

# STOKE PARISH COUNCIL



50 Pepys Way, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3LL

## DRAFT MINUTES

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2024**  
**Annual Parish Council Meeting**  
**Village Hall ~ 7.35pm**

Attendees: Cllr J. Wallace ~ Chair  
Cllr K. Mansell  
Cllr S. Back  
Cllr T. Hall  
Cllr P. Dumke ~ Vice Chair  
Cllr N. Blown  
Cllr S. Hall  
Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk

Members of the public: Seven (7)

### **PUBLIC SESSION ~ NOT PART OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace opened the public session at 7.00pm and thanked the Parish Councillors and seven (7) members of the public for attending.

#### **Part A. Public Discussions**

A member of the Stoke Community Project spoke to appeal to the Parish Councillors for their annual grant, reporting that the team were now beginning to organise community events to take place later in the year.

In response to the aforementioned events, Cllr S. Back spoke to volunteer his services as both a trained Fire Marshall and First Aider. Cllr K. Mansell spoke to commend Cllr S. Back's skills, where she praised him for the fantastic job, he had made of updating the Village Hall's first aid kit.

Finally, a member of the public spoke to enquire why Ward Councillor C. Spalding was not present. The members spoke collectively to assure the resident that Cllr C. Spalding had been invited however, they had received no apologies for absence from him.

#### **Part B. Public Discussions on any agenda items** **None.**

No further questions were raised and the public session closed at 7.50pm.

#### **1. Election of Chair Person,**

**To elect the Chair Person of Stoke Parish Council for the 2024/2025 Council Year.**

**Min 7938:24** Cllr K. Mansell spoke to propose Cllr J. Wallace be elected as Chair, this proposal was seconded by Cllr P. Dumke and was unanimously agreed.

#### **2. Chair Person's Declaration of Acceptance of Office,**

**To receive the Chair Person's Declaration of Acceptance of Office or, if the Chair Person is not present, to resolve that such Declaration be made at or before the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council.**

**Min 7939:24** Cllr J. Wallace duly signed the declaration of acceptance of office, which was witnessed and signed by the Proper Officer, Mrs J. Allen.

#### **3. Election of Vice-Chair Person,**

**To elect the Vice-Chair Person of Stoke Parish Council for the 2024/2025 Council Year.**

**Min 7940:24** Cllr N. Blown spoke to propose Cllr P. Dumke be elected as the Vice-Chair, this proposal was seconded by Cllr S. Back and was unanimously agreed.

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4. **Vice-Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office,**

To receive the Vice-Chair Person's Declaration of Acceptance of Office or, if the Vice-Chair Person is not present, to resolve that such Declaration be made at or before the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council.

Min 7941:24 Cllr P. Dumke duly signed the declaration of acceptance of office, which was witnessed and signed by the Proper Officer, Mrs J. Allen.

5. **Apologies for absence,**

Min 7942:24 None.

6. **To receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensations,**

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers. To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

Min 7943:24 None

7. **Minutes from the previous Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024,**

a). To receive and approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Min 7944:24 The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024, were circulated.

It was proposed by the Cllr N. Blown and seconded by Cllr P. Dumke that the minutes be approved as a correct record. The motion was carried after it was unanimously agreed.

8. **Matters arising from the minutes (not otherwise on the agenda)**

Min 7945:24 None.

9. **To review the Council's Sub Committee Memberships**

a). **Personnel.**

Min 7946:24 After careful consideration, the members collectively agreed to elect Cllr J. Wallace & Cllr P. Dumke as their chosen representatives.

b). **Planning.**

Min 7947:24 After careful consideration, the members collectively agreed that ALL of the Parish Councillors should be elected as the representatives of the Planning Sub Committee.

c). **Finance.**

Min 7948:24 After careful consideration, the members collectively agreed that ALL of the Parish Councillors should elect as the representatives of the Finance Sub Committee.

10. **To review the Council's Working Party Memberships**

a). **Playparks.**

Min 7949:24 After careful consideration, the members collectively agreed to elect Cllrs K. Mansell & P. Dumke as their chosen representatives, alongside the new village litter picker (once recruited).

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## **b). Policies.**

**Min 7950:24** After careful consideration, the members collectively agreed that ALL of the Parish Councillors should be elected as representatives of the Policies Working Party.

## **c). Neighbourhood Plan.**

**Min 7951:24** After careful consideration, the members collectively agreed to elect Mr P. Egan as their chosen representative of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party, alongside several members of the team he had formed.

## **11. To review the Council's representatives for external bodies**

### **a). KALC**

**Min 7952:24** Cllr N. Blown spoke to volunteer himself as the Parish Council's KALC Representative. After careful consideration the members unanimously agreed to elect him into the post.

### **b). Rural Liaison.**

**Min 7953:24** Cllr J. Wallace spoke to volunteer herself as the Parish Council's Rural Liaison Representative. After careful consideration the members unanimously agreed to elect her into the post.

### **c). Police Liaison.**

**Min 7954: 24** It was accepted that there was no Police Liaison Committee any longer, as this group had been superseded by PACT Meetings (Police and Communities Together) instead.

### **d). Village Hall.**

**Min 7955: 24** Cllrs N. Blown & K. Mansell spoke to volunteer themselves as the Parish Council's Village Hall Representatives. After careful consideration both members were unanimously elected as their candidates.

### **e). Stoke Community Project.**

**Min 7956:24** Cllr J. Wallace spoke to volunteer herself as the Parish Council's Stoke Community Project Representative. After careful consideration the members unanimously agreed to elect her into the post.

## **12. To review and approve the Council's and/or employees' subscriptions to other bodies**

### **a). KALC.**

### **b). ICO.**

### **c). Rialtas.**

### **d). Satswana.**

**Min 7957:24** The members collectively discussed the Parish Council's subscriptions to KALC, ICO, Rialtas & Satswana. It was unanimously agreed to continue with these payments for the forthcoming year.

The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen also suggested that the Parish Council considered joining NALC (National Association of Local Councils).

## **13. Ward Councillor report**

### **a). A report by Ward Councillor Chris Spalding**

**Min 7958:24** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen reported that Ward Cllr C. Spalding had not provided any apologies for this absence or provided her with a copy of his most recent Ward Councillor report.

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## 14. Planning

### a). Applications

**Min 7959:24** The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace spoke to confirm receipt of three (3) new planning applications. The Parish Councillors discussed each in turn.

- **MC/24/0775 – Mill Croft. Allhallows Road**  
The members observed that this application related to a detached outbuilding to the rear. Because of its positioning, it was felt that this outbuilding would be visible from the road, and as such the Parish Councillors decided not to submit an objection.
- **MC/24/0449 - Former White Horse PH Site, The Street, Upper Stoke**  
No Comments.
- **MC/24/0413 - 2 Heron Way**  
No Comments.

### b). Decisions

**Min 7960:24** The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace spoke to confirm receipt of two (2) new planning decisions, both of which had been approved subject to conditions:

#### Approval with conditions

- **MC/23/2467 - Orchard View, High Street**
- **MC/23/1435 - Land at Walnut Tree Farm, Grain Road**

### c). Appeals and Other Matters.

**Min 7961:24** The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen informed the members, that she understood Medway Council was still speaking to their solicitors, to determine the best course of action regarding the ongoing planning issues with 'Sturchfield'.

She also referred the members to an email she had received from the Clerk of the Neighbouring Village of St Mary Hoo, appealing to the members of Stoke Parish Council to lodge an objection against planning application:

- **MC/24/0291 - Land Adjacent Fenn Street & Ratcliffe Highway, St Mary**

A discussion ensued and the members asked the Clerk to write down several points the Parish Council could object on, in order to formulate a response.

## 15. Finance

### a). Bank balances

**Min 7962:24** The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace referred the members to the bank statements provided in their meeting packs where she talked them through the bank balances shown.

### b). To agree the financial performance against the budget for April 2024.

**Min 7963:24** The members carefully evaluated the Parish Council's financial performance against the budget for April 2024, where they concluded that the balances were acceptable.

### c). Accounts paid since the last meeting to be ratified.

**Min 7964:24** The members evaluated the payments made since the last meeting, where they concluded that these payments were acceptable.

### d). Accounts for payment.

**Min 7965:24** After careful consideration the below payments were accepted, having been proposed by Cllr S. Hall, seconded by the Vice-Chair, Cllr P. Dumke and unanimously agreed.

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Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£543.07	April 2024 Wages
Mrs J. Allen	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£35.00	Use of home office –April 2024
HMRC	Min 1436:18	PAID BY BACS	£129.60	Tax & NI charges (April 2024)
Vodafone Telephone & Broadband	Min 1451:18	DIRECT DEBIT	£44.01	Broadband & Telephone line rental for April 2024
Mr J. Treveil	Min 7703:23	PAID BY BACS	£130.00	Deep Clean of all three (3) play parks INV: (TO FOLLOW)
Go Cardless	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	DIRECT DEBIT	£11.99	Stoke Parish Council Hugo Fox Website INV: (TO FOLLOW)
Gallagher Insurance	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	PAID BY BACS	£793.03	(Balance due from amalgamation of the Village Hall's Insurance with the Parish Council's insurance). INV: 528933433
Stoke Village Hall	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£40.00	Charges incurred by Medway Council for Surface Water Meeting (held on 13/12/2023).
Stoke Village Hall	TO BE AGREED RETROSPECTIVELY	TO BE PAID BY BACS	£40.00	Neighbourhood Plan Meeting (held on 20/03/2024)
The People's Pension	Min 1775:20	DIRECT DEBIT	£54.60	Both Employer & Employee Contributions for March 2024
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£1,821.30</b>	

**e). Payment requests to be discussed for approval and payment.**

Min 7966:24 None.

**f). Publication of agreed 2024/2025 budgets on the Parish Council's webpage.**

Min 7967:24 The members discussed the publication of the Parish Council's 2024 /2025 agreed budgets, where it was noted that confirmation of these budget would be printed and uploaded onto the Parish Council's webpage in the Finance Committee minutes.

Owing for calls for more transparency, the Clerk was also asked to publish a summary of the Parish Council's spendings from the last financial year.

**16. Management of the Council's land and property**

**a). To receive the play park inspection report from the month of April for:**

**i Button Drive Playparks Road Playpark**

**ii Heron Way Playpark**

**iii Upper Stoke Playpark**

Min 7968:24 Cllr K. Mansell spoke to advise that there was no change to any of the play equipment in all three (3) parks. She also commented that the weather had been too wet again for the children to be able to fully utilise the apparatus.

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The meeting was temporarily adjourned whilst a couple of the Parishioners, sat in the public gallery, spoke to raise their concerns about the cleanliness of the play parks, the use of the recreation ground by dog walkers and the regularity the bins were being emptied.

The members discussed each point in turn. Accordingly, the Clerk was deployed to ask the contractor to return if the apparatus was not being cleaned properly or at regular intervals. It was felt however that this complaint had coincided with the imminent return of the contractors to clean the play equipment, which was understood to have happened shortly after the residents had left.

Finally, the Parish Councillors spoke of the possibility of either paying a local contractor to empty the bins and dispose of the waste or removing the overflowing bin from the Button Drive Playpark and paying Medway Norse to install a new bin, which they would be responsible for emptying, on the outskirts of the Recreation Ground.

## 17. **Highways & Transportation**

### **a). Footpaths**

Min 7969:24 Cllr S. Back reported that the MHS footpath that ran between Heron Way and the High Street still required attention.

### **b). Lighting**

Min 7970:24 It was acknowledged that the Clerk was still waiting a response from Medway Council concerning the broken street lamp, situated on the outskirts of the Lower Stoke Car Park.

### **c). Highways and verges**

Min 7971:24 No report. Cllr J. Wallace advised that she felt the verges currently looked tidy.

### **d). Pot holes**

Min 7972:24 Cllr N. Blown spoke to advise that he had reported several large potholes, that were situated along Allhallows Road, to Medway Council.

Cllr S. Hall also spoke to recommend the use of an application called 'Fix my Street'.

Finally, the members discussed the large pothole in the Lower Stoke car park, where the Vice Chair Cllr P. Dumke, agreed to speak to a contractor he knew to obtain a quote.

### **e). Fly tipping**

Min 7973:24 Following reports of several tyres being dumped along the country lanes previously in the year, the Parish Councillors agreed that there had been no further fly tipping activity recently.

### **f). Grass cutting**

Min 7974:24 No report.

### **g). Leaking manhole cover on A228 / Grain Road**

Min 7975:24 It was recognised that the problematic manhole cover, located on the A228 / Grain Road, was still leaking. In response to this, the Clerk was asked to remain in contact with Ms G. Bussley of Medway Council, to chase for a further update.

### **h). Salt / Grit Bins.**

Min 7976:24 No report.

### **i). Flood signs**

Min 7977:24 No report.



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## 18. Correspondence

### a). Neighbourhood Plan Application form (signatories).

Min 7978:24 Having been sent a copy of the completed Neighbourhood Plan Application form for Medway Council from Mr P. Egan (Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee). The members asked the Chair to enquire if three (3) signatures were a mandatory requirement or if only the signature of the Chair, on its own, would suffice, as they had previously been advised.

## 19. Reports and Circulars

Min 7979:24 None.

## 20. Any other business

Min 7980:24 None.

## 21. Date of next meeting

Min 7981:24 The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace spoke to remind everyone that the next Parish Council meeting had been scheduled to take place the Village Hall on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June.

## 22. Close of meeting

Min 7982:24 The Chair, Cllr J. Wallace closed the meeting at 8.50 pm and thanked everyone for attending.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on:

<b>Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024</b> <b>Parish Council Meeting</b>	<b>7.00pm</b>	<b>The Village Hall</b>
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### Tasks agreed:

Clerk to pay the Stoke Community Project their annual grant.

Clerk to upload approved March Minutes onto the Parish Council's webpage.

Clerk to pay the agreed expenditure costs and obtain a quote for an annual subscription with NALC.

Clerk to continue to chase Medway Council's Planning Department for an update on Sturchfield.

Clerk to supply points for objection, concerning planning application MC/24/0291.

Clerk to upload a copy of the Parish Council's Summary of Accounts for 2023/2024 onto the members webpage.

Clerk to source quotes for a local contractor to empty the bins in the playparks and removal of waste.

Clerk to obtain a quote from Medway Norse to install a dual-purpose bin on the outskirts of the Button Drive Recreation Ground.

Clerk to continue to chase MHS homes concerning the poor condition of the footpath between Heron Way & the High Street, in Lower Stoke.

Clerk to continue to chase Medway Council concerning the issues with broken street lamp in Lower Stoke.

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Cllr P. Dumke to organise a quote to repair the large pothole in the Lower Stoke Car Park.

Clerk to continue to chase Medway Council regarding the overflowing manhole cover, located on the A228 / Grain Road.

Cllr J. Wallace to speak to Medway Council regarding the Neighbourhood Plan Application Form.

DRAFT