The Chair advised that Ocean Remix had hosted the Parish Council's website for the last two years, and they had advised that they were consolidating two businesses, so the hosting company currently trading as Ocean Remix Ltd is now Ocean Remix and will be changing by name to Bequality. The Chair advised that this was for information as it didn't change anything that the Council had in place or agreed to be in place. The Chair shared that a member of public queried the security of the website and she advised that there wasn't a website that was ever completely secure such as Twitter, Apple, BA, HSBC etc have all been hacked in recent months.

Norfolk County Council Partnership Scheme 2020/21 – The Chair advised that there were three potential Parish Partnership fund projects identified. They were seating in the form of perching at the Gardens Area bus stop; number tags for finger posts to complement the walks booklet for around the parish and a map displaying the walks and points of interest. She added that the final scheme for the bid would be decided at the October meeting. Following a suggestion by Cllr Trudy Mann the Council agreed that she bring together costs for the October meeting and advertise for a local artist to draw up a map that could be displayed on the plinth near the gardens area and an empty frame on a nearby wall. She added that she envisaged it would be a map that could be reprinted and displayed under clear plastic, should it perish or get damaged in time. It was agreed to advertise in the Stoke Ferry Market Place for artists.

Matters Arising – 21 August – EGM for the Mill planning applications - Cllr Martin Storey advised he had no information on a further Committee date at the Borough Council.

Clerks Report

The Post Office Mobile Van Manager based at Upwell had advised the Clerk that they would not be able to consider an extra service for Stoke Ferry at least before next April 2020. They might however consider extending the time that the van was at Wereham. The Clerk agreed to seek an update on the garage's application to run a Post Office.

Email from Norfolk County Council – 'We are in the process of carrying out inspections of roadside trees and we may be surveying in your parish on smaller, rural roads known as class 4A2. The primary focus of the inspections is to identify ash trees that are in decline due to ash dieback disease (ADB) and assess whether they are now posing a risk to highway users. We may also pick up other trees that are in a dead or dangerous condition. For further information on ADB please visit our webpage: www.norfolk.gov.uk/ashdieback. This summer, our approach is to remind landowners that 'their trees are their responsibility' and to raise awareness of ash dieback disease. If trees are found in poor condition but not considered imminently dangerous, we are fixing notices to the trunks of trees and marking the trees with yellow paint to inform the owner that they may need to act. We may contact you in future if we find any areas of concern or have a query regarding ownership of an individual tree or tree group. Should you need any further information or have any queries concerning the above, please visit our webpage or contact us at ashdieback@norfolk.gov.uk' Ash Dieback Team Community and Environmental Services Phone number: 01603 222112 Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Martineau Lane, NR1 2SG. The Clerk agreed to share with them the Buckenham Drive area behind the bungalows as suspected Ash trees.

209/19 To Update on the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan

The Chair advised that the Parish Council had advertised for people to come forward to join the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group. A meeting had been arranged with Alex Fradley from the Borough Council Planning Team regarding funding available and discussions about a Neighbourhood Plan Consultant on Monday 9th September.

210/19 To Approve Commission of Grounds Maintenance Contract Quotation Paperwork and to Discuss the Placement of a Skip in the Cemetery

Draft paperwork for consideration had been circulated for comments. It was agreed to add the bins as a separate section in the quotation document. It was agreed to specify in the documents that the Council wished the contractor to cut grass on either a Wednesday or Thursday weather permitting for consistency and to be able to check work completed. Cllr Trudy Mann agreed to make amendments to the documents. The Chair shared that there also was a checking document for whilst the contract was in place to check works done and which would be completed by Councillors.

The Chair suggested adding the verge near the entrance to Bradfield Place on the contract as it was only cut twice a year, but maybe arrange for extra cuts only once a month. Cllr Trudy Mann agreed to contact the Borough Council in terms of this piece of land and other pieces that they cut to negotiate around the cost efficiency that this would bring them, and what could be offered to the parish in return.

Cllr Sue Lintern proposed to continue to use the soil area for grass cuttings in the cemetery and not use a skip, which was seconded by Cllr Daphne Clements, all were in favour.

211/19 To Discuss and Approve Any Action Relating to an Overgrown Hedge on Boughton Road

The Clerk agreed to ask Highways to look at the 'unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles sign' and the possibility of the hedge being cut back.

212/19 To Approve Purchase of Wreath(s) for Remembrance Sunday

Cllr Janet Taylor proposed the purchase of one poppy wreath, five large poppies and 21 wooden crosses for names of remembrance to be added of up £100, seconded by Cllr Sue Lintern, all were in favour. The Clerk agreed to order from the Royal British Legion in Downham Market. Remembrance Sunday was on 10th November. This payment will be made under the power of s137 of Local Government Act 1972.

213/19 To Approve Amendments to Standing Orders

The Chair advised that adjustment in the Standing Orders had been amended where public participation was mentioned as being allowable for 5 minutes and suggested a change to 3 minutes. The Parish Council were unanimously in favour.

214/19 To Approve Councillor Attendance to NALC Course: Law and Good Practice of Local Council Meetings

The Parish Council approved payment for two Councillors to attend the Law and Good Practice of Local Council Meetings at £60 plus VAT each. The Clerk agreed to book them on.

215/19 To Approve: Payments and Accounts Reconciliation to Date

Payee	Cheque No.	Payment for	Net	VAT	Total
Clerk	101821	Clerks Wages and Expenses -Aug 19 including refund of website hosting fee for 24 months (23.98 inc VAT)	304.18	4.00	308.18
HMRC	101822	Aug-19	66.80	0.00	66.80
Westcotec- Street-light Maintenance	101823	May, June and July 19	46.32	9.27	55.59
SF Village Hall	101824	Village Hall Hire - 21 August and 4 Sept	40.00	0.00	40.00
EON	DD	Electricity for Street-lights	80.60	4.03	84.63
Grounds Maintenance	101819	Aug-19	98.00	0.00	98.00

Total **635.90** **17.30** **653.20**

As at 2 Aug 2019

Community Account - Current 9563.27
Business Account 29974.74

Cllr Kit Hesketh-Harvey proposed approval of the payments, which was seconded Cllr Janet Taylor, all were in favour.

216/19 Urgent Matters – Chairman

The Chair made the following statement.

Over the last 2 years the Parish Council has been accused by two individuals of many things including fraud, lying and mismanagement of funds.

Most people in the village know the members of the Parish Council (PC) and know these accusations are not true. However, some have also questioned why, if it's not true, we don't do something about it, or don't defend ourselves, so here we go:

The two individuals who have made these accusations have reported the PC to every possible professional body they can find, and, in each instance, we have been exonerated. For example, members of the public will no doubt remember the ludicrous claims of electoral fraud made earlier this year. This was reported to the police and found: "it is the opinion of the police that this does not breach purdah guidelines or any criminal legislation. It does not breach any of the 'guidance' issued by the government. The walkers guide has not been published to 'influence' the outcome of the election. It passes the reasonable test."

Given that the two individuals concerned have put themselves forward as the "policemen of the PC" and knowing what sticklers they are for getting things right, I am sure it is an oversight on their part to not update people with the outcome and that they did not intentionally mean to mis-lead anyone by letting them think electoral fraud was actually committed.

There are many more instances such as this and, sadly, each time, the people instigating these accusations have forgotten to inform the public of the outcomes.

Whilst I don't expect a public apology for the PC or the Clerk, I would expect these two individuals to rectify such mis-leading information. I'm also sure others would own up to an error on their part.

I can categorically tell you that our Clerk, who incidentally serves 3 parishes, is hard working honest and completely above board in all her dealings.

When these individuals make such false allegations about this parish council, we will, in future, be sharing our responses.

End of Statement

The Chair shared that the PC had been invited to send two Councillors to a meeting with the new Police Inspector at Downham Market Station, as an opportunity to hear local Policing plans and ask the Inspector any questions they may have. Cllr Sue Lintern agreed to attend, and the Clerk agreed to let them know, possibly with Cllr Jim McNeill.

217/19 To Receive items of concern & matters to be included on the next agenda from the Parish Council and note forward items

- The Clerk agreed to ask NCC Highways to inspect footpath at Bridge Road as was split and uneven.
- Cllr Janet Taylor agreed to visit a person regarding a hedge to be cut.
- Cllr Trudy Mann shared that residents had approached her with concerns about a smell believed to be coming from the Wissington Factory. Cllr Janet Taylor had contacted the factory and was advised that they would monitor it. She added that they thanked her for her call and welcomed feedback as they continued to improve the factory. The employee she spoke to advised that they subsequently had checked

the dusk extraction but there was no indicators of any issue, and had shared with key staff who lived locally about reports of an odour, but there appeared to be nothing obvious as a cause at this time but would remain vigilant as the weather continues to be warm. She added that they also extended an invite to visit the factory as before. It was agreed to send the Factory a formal letter of concern from the Parish Council copied to Elizabeth Truss MP, the Environment Agency contact Sam Brown and the Borough Council's Environmental Health team. The Clerk agreed to do.

218/19 Cllr Colin Sampson (BCKLWN) and Cllr Martin Storey (NCC), if in attendance

Cllr Colin Sampson

- Advised that a Neighbourhood Plan may encompass a more important role in the coming years and so it was an important document to have in place.

Cllr Martin Storey

- Unfortunately, he hadn't been at Stoke Ferry since the Planning Committee meeting and shared that he had been impressed with the speakers at the Planning Committee from Stoke Ferry regarding the mill planning applications. He added that it was hoped that the best could be gained for Stoke Ferry from the process.
- There had been amendments to the CIL process which the Clerk would be circulating from the Borough Council to the Councillors for information.
- There had been numerous activities reported on the NCC website over the August holidays.
- There was a hazardous waste amnesty at the Norfolk waste dump coming up, Thetford it was 14th and 15th September, and in King's Lynn it was 19th and 20th October. Any items could be taken to the sites and disposed of which normally are not accepted.
- There had been comments from parents about the NCC budget cuts and meetings were being held with them to explain the reasoning behind the cuts and anything that could be done to help them. There was going to a meeting at County Hall soon to discuss such matters and he hoped to attend.
- Any other information can be found on the NCC website or contact him direct if anyone needed his assistance.

The Chair shared with Cllr Martin Storey that she had contacted the strategic health person who commented on planning matters, and had asked them whether in the case that a local doctors surgery didn't wish to expand and apply for CIL funds, whether the Parish Council could approach other local surgeries for example and ask them to bid to provide services to Stoke Ferry residents. Cllr Martin Storey advised that infrastructure was something considered before making a planning decision and the person the Chair had contacted was the right person to ask and to await to hear their answer on the matter.

219/19 Adjourn the meeting to allow for public comments

The meeting was adjourned.

220/19 Confirm the Date of the Next Meeting – Wednesday 2 October 2019 at 7 pm, Ordinary Meeting of the Stoke Ferry Parish Council

This was agreed.

221/19 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC The Council to pass a resolution excluding the press and public from the meeting in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. To discuss any urgent HR issues, Contracts or Legal Proceedings. To discuss HR related topic and Contract related topic. It was agreed that there was nothing to be discussed

The meeting closed at 8.36 pm